



IACAC NEWSLETTER

International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains

Newsletter- January 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues

A New Year and new start, what does it hold, for some it may be excitement of looking forward to a new member in the family, others a new job. And, for others, it may be the fear of bad news which can cause frustration, ego, anxiety and resentment.

Fear is something that we all live in our everyday work and activities; one time that I recall was when I was at sea and employed by the Ministry of Defence. I was flying to the Falkland Islands in 1982. We had flown from Brize Norton to Ascension Island and then were put into a C130 one of the workhorses of the military at that time and still are today. We took off from Wideawake which was, and I would still guess, is the name of the airfield there. Our flight down was pretty uneventful given the basic seating in the plane. Three planes had taken off that morning and we were the second one. The new commanding officer for the Falklands was aboard the first one, which had landed. As we made our approach the cloud base came down and our pilot made six attempts to try and land but eventually turned back to Ascension Island as he said 'I am not putting my plane down as it is pretty dangerous' It was his second trip in command. Later we headed back and this time the flight was not as relaxed as every fifteen minutes the flight engineer and the loadmaster were going around checking the massive fuel tanks that had been installed to enable these planes to carry out their task. As we approached Ascension the loadmaster came around and told us to close up and get cosy towards the front of the plane. As you can imagine we just did as we were bid as we had been flying by this time for about thirty hours. The next thing we knew was that the nose went down and we were on the ground and as we disembarked, my cook (Knocker White) who was in front of me, enquired from the crewman at the foot of the steps why were we asked to close up towards the front of the plane, the response was "If we had not got some weight into the front of the plane we would have been flying into the blue yonder but don't worry sir, we look forward to seeing you tomorrow morning same time, same place and destination". One can just imagine the fear in us when we realised what we had been through and maybe the same next day but we could not let it overcome us as there was many times during that deployment when fear was real in the tasks that we had to carry out.

As I was thinking about fear I came across a couple of quotes:

Shirley McLaine says 'Fear makes strangers of people who would otherwise be friends

Jonathan Lockwood Hule wrote: "What if it were only an illusion? Perhaps life is not as threatening as it appears.

Perhaps the greatest threat to our serenity is our fear of the future, our fear of the unknown'

Perhaps as Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "The Only Thing We Have to Fear is Fear Itself."

And, my friends, as we enter a new year, let us use fear in a positive way if that is possible and let us use our faith as do the many pilots who fly into our airports. Faith in flying and the controlling of their aircraft by using and feeling the Elevator, Aileron and rudder to bring them and their passengers safely through landing and taking off.

Wishing everyone a good new year and as we say in Scotland 'Lang may yer Lum Reek'

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CANON MIKE VINCER

It was with great sadness that we received the news that our friend, Canon Mike Vincer, former chaplain of Manchester Airport, passed away peacefully on Saturday the 4th January. Mike was at home with his wife and surrounded by his family. Bette and her family are so happy for his life, grateful for their memories and so sad for his death.

Mike was ordained in 1980 and served the majority of his ministry in industrial chaplaincy. It was in 1992 he took up the position of senior chaplain at Manchester Airport and through his work developed it into a ecumenical multifaith chaplaincy supported by seven members of staff.

Mike played a very active part in the growth and development of the IACAC as we know it today. He became Secretary for several years and was elected President from 2003 to 2005. In 2001 he was made a Canon of Manchester Cathedral and in 2005 Canon Emeritus.

Mike's Funeral was at 11am on the 20th January at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Pickering, Nth Yorkshire. There were no flowers by request but donations were made to "Christian Aid" a Charity which Mike held in high regard. Many of his friends and former colleagues were present in the Church for the Service of celebration and Thanksgiving for his life. IACAC was formally represented by our President, Deacon Lewis Rose and Treasurer, Mrs Bev Mc Neely. We give thanks to God for his faithful service and now for his call to Glory. Thank you to the many people who sent messages of support to Mike's family and please continue to hold Bette, Louise, Fiona, Kirstie and their families in your prayers and may God uphold them at this time.

A REFLECTION

Have you ever taken the time to browse through the training and information documents we have on our website? Sometimes just reading through some of them helps refocus our thoughts on our role within the airport and reflect on our mission. Listed below are 8 points considered to be key elements of good airport chaplaincy. What do you think?

Airport chaplaincy seeks to reflect spiritual and ethical values in human life on the airport, offering a faith based ministry to employees, passengers and visitors- be they of any faith or none.

The mission is to identify, understand and share in the issues affecting airport employees, aircrew and passengers and to reveal God's presence in those situations through the chaplaincy presence.

The Chaplain seeks:

- 1. To be **visible**- a friendly, well known face at the airport, through personal workplace visiting, meeting with managers, attending union meetings as invited, and through other contacts, to be proactive in discerning need.*
 - 2. To be **available** to any airport employee at all times for work- related or personal needs; to listen, and to offer independent, confidential support and encouragement- showing concern and interest towards all.*
 - 3. To **walk** the terminal buildings regularly, enabling a response to the needs of passengers and those who work there.*
 - 4. To **communicate** with staff in the companies on site, and to enhance a sense of community at the airport.*
 - 5. To **respond** through leading the Chaplaincy/local emergency response team in the event of an aircraft or airport incident and to share in the work of the Airport Emergency Planning Group.*
 - 6. To **encourage** and support employee faith groups which may meet on the airport for prayer, study and discussion.*
 - 7. To **inform and challenge** all faith groups regarding faith and work links. Also to seek prayer support for the Airport chaplaincy ministry carried out on their behalf.*
 - 8. To **learn from** and share in the wider work of Industrial Mission.*
- The Airport is a "parish" often without a church and the chaplain has a duty to offer help to anyone who*

might be in need. It is "being there" that is important- the walking, talking, listening and "getting to know you" aspects of the work. An Airport Chaplain has time to spend with people. Reliability and regularity in attendance are the keys to good chaplaincy work. Chaplaincy is about people, not issues.

IACAC BOARD NEWS

2014 Membership Subscriptions are now due. The membership year is from the 1st January to the 31st December each year. Full membership is \$US60. Associate membership is now available for people interested in supporting airport chaplaincy. Associate members have no voting rights and pay a reduced membership subscription. Application for associate membership requires a letter of recommendation from the sponsoring chaplain to accompany the membership application form. The membership subscription for associate members is \$US30. Payment of all membership subscriptions can be made through the IACAC website: www.iacac.info using PayPal.

Executive Board Meeting- The IACAC Board will meet in Amsterdam on the 18th to the 20th February. Much of the meeting will be involved in discussing and reviewing the plans and preparation for our annual conference on 19th-24th August this year. Other items for discussion include matters arising from the Business Meeting in Atlanta, concerns raised by members and forward planning for our Association. Please pray for the Board that God will guide their discussions.

NEWS FROM OUR CHAPLAINCIES

Our colleague, Rev Ragvald Seierstad from Oslo Airport in Norway wrote to say he would complete his work at the airport at the end of December and take up an appointment as the Seamen's pastor in the Norwegian Seaman's Church in Pattaya, Thailand. This will be a big challenge for Ragvald and his family. He will have a staff of nine coworkers and will be visiting hospitals and prisons. Last year the staff there made 900 such visits and the church is much needed to give this assistance. Ragvald prays that God will bless all his colleagues in IACAC now and in the future. We pray that God will bless him and his family as they take up this new work.

Please continue to hold in your prayers Dr Francis Mutach Kapend and his family from the Lubumbashi Intl Airport in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as they mourn the loss of their son and comfort their daughter, his twin sister.

Fr Steve Teston and Ms Rebecca DeQuina from Manila Airport send their greetings and best wishes to everybody for a happy and successful 2014.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

You cannot live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.
John Wooden