

Before blogs: This is part of an email exchange between myself and the Bishop of the Armed Forces, Prison, and Health Care Ministries of the Episcopal Church, while I was deployed with the Red Cross at the NJ Family Assistance Center after the World Trade Center Attacks. The Center was setup at Liberty Park, directly across the Hudson River from WTC:

11/1/2001 4:31:29 PM Eastern Standard Time, [REDACTED]@episcopalchurch.org writes:

Howard, We're not looking for fancy. Any rough observations from the "family center staff perspective" would be wonderful. +gep

11/5/2001 3:34:01 PM Eastern Standard Time, [REDACTED]@cs.com writes:

Ok, ok... jeez, bishops! ...rough observation it is. That means I'll just send it. You will have to sort it out.

You guys have heard the stories of those who kissed someone good-bye only to have them disappear from the earth several hours later. You have heard the stories of those who barely escaped with their lives. You have heard the stories about those who went into save others, only to be lost themselves. You have heard the stories of those who watched bodies fall out of the sky like rain. I was ready for those stories. The horrific Manhattan experience is well publicized. Those are the victims for which I was "prepared," such as it is.

We have those stories over in Jersey, too. But here, they seem less likely to be about investment bankers and brokers. Here are the secretaries, janitors, and middle and lower management. Many in the same family worked for the same employer. Not infrequently, a son or sister might escape, while a mother or brother would not. These are more likely to be complicated, extended, blended, loud, problematic families. They are in conflict about money, insurance policies, promises made, next of kin. They feel more frightened, defensive and angry when the "six trailer process" here at the FAC wants "proof" that the dead are really dead. How do you prove that someone was really in the WTC: check the time clock?

Over here in Jersey, too, are the second ring of the traumatized. Like our local disaster volunteer (LDV) chaplains. The rabbi, who watching the 1st tower burn while crossing the George Washington Bridge, sees the plane go into the second tower. He was headed to WTC to meet a member of his congregation for lunch. He goes home and calls every member of his congregation to "take roll." For two days, three, four, five. Compulsively, he calls and calls, as if calling somehow can hold them in existence. He is lucky, he says. Only six families in his congregation are "hit." He stays on the verge of tears all day, held back— I think— only by his anger. Another LDV chaplain, a Roman Catholic priest, tells me only a few minutes before we send him off with the families to Ground Zero, that he made the trip a couple of weeks before as a family member. He has "the 1000 mile stare" when he returns. Two semi-elderly, retired, RC priests are very enthusiastic about their volunteer day Sunday. (Actually, they won't take direction and give me a backhanded hard time all day, "now what kind of minister are you again?" I call them Heckel and Jeckel.) They know family after family, cousins, brothers, uncles. We send one on the boat. He comes back in tears. He can barely speak. He has spent 50 years in this diocese. The other old crow takes him back to the retirement home. (God, I think I killed a priest.) A NJ State Trooper talks about how he was on marine patrol when the first plane hit. He took his boat over the NY side to evacuate victims. While it was docked, the second plane hit and a huge piece building fell out of the sky and destroyed his boat. He says he can't talk about it with his family and he can't talk about it at work. Many of the local social service, medical, EMS, and mental health volunteers are those who on 9/11 built a world class triage hospital in this same railroad station. Hour after hour they watched helplessly from the dock the horror unfold ½ mile away across the river. They had plenty of time to watch, all afternoon and all night, as the sickening reality settled heavier and heavier that there was not going to be anyone for them to help. In a way that I can emotionally feel, but do not myself cognitively understand, it has erased some essential part of who they are... something like when a person is forced to watch as someone they love is beaten, raped or killed... multiplied many times.

The ideal of the wounded healer aside, one of the 1st rules of trauma work is not to traumatize the helpers. The 2nd rule is you can't help yourself. Too late, I think. The designated, long term helpers on this shore are just as sick as those they are supposed to help. (My hunch is this might apply to the hot-shot pastoral care givers at 815 and the downtown churches— who's helping you?)

There is a lot of politics to the disaster business. Urns and flags are to be presented to the next of kin on behalf of the Mayor and People of New York and the Governor and People of New Jersey. When it comes to presenting and praying with families as they receive the urns of soil from Ground Zero, there is not much business for the protestant chaplain. Of the families, 70% are Roman Catholic, 20% Jewish, and 10% "other." For the local volunteer RC priests we support, it can

be very intense. Even though we tell families there are no human remains in the urns... well... it's the closest thing may be going to get to a body. It's like doing 12 funerals a day. One priest last week cried out in exhausted exasperation: "What is this? Protestants don't die?" I told him we were already dead. He didn't get it.

As many of the Roman Catholic families are somewhat casual about affiliation, when they ask for a priest, I can "pass" well enough when necessary. (Msgr. Desmond, Episcopal Vicar of Newark is not amused.) But necessary is often.

Because there is no line for the "not-really-a-catholic-priest," after I have presented an "urn" and prayed with a family, I have time to ask them to tell me about (N.) That's when the stories come. I listen to stories. It's some kind of twisted deal I have with God. People stop me and tell me stories.

There are a million stories here. Elie Wiesel is correct. All of these witnesses have to be heard. I don't know why. I don't know why it is important for me— for the church?— to hear them. It is apparently important to God for me to hear them. Stories. Like a psychotic's dream journal. God will kill me with stories.

Because there is nowhere else to put this: What is printed across my forehead? These people have not read my resume and cannot know who I am. There is no way they can know my research and teaching interest in paranormal experience. They have not sat in my workshops. But story after story I hear of visitations from the dead (technically apparitions, thank you very much). The living and the dead smile, sing to each other, send their love across the chasm. Reassure each other. If only in our mind. Or God's mind. These stories I listen to as well.

Love lives again, that with the dead has been...

Oh, yeah... you wanted feedback on the links from your web page...

As I have said, I was very impressed by the "Upcoming conferences" and "Crisis Intervention" links (I am hard to impress in this area) and might like to use them (with attribution) for resources in the ARC/SAIR aftercare plan that seems to be falling to me to write.

The liturgical link was certainly helpful. The prayers of the People ("For all whose lives are devastated by the violence of terrorism...") I have adapted several times and chaplains and lay people have asked to use them in congregations and churches upon their return "to the world."

However, after the Memorial Service @ Ground Zero on 10/28 (btw, 1000 people processed through the center that day), imo, the mood shifted. The adrenaline has gone... what's left is the grief and hopelessness. Now what? Liturgically, I think it may be time to turn the page, time to address the grief and hopelessness.

e.g., In a inter-faith homily for staff, I used your 10/28 story about the historical perspective of the beer cans found in the girder, the evidence of some steel workers' lunch break in the early 1970's... and when I got the chuckle, the instruction to the congregation was: find hope, find life... anywhere you can.

(And since I owe you a story in return) I have also told about coming into the FAC very early one morning and walking through the "wall of remembrance" panels that are set up at the entrance. This is, of course, a very tragic, painful place, containing sacramental messages from the hopeful expectation of missing persons posters, to the finality of young children's letters to their dead mothers and fathers; parents' letters to their dead children; lovers' letters to their beloved. In a very real sense, the tragedy is no longer the burnt hole across the river; the tragedy is written on these boards. But as I walked quietly through the maze of panels, I came suddenly across two permanent residents of the old NJCRR station—their families having lived there since before my grandmother walked through the same hall off the Ellis ferry 80-some odd years ago. There, two pigeons were witnessing to their Creator: noisily, grandly, passionately, unabashedly, er, well, having sex. Hear this, O Israel: God *will* have the last word. God *will* have life. Find hope, find life, anywhere you can.

I think it continues to be very important to give voice to our anger and pain in liturgy. But now seven weeks afterward, we also need to witness to a pin point ray of hope. This seems particularly true with the workers at NJ FAC, who are way past toasted; it is true for many families who have had their (sometimes now multiple) memorial services, and need spiritual guidance and support for "now what?" Realistically, the various operations are ramping down around them (e.g., where there was massive protective police and fire presence at ground zero, now the families are objects to be gawked at by office workers and tourists from the time they leave the ferry until they get to the platform, and again at the wall of remembrance). The process of identifying the body parts at

Fresh Kills will be one that stretches far, far into the future, (I think I told you ICPC is covering there with those workers) but anger will only nourish for so long. Christmas is coming and a huge percentage of the women I see through the FAC are pregnant. I wouldn't look forward to preaching Easter here this year—I doubt it is going to be easy for local clergy to do or families to hear. (While I'm thinking about it, 9/11/02 will fall in the middle of High Holy Days next year.) I think there is a limit to how much "blood soaked ground" liturgy folks can handle. That the church needs to be in the hope business is not an inappropriate expectation.

So, liturgically I am deliberately, repetitively using (yes, I do hope to screw it into their hearts from memory) Psalms such as 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion
Then were we like those who dream
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us,
And we are glad indeed.
Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
Like the watercourses of the Negrev.
Those who sowed tears
Will reap with joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying their seed,
Will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Franciscan office Canticle of The Heavenly City: Rev: 21-22

(This I remembered while watching from Liberty Park the high powered work lights from Ground Zero, eerily irradiating the night sky. From our side, it looks like the light emanates from something under the ground. I had made my first trip over to GZ with families that afternoon. Even in the face of terrible destruction, knowing not only the sheer numbers of dead, but looking into the sky were they last "were", and imagining their death, I was confused and somewhat embarrassed. Briefed to expect a horrific emotional experience, mine was different. What I felt was a profound sense of Peace... much like some people report when visiting the poppy field at Auschwitz. I certainly felt the pain on the platform. But it was a beautiful, sunny day; the wind was blowing... much like the day it happened. As I looked into the pit, dozens of huge cranes and sundry earthmoving equipment were doing their job. But it seemed they were somehow doing it gently, quietly, carefully, lovingly, almost in slow motion. I looked up and saw the nets over the surrounding buildings flapping in the breeze. The sun lit the blackened granite. Construction workers were speaking softly to each other, like nurses in a recovery room. Somehow, the dead were telling me that while it was not ok, it was ok... they were ok. Why do you look for the living among the dead? God was in that place.)

I saw no temple in the city,
for its temple is the Lord the God Almighty
and the Lamb.
And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it,
For the glory of God is its light,
And its lamp is the Lamb.
By its light the nations shall walk,
And the rulers of the earth
shall bring their glory.
Its gates shall never be shut by day,
Nor shall there be any night;
They shall bring into it the glory and honor of the nations.
I saw the river of the water of life,
bright as crystal,
flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.
And either side of the river stood the tree of life,
yielding its fruit each month,
and the leaves of the tree were the healing of the nations.
The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there,
and his servants shall worship him;

and they shall see God's face and his name shall be on their foreheads.

No longer shall there be any curse.

I borrow heavily from the prayers of the local reform rabbis (who we typically use to pray at family visits to Ground Zero, as what comes out of their mouth is frequently both beautiful and ecumenically safe). They could certainly be Christianized easily enough. (Sorry, but I remember you were a service chaplain, you know what I mean):

*To this sacred place I come, drawn by the eternal ties that bind my soul to yours.
Death has separated us.
You are no longer at my side to share the beauty of the passing moment.
I cannot look to you to lighten my burden, to lend me your strength, your counsel, your faith.
And yet, what you mean to me neither withers or fades.
For a time we touched hands and hearts;
still your voice abides within me, still your tender glance remains a joy to me.
For you are part of me forever;
something of you has become a deathless song upon my lips.
And so beyond the ache that tells how much I miss you, a deeper thought compels:
we were together.
I hold you still in mind, and give thanks for life and love.
The happiness that was, the memories that do not fade, are a gift that cannot be lost.
You continue to bless me days and years.
I will always give thanks for you.*

Prayer for Those Who Help

May the One who blessed our ancestors be a presence to those who provide help for the ill and troubled among us. May they be filled with fortitude and courage, endowed with sympathy and compassion, as they give strength to those at their side. May they strive to fight against despair and continue to find within themselves the will to reach out to those in need. In their love of others, may they know the blessings of community and the blessing of renewed faith.

Prayer before Kaddish

Eternal God, the generations come and go before You. Brief is their time. Passing, they leave many of their tasks unfulfilled, their dreams unrealized. It would be more than we could bear, but for the faith that our little day finds its permanence in our eternity, and our work its completion in the unfolding of your purpose for humanity.

At this sacred moment, we turn out thoughts to those we love who have gone from life. We recall the joy of their companionship. We know that they will never vanish, so long as heart and thought remain within us. By love they are remembered, and in memory they live.

O God, grant that their memory may bring strength and blessing. May the nobility in their lives and the high ideals they cherished endure in our thoughts and live in our deeds. May we, carrying on their work, help to redeem Your promise that life shall prevail.

Kiddush and motzi

The commandment to bless this wine is a commandment to drink life deeply as we drink from this cup. It is a commandment to bless life and to love deeply. It is a commandment to remember with Shabbat heart, to act with Shabbat hands, to see the world with Shabbat eyes. It is a commandment to laugh until we are all laughter, to sing until we are all song, to dance until we are all love. This is the wine that God has commanded us to bless and drink.

There is a lot of politics in the disaster business #2. People who have come to help are very frustrated when they cannot do their job.

There is a lot of politics in the disaster business #3. Disasters bring out the best and worst in people. We all function from the culture of our disciplines and home settings. This is particularly true for professionals who are recruited because they are among the best in their field, experientially are accustomed to their whims being followed, and by their nature prima don(na)s. Frustrations are running real high seven weeks out.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but like many clinical clergy, my relationship with the church is like that Goethe describes with God: We acknowledge each other, but do not speak. My job is easy compared to yours. I just listen to stories in the name of God. I cannot imagine what to say to the ECW about wounded healers and crazy upset people and gawking tourists and angry firefighters and body parts and politicians and God. If I remember correctly, they will want to write a check so I will go away. By next spring, I wouldn't even get the check.

There are many who predict WTC is just the beginning of a long string of incidents we can expect over the next few years. We need to think about how short life is, how precious our relationships are. They should read some letters from the remembrance panels here at the FAC... like the one from an 8-9 year old girl, telling her dead father how sorry she is that she was mad at him and didn't kiss him goodnight on the 10th of September.

So what does the WTC have to do with St. Swithin's Christmas Bazaar and this year's hot resolution at diocesan convention? Perhaps on your liturgy webpage could come a message from the un-Donne Dean of St. Paul's, London:

Perchance he for whom this bell tolls may be so ill, as that he knows not it tolls for him; and perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me, and see my state, may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that. The church is Catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that body which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me: all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another. ...The bell doth toll for him that thinks it doth; and though it intermit again, yet from that minute that this occasion wrought upon him, he is united to God. Who casts not up his eye to the sun when it rises? but who takes off his eye from a comet when that breaks out? Who bends not his ear to any bell which upon any occasion rings? but who can remove it from that bell which is passing a piece of himself out of this world? No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

Enough. More later, perhaps.

HWW+

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LIBERTY STATE PARK FAC - DR 795

SAIR O Annotated Daily Activity Schedule

This is a living document last revised 11/12/01 and continuously subject to change. This narrative is based on one passed to me from a departing O. I started writing and added six pages. My hope is that it can be continuously revised and passed down, shorting the learning curve for this position.

*Some things
do not need to be mysteries
known only to God.*

The Spiritual Air Incident Response team was trained for a specific function(s) within a 1 week ARC/NTSB operation. You can save yourself a lot of trouble by understanding we are *not doing that here*. This is the 1st time we have been deployed for what is known in ARC parlance as a "general disaster." You might as well put the SAIR manual back in your suitcase.

SAIR Tasks on this operation:

1. Provide religious ceremony for the presentation of urns to victim families.

2. Provide pastoral presence to families during trip to ground zero.
3. Provide oversight and pastoral care to Local Disaster Volunteer (LDV) clergy.
4. Provide spiritual care to ARC staff.

8:00 AM - Day shift SAIR chaplains report for work. Of this writing, I have scheduled 1 SAIR each 8a-2p and 2p-8p for the table, plus 1 SAIR 10a-3p for the ferry. This gives us 1 SAIR always at the table and 1 SAIR on the ferry with the local clergy (LDV Chaplains).

Chaplain's table should probably be staffed at all times while urns are available for presentation. Encourage chaplains to wander around in the hall--this is the treatment milieu of which they are pastor--but to tell the several chaplains/MH workers left where they can be found, particularly if they are going for meals, wall, office, bathroom, rear deck, etc.

You can check with Salvation Army about who will be available from their ministry for assistance... but over the weeks, they seem to have relinquished their role. I have not objected.

Process note: The main issue about "the table" or "chapel duty" is that it can be very boring. There are days when even the LDVs have no "urns" to present. The number of urn presentation has dropped drastically in the last week. The SAIR chaplains at least can minister by walking around as they might in a hospital setting, and in this way can give some significant care to staff. But consider this: during my rounds the other day, I walked up on the table from across the great hall. There gathered around a table, at the front of entrance, talking, quietly laughing, were the priests and prophets of God, men and women, in the distinctive dress, trappings and vestments of their various traditions piles up on the table, mutually affirming, clearly enjoying each others' company. God was at that table, and the witness through sign and symbol was unmistakable.

8:30 AM - Ecumenical Morning Prayer. We have had as many as 7 attending. But, the vast majority of the time, no one but the opening SAIR chaplain is there. Availability may be more symbolic than anything.

9:00 AM Facility Staff Meeting (Administrative Trailer) Generally agency heads. Attend with the AD FAC (This is the head ARC person, currently [REDACTED]). This task is a holdover from SAIR protocol, and is very helpful in giving Spiritual Care an overview of the operation. If you have any input for this meeting, you might wish to feed it through the AD-FAC first. Remember that we are the guests of the NJ Department of Human Resources. They would generally chair this meeting. At this writing, the Director of the entire operations at this facility is [REDACTED]. The #2 is [REDACTED] who oversees the ferry runs.

9:30 AM ARC Staff Meeting - (Great Hall) Function heads within ARC. Be prepared to report on general activities, problems, and successes. Have the latest staff and activity numbers available, i.e. number of urns services, numbers from previous day's activity, issues. Turn in Staff Roster indicating daily assignments.

10:00 AM - Every day, brief LDV chaplains on procedures for the day, i.e. urn procedures, process out back in the trailers, awareness of various State functions, e.g., banking commission, MVA, various public/private agency family services, "missing person" to death certificate process, NOVA, NJ-AG, INS, MH, role, where they should be sitting, sensitivity to family members, decorum in family area, ministry to staff, and need to be identified as ARC Chaplains by wearing ID's and/or vests/jackets. Show staff mess as distinct from family mess. Suggest chaplains not to sit together, but at separate tables to minister to staff. If this is their first time, have them complete LDV Staff Registration form then issue identification badges with expiration date.

RC Chaplains are coordinated by Mgrs. [REDACTED], Archdiocese of Newark. (201) 988-[REDACTED]. He blusters a bit when priests don't show up. But I think he likes coming out himself. I call him "Uncle Mike."

Jewish Chaplains are coordinated by Rabbi [REDACTED], Union of American Hebrew Congregations, (201) 722-[REDACTED]. (In an emergency, her home phone is (973) 533-[REDACTED].) also coordinating may be Rabbi [REDACTED], Cell (732) 580 [REDACTED], Pager (732) 294 [REDACTED].

Two process notes:

The families coming through the center are 70% Roman Catholic, 20% Jewish, and 10% Protestant or other. We really need to have a RC priest at the table, and optimally two at the FAC on ferry days. They will have anywhere from 1-12 urns per day.

If ferry is running, we have Jewish families for urns. If ferries are not running, we would likely have NO Jewish families on Saturday-Shabbat. i.e., there probably would be no need to schedule a rabbi after the Shabbat Service. Even on ferry days, the Rabbi may have no urns to present. At most, the rabbis have been presenting 4 urns per day.

An observation: the local clergy are very much part of the traumatized community. Most have victim families in their congregations; many eye-witnessed some part of the WTC event; some are part of victim families themselves; a few were actually there on site during the incident. They have their own stories to tell. I believe a large part of the SAIR mission should be to provide support for these local clergy.

10:00 AM (Ferry Days) -NJ Department of Human Resources Briefing for all staff going over to Ground Zero. Insure chaplains scheduled for the ferry are there. After briefing, brief them yourself on trip procedures for chaplains - being available, assisting where pastoral concerns are noticed - and especially on being ecumenical, decide on who will give prayer at platform. I have found the rabbi to be a good choice; they are dependably articulate and their prayers inoffensive. SAIR can offer suggestions on what other chaplains have done and again emphasize their sensitivity in praying for many faith traditions. Note that there is a lot of politics in the disaster business. Sometimes a decision comes from "elsewhere" that another clergy person will offer the prayer. Sometimes you will have to do a PR/Pastoral clean-up if the visiting dignitary prayer has offended by making political or evangelical statements. There has been a time (on a Port Authority trip) that we were told there would be NO prayer. Go figure.

10:30 (+/-) AM - Pick up "companion" stickers from AD-FAC and distribute to chaplains going over on ferry. As I want to have both a RC priest and a rabbi, I usually send the LDV chaplains on the boat. Send one trip experienced chaplain-preferably a SAIR chaplain, and perhaps yourself-with the LDVs to ground zero. Watch them and assess carefully.

12:30 PM - Family and staff briefing for trip to ground zero. Chaplains may be asked to stand up for identification at briefing. Pre-arrange with briefer (Kathy) beforehand to say that Chaplains will be available for private prayer anytime during the trip.

1:00 PM - Buses departs for ferry landing.

2:00 PM Currently, expect SAIR chaplain shift change... keys, stats, scheduling, etc. Particularly with the erratic schedule, I do not do formal daily staff meetings, but this is a good time to catch at least two in the same place.

2:00 PM -Call SAIR National Headquarters SAIR Desk (currently Donna Effinger (703) 206-8920) and report accumulative statistics. Discuss any staffing issues and when replacements are to be expected. Have an idea of the staffing needs in the week to come. Report on any significant needs. Stay on them about staffing needs. Get the picture? Wanna go home someday?

When you can't find the person at the SAIR desk for more than 48 hours, I suggest you FAX the report in. Keep the FAX receipt.

Process note: For my own sanity, I have reduced all this reporting to 1 sheet of paper (see SAIR ASSIGNMENT SHEET), in this case, the same sheet I have given to the AD FAC (and the State Police, and logistics, and MH, and whoever else approaches me wanting a piece of paper). They can find what they need on it somewhere.

3:00 PM - Bus returns from ferry landing. Some families will be traumatized, others will be seeking services and still others will depart as quickly as they can. Be prepared to assist.

3:30 PM - Ground Zero staff debriefing. Invite LDV chaplains to attend but if they resist, let them go. Be sure to get credential holder and any vests/jackets. They may keep their identification if they like; be sure there is an expiration date.

4:00 PM The current AD FAC (████████) believes "Close of Business" (COB does not refer to corn) to be 4PM. Sometime after 4PM (like 5PM) he wishes daily stats. I have blended these numbers with the HQ numbers so that I am not keeping two sets of books. You might wish to exercise your creativity and imagination here.

8:00 PM FAC closes and late shift SAIR departs.

FLIGHT OF IDEAS

If you are reading this after your first day as the O, please accept the assurance that you are neither crazy or incompetent. A multi-level, multi-agency, disaster operation is Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, rewritten by Franz Kafka, with a screen treatment by Jimmy Breslin. Remember, you are a volunteer; you will go home soon. Some people do this for a living.. and a life.

There's a lot of politics in the disaster business. Politics are part of the disaster. I'll bet suffering people never even came up with the word "disaster," and rarely ever use it in conversation. You can't really have a disaster without politics. Politics make the disaster. Politics gives disaster its definition. Where it not for politics and politicians, we would not be on this operation. Otherwise, it would just be something like: "When shit happens, everybody just help each other out."

You think that's funny? All those same arguments can be made about volunteers. During the first 48 hours after the Oklahoma City bombing, 15,000 spontaneous volunteers showed up wanting to help.. Now *that's* a disaster. Yes, I know, we are different. We are the American Red Cross: screened,

trained, professional, well disciplined, well managed, well supervised volunteers. Yeah, right. Think about all the deployment snafus on your way to this operation. The ARC couldn't orchestrate a two car funeral.

Enough. My point is that we might need to realize that instead of saving the world, we might be part of the disaster. So, let management of the chaos begin:

The Administration Trailer is the double Salvation Army trailer slightly to the right, outside the end of the terminal that contains the memorial wall. If you are the 1st one "in" in the mornings, it will be locked. Key to the front door is in the floor of the rear door on the white truck tractor in back of the trailer; I haven't been able to get it to work either. Suggest you get breakfast until someone else shows up and unlocks. No, I'm serious, because when you next have time will be 10:45, and breakfast will be gone.

There are copy machines in the Admin trailer, in trailer #2 (where the SAIR cubby is), and upstairs in the terminal facility office.

Process note: It is worth discussing the incredible energy we are putting into providing clergy of specific faith traditions. On one hand, we are trying to respond to the local religious culture: Roman Catholic and Jewish. On the other hand, SAIR chaplains are clinically trained, board certified, predominately functioning as generic hospital chaplains, accustomed to responding to the crisis needs of any tradition. Are they being well used? Is it time to just return spiritual care to local clergy and congregations? What is the appropriate role of the Spiritual Air Incident Response team at this time in this operation? Should we revert to a consultant's role? Is it time for us to just go back home? I don't have the answer, but it needs to be discussed.

Heat in the chapel. When the chapel (otherwise the station's tourist film orientation theatre) is cold: walk out the rear of the chapel, through the double doors toward the bathrooms; continue toward the outside exit; just before you reach the exit, on your left is a door labeled furnace room. Open the door; immediately to your right you will see 4 gray boxes. Find the top left box. Find the switch on the box. "Hand" is on. "Off" is off. "Auto" doesn't work. Turn the switch to "on"; this will pump hot water through the baseboard heaters in the chapel. If the chapel becomes too warm, turn the switch to "off." The "auto" position does not work. The thermostat in the chapel only controls the AC. Please leave it off. Off, I said.

Not even Radar O'Rielly could get you plain sanctuary lamps for the chapel. I didn't even know they came with American Flags and fire engines on them. Imagine my surprise. Turn the ones with the crosses around so they don't show. If the rabbis whine, apologize and tell them it's a disaster.

On the subject of the memorial wall: advise chaplains to read in moderation. 1st rule of trauma care is to not traumatize the caregivers. It is a good place to do some pastoral care, particularly early in the morning when you find the NOVA workers lighting the candles. Remember: the tragedy isn't a hole in the ground in Manhattan; the tragedy is here on these memorial walls.

I suggest you schedule chaplains for a day off about day three of their tour. We all arrive ready to save the world. When reality sets in, there is incredible adrenaline drop. After a day's rest, they will frequently come back better personnel than when they arrived. We are all at the top of our game about day 10. It is down hill from there.

On the trips to ground zero: with the massive police presence gone, we have to deal with being a tourist spectacle walking through the Wall and Battery Park area from the boat. Walk on the outside of the families and watch for cameras. We still have our NJ Troopers with us. If you see one pointed at us, say something to a trooper and they will puff up very large, and if necessary, confiscate the camera.

The computer printer is in the Admin Trailer. You may in theory use any terminal at any desk in the trailer, but try to use the ARC desk/terminal—second from front, center row. The system password is <Liberty>. The Windows network password never works for mere mortals, so hit <cancel> or bypass. Sometime you get network error messages trying to access your disk on the A: drive. The only remedy I have found is to go back to your computer, rename the file, copy to a new floppy. It is a pain in the ass. Lobby AC SAIR for a traveling printer. Most of us use our own laptops and print in the Admin trailer.

The MH (mental Health) folks in the next cubical take telephone messages for us; think about reciprocating.

ARC MH are generally savvier folks than LDV MH. ARC MH is identified by a large paper clip on their ARC Disaster Relief name tags. (If they call themselves "Mental Health," people run from

them.) They may approach you and try to do a 1:1 debriefing every day. Be a good sport. You can always retaliate by asking them about their prayer life.

Everyone will have to have a formal MH debriefing as part of out processing. These can be done at the FAC rather than at Edison. Schedule with the MH-O (currently Judy). Tell her you want someone over 40.

At this writing, Candlewood Suites presents the fewest logistics problems for SAIR. If you get an incoming SAIR Chaplain assigned hotel anywhere else, request a Hotel Change Request Form and get first available at Candlewood. From Candlewood: walk left out the front door; you will see BJ's Warehouse; behind this is Shop Rite Supermarket. You will also see Sears and JC Penny. Fleet Bank (where you cash your ARC advance check) is in the Exchange Center 2 blocks down on Washington (away from the FAC)... they have Saturday and late Thursday hours.

You can take public transportation back and forth from FAC and Candlewood. Harborside station on NJ Light Rail is right behind the Candlewood (duh... most of us can hear it from our rooms... all night). Take train toward Bayonne. Any train going that direction will do. Get off at LIBERTY PARK STATION. Shuttle to FAC every 20 minutes. At this writing, we are still taking train for free. Shuttle drivers have gotten a little whiney, so you might wish to put a buck in the fare box.

The Harborside Financial Center behind the Candlewood has shops and restaurants... check it out for convenience. One more block down is the prier... best place for photos and just to sit. Check out the Polish war memorial. Look at it, read the inscription, juxtaposed to the WTC site at night.

There are ARC groups leaving Candlewood in the mornings between 7:30 and 8:30... you can always catch a ride. You can usually catch a ride around 4-5 from the FAC to the Candlewood. You can always find a ride when the FAC closes at 8pm.

We currently have two cars. Try to keep them. They may be listed at HQ under Mental Health—remember SAIR used to run under MH. Chaplains can leave keys at the desk for each other. You can gas them up, keep the receipt and list it against your advance on the Travel Expense Report.

One the subject of FORMS. All ARC forms are in a notebook on the AD FAC's desk. You can also ask whoever is so motivated in Edison or Washington to fax you the form they wish filled out and you will fill in the blanks and fax it back. Do it and they will go away.

The "community fax" number for the FAC is (210) 915-5215. The fax is in the Admin trailer, second desk from the left rear. Use and request others to use a cover sheet. Incoming faxes are in a pile by the fax machine. When you can use the noun phrase "FAC FAX" without laughing, it is time for you to go home.

Occasionally somebody will ask if we are interested in "lending" someone to "ground hero" at Fresh Kills Landfill. I don't know where this comes from, but the operational fact is that when the outer buildings started yielding large body parts, ICPC (police chaplains) fell all over this like rural volunteer firefighters. While I do think they are in peril, so far they (ICPC) are not wanting ARC help, and two Os now have wasted some significant time trying to sort out the suggestion that we "do something."

When families ask what is happening to "the human remains," I suggest be both evasive and proactive. I tell them "material" is being removed from the site very slowly and carefully. It is put in a truck, and before each truck leaves the WTC sight, it is blessed by a priest. When it arrives at the medical examiner's "processing center," it is being handled very carefully and searched minutely by law enforcement officers and medical personnel. There are chaplains on site who see that any remains found are handled properly and respectfully. Other than the attorney general's notification that a DNA match has been made, families may hear very little else for many, many months. But understand, this site is a holy place as well, and the process is being handled in a respectful, sacred manner. You might add: and you know, there may be some things that are never found.

The preceding paragraph falls within the realm of truthful. Suggest your chaplains watch their mouths, particularly the LDVs who will know somebody who has a cousin who has a brother who has the garbage bag contract, or drives a truck that makes the run to the morgue at the landfill.

My counterpart in MH health (Judy) says that after the first 48 hours, if you can't laugh at a disaster, you need to go home.

SBC Child Care has scissors when no one else does. Smile at the fact that you have had to ask the Southern Baptist Convention for their help. Thank God they will give it to you.

Put a couple of small stuffed animals in your pocket for the GZ trip. You never know when a little bear will come in handy.

The #9 washing machine at Candlewood does not spin your clothes dry. You will be late for work.

There is a liquor store inside the Shop Rite. There is a drug counter inside the Shop Rite. The NYT is inside the Shop Rite.

There is a Staples Office Supply 2-3 blocks down Washington on the left. That seems to be the closest color copier and UPS depot. Hours are 7a-9p. Save receipts and attempt to put it on the Travel Expense Report.

A rabbi appears for Shabbat Services on Saturday at 9:30 am.

Sunday Services: RC priest appears for 8:30 am Mass.

United Protestant service is at 9:15. Depending on community needs and SAIR personnel on site, there may be a communion element or not. There is one of those communion sets with the little plastic cups underneath the extreme left rear desk in the Admin trailer (currently belonging to Salvation Army Maj. [REDACTED]), along with "chiclet" looking communion bread. At this writing, errant Episcopal clergy are celebrating a Eucharist at the end of the service using pita bread and ARC coffee cup with collusion from various Protestants on site. In respect to the Southern Baptists Child Care (yellow vests) who attend, we are using grape juice... do yourself a favor and buy real grape juice and fresh pita before Sunday morning. We have been using the common lectionary and responsive prayers written after the 9/11 events.

There is a self dispatched Presbyterian minister by the name of [REDACTED]. He wanted to be an LDV Chaplain. No local affiliation, no clinical training, no obvious reason for being here. We certainly don't need Protestant clergy. We said "no thanks." He has lately been showing up as a NOVA volunteer, and then introducing himself to staff and families as a pastor. Both Carl and I have assessed him as a disaster junkie and have told both NOVA and the NJ State folks. But he keeps showing up like herpes. Other than keeping him out of the ARC side of the operation, there may be little more we can do.

If you have the energy, the LDV clergy are a good source of day off ideas in NYC. "Uncle Mike" is particularly good for Soho and the arts districts. The PATH runs at the Candlewood. Remember, you don't have to knock yourself out, there are short night excursions, too. After 8pm, it takes less than 2 hours to go across, walk over to Times Square, gaze at the lights for 20 minutes and come back.

Some people cope with the stress by sleeping. That's good, too.

ARC meals can be carried back to hotel in "to go" boxes.

The jazz radio station is the 1st station on the FM dial... 88.3. I finally knew I was here when the announcer started telling me who was playing at Birdland and The Blue Note every night.

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Yesterday was my last work day on this deployment. I am ready to leave. I am exhausted. I can't remember names long enough to pray with people. (Really embarrassing when I was praying with an Episcopal priest and his family- he had lost his son). I cannot listen- really listen- to any more stories. Orienting the LDVs in the mornings, when we get to the wall, I don't even look at it, and I start to cry. My nighttime scotches are much taller than I am accustomed. I woke one night a few days ago in one of the darkest, dread-filled depressive episodes I can remember. (It was a transient chemical event and went away.) So, "Hel-lo? Dr. Whitaker? Can you say *secondary traumatization?*"

It is time for me to go. I only had to extend one day, because...

Santa sent my replacement... an old army chaplain, conservative rabbi. I wish I could get the video clip of how he mixes it up with the Salvation Army Major. He is, of course, observant. I put him in the Candlewood where he could cook. I don't think the AD FAC gets it- I mean really gets it- that is guy is going to observe Shabbat. He is going to disappear several hours before sundown on Friday, and will not appear until Sunday morning. The shifting of the burden was obvious: the FEMA lady took one look at us last night and said, "You can sure tell who's got the job and who just got rid of it!" I ain't looking back.

The new AD FAC is an Episcopalian, a retired physician from Atlanta. In his seventies, he is largely unflappable, and certainly still fires on all cylinders. He may talk slow, but he's got every ARC function head and half of the NJ State Police thinking they are his favorite grandchild—including me. I took him with the chaplains over on the GZ trip yesterday. "Well, I don't want to go, but I guess I ought to see what these people got to go through." It was the day after the AA flight crashed into a neighborhood in Queens. On the return boat, he stood by himself in the cold on the outside deck looking back at Manhattan. "Father Howard," he says, "I think it's just going to be one damn thing after another from now on." He was very quiet the rest of the evening.

I am most worried about the local clergy. We know some thing about the future from looking at the experience of Oklahoma City. The divorce rate doubles, as does the incidence of domestic violence, child abuse, alcohol and drug use, and disability and workers comp claims resulting from emotional and somatic problems. Clergy are frequently the "first responders" for such problems. Congregations are going to become unstable and clergy are going to wobble badly within 12 months.. hell, the ones I see are aren't doing that great now.

Having not made the trip to GZ for a while, I exercised departing chief chaplain's prerogative and said the prayer that ends the families' visit at Ground Zero. It was ok. It would have been a piece of unfinished business if I had not. The site didn't— and hasn't really— bothered me. But the pain of the people on the platform is still heavy.

PRAYER AT GROUND ZERO

*When you speak the words of a prophet,
the prophet's lips move in the grave. -Baal Shem Tov*

Job said,

O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock forever!
For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,
then in my flesh I shall see God,
whom I shall see on my side,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me." 19:23-27

In you, O God, are the lives of the living and the dead. Hear our cry.
We bring to you:
Our love for those who last in this place, disappeared from our sight;
Our grief for the lives and relationships that have been violently and
suddenly interrupted;
Our anger, pain, and disbelief that any of this should happen to anyone, let
alone to us.
Heal us. Help us to remember:
That those we love but see no longer are never forgotten, but live safely in
you. That love lives forever.
That you know of our pain and desolation, and cry with us.
That life and hope will prevail.
And that you and we and those who have gone before us will remain united,
until we see you face to face. **Amen.**

HWW+
ARC SAIR Team
11/13/01

I am back in Chattanooga. People ask me if I had a good time in New York.

The Prayers of the People (adapted from Resources: The Bishop of Armed Services, Prison and Health Ministries)

Leader Let us pray saying, "Bless us and keep us, O God."

For all whose lives are devastated by of terrorism: for those killed in the attacks on the World Trade Center, The Pentagon and in the plane crash in Pennsylvania, for the victims of terrorism in Ireland and in the Middle East, and who live in the midst of conflict and fear, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Leader For all who mourn a tragic loss: for those whose loved ones were killed in these disasters, for all who have lost a spouse or relative, co-worker or friend to violence of any kind, for the grace to build a world free of bloodshed and hatred, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Leader For all those who serve the welfare of people everywhere: For the leaders of the nations and for all in authority, for the healers, for rescue-workers and firefighters, for peace-makers and peace-keepers, for all who give their lives to serve the needs of others, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Leader For our children who grow up with violence all around them: on the streets, and in their classrooms, for wisdom in teaching them, gentleness in modeling life for them, and above all things, respect and love for them, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Leader For our world torn apart by conflict and strife, arrogance and hatred, disparity in power and resources, yet bound together in the common ideals of freedom and justice, dignity and opportunity for all; that we learn the lessons of respect and reconciliation and turn our hearts against vengeance, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Leader For our nation and for our country: for this good and bounteous land that you have given us, for the noble heritage of liberty, freedom and justice which is ours, for the grace to share generously what has been entrusted to us and for the wisdom and will to conserve it for those who come after us, we pray to you, O Lord:

People Bless us and keep us, O God.

Celebrant: God of grace, call all the nations of the earth to cease from strife, that all may join to fight not one another, but their common foes of want and ignorance, disease and suffering. Lead all people out of the way of death and into the way of life; away from destruction and to the building of a new world of justice and peace, liberty and joy. Great Redeemer of all, hear our prayer, and end the dark night of cruelty and fear, and bring in the dawn of mercy and reconciliation, for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen.**

On a closing note: Rabbi Chaim Stern, brother of Issac, and author of the prayer **To This Sacred Place I Come** died last week.