

THE AMERICAN LEGION

National Chaplain

2018-2019 Year-end Report

Father Philip G. Salois, M.S.

I was appointed National Chaplain at the close of the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis held from 24-30 August 2018. I am a Roman Catholic Priest and a Missionary Priest of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette. I ordained in 1984. I am a Vietnam War Veteran having served as a rifleman with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade (Sep) (Light), Company A, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment from 1969 – 1970. I am a recipient of the Silver Star, the third highest award for bravery-in-action. In 1990 I took a commission as a 1st Lieutenant Priest-Chaplain in the United States Army Reserves assigned to the 455th Field Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island. When this unit inactivated, I transferred to several other units until I was assigned to the 883rd Medical Company (CSC) [combat stress control]. I resigned my commission in 2002 when the unit was deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 due to hardship to care for my ailing 84-year-old Mother. I am a 100% Service-Connected Disabled Veteran.

My priestly life has been dedicated in service to war veterans with a specialty in the spiritual healing of those suffering from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). I worked for the 27 years at the VA Boston Healthcare System as the Chief of Chaplain Service.

In November 1990 I founded the National Conference of Viet Nam Veteran Ministers – an organization designed for the spiritual healing for former military Chaplains and former enlisted and officers who served in war and later became ordained ministers. One of the main components of the NCVNVM was to offer spiritual healing weekend retreats for war veterans and their spouses and/significant others. Over the years NCVNVM offered over 25 of such retreats. NCVNVM's mission expanded to other English-speaking nations (United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand) to former war veterans and former Chaplains who were engaged in war and invited their membership. The NCVNVM became the ICWVM (International Conference of War Veteran Ministers).

Veteran Service Organization involvements:

- 1) The American Legion: Life Member since 1987 (32 continuous years) Massachusetts Post #20 and Massachusetts Department Chaplain since 1990 to present.
- 2) Veterans of Foreign Wars – Life Member and Chaplain to Rhode Island Post #11519.

- 3) Disabled American Veterans – Life Member and Chaplain to Rhode Island Chapter #12.
- 4) Vietnam Veterans of America – Life Member and National Chaplain since 1993 to present and President and Chapter Chaplain to VVA Chapter #818 for the past 15 years.
- 5) Military Order of Foreign Wars – National Chaplain since 2017 and Chaplain to the Rhode Island Commandery since 2016.
- 6) AMVETS and Catholic War Veterans – Life Member to both

Legion Activities as National Chaplain

November 11, 2018 – Veterans Day – offered prayers at Armed Forces Park, Woonsocket, Rhode Island and offered prayers at the dedication of the World War I memorial at the Rhode Island – Fairmount Post #85.

November 17, 2018 – Massachusetts Department Commander's banquet in Marlboro, Massachusetts and offered banquet prayers and Holy Mass for Catholic legionnaires.

March 11, 2019 – Celebrated Funeral Mass in the Fort Myers Post Chapel and interment of SGT Ed Ryan in Arlington National Cemetery.

March 23, 2019 -Attended the Team 100 celebration for the Post 107th banquet at the Crowne Plaza in Natick, Massachusetts and offered the invocation and benediction.

March 27, 2019 – Featured guest on PEGRI (local Rhode Island TV station)

March 29, 2019 – Vietnam Veteran Day – offered prayers at a ceremony at the State Veterans Home in Bristol, Rhode Island

April 13, 2019 – Attended and National Commander's testimonial and banquet in Marlborough, Massachusetts and offered invocation and benediction.

June 7-9, 2019 – Attended the Massachusetts Department Convention in Plymouth, Massachusetts and offered opening banquet prayers, convention prayer and Holy Mass on Sunday for Catholic legionnaires. As the Election Committee Chairman, I oversaw the elections of new Department officers.

August 2018 appointed National Chaplain at the 100th Annual Convention, Minneapolis; attended the ANAVICUS breakfast and Mass for Catholic members.

September 27-30, 2018 conducted the Department Chaplains Conference – Indianapolis along with the ALA National Chaplain and SAL National Chaplain – celebrated Mass for Catholic legionnaires

October 12-18, 2018 – Attended the Fall NEC Conference – delivered invocations and benedictions at all delegate meetings. Participated in the Americanism Commission meeting by offering the invocation and benediction at the opening and closing of the meeting. Attended the National Commander's reception and banquet offering pre-dinner and post-dinner prayers. Offered Mass on Sunday for Catholics legionnaires.

February 24-27, 2019 - Mid-Winter Conference – Washington, DC – attended the American Legion caucus in the Senate building. Delivered the invocation for the opening of Congress at the invitation of Congressman David Cicilline (D-RI) with Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) presiding. Attended and offered invocation and benediction for the National Commander's reception and banquet.

May 8-9, 2019 – Spring NEC Conference – Excused from attending due to an auto accident I sustained.

July 6, 2019 – Attended the Rhode Island Department Convention and offered invocation at the banquet.

July 20-23, 2019 – Boys Nation – Washington, DC – Celebrated Holy Mass on Sunday and conducted the Memorial Service for those who have died during the previous year. Laid a wreath along with the National Commander and two of the boys at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery

August 2, 2019 – Region 1 National Vice-Commander, Paul Spedalieri's Testimonial Reception and Banquet – offered the invocation and benediction.

August 23-29, 2019 – 101st National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana and offered opening Convention prayer, Memorial Service and prayers for the National Commanders reception and banquet.

In addition to my duties I sent 48 spiritual bouquets/Mass cards to 51 past National and Department Commanders who entered Post Everlasting during my tenure.

Respectfully submitted,

Father Philip G. Salois, M.S.

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