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TRAINING OF CHAPLAINS AS A FOUNDATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUAL SUPPORT IN MODERN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

The article explores the issue of chaplain training as a crucial element of the spiritual support system in Ukraine, particularly in the context of the ongoing armed conflict and societal transformation. The focus is placed on the role of chaplains in various spheres of public life, such as the military, police, hospitals, penitentiary institutions, and other social structures, as well as the importance of their professional training for the effective execution of spiritual care functions. Historically, Ukraine has deep-rooted chaplaincy traditions dating back to the era of Kyivan Rus. However, modern chaplaincy requires new approaches to training specialists capable of providing spiritual support in challenging conditions of war, stress, and crisis situations. The article identifies key stages in the development of military chaplaincy in Ukraine, particularly since 2014, when chaplaincy became an integral part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Special attention is given to the organization of educational programs for chaplains, the adaptation of training courses to meet the needs of both military and civilian institutions, and the establishment of ethical and professional standards for chaplain service. The article also emphasizes the significance of interfaith dialogue and cooperation among religious organizations in chaplain training to ensure maximum effectiveness in Ukraine's multi-confessional society. A particular focus is placed on the importance of chaplaincy work in post-traumatic stress conditions, as psychological support is one of the primary functions of chaplains. Additionally, the article examines the prospects for the further development of chaplaincy in Ukraine, particularly the need to improve the legal framework and create more effective mechanisms for providing spiritual support to all categories of citizens, especially those experiencing stress or war-related hardships. Chaplain training in the context of globalization and contemporary challenges is seen as a crucial step toward building a harmonious and stable society, where spiritual support plays a decisive role in maintaining the moral and psychological well-being of citizens.

Key words: chaplaincy, chaplain training, military chaplaincy, Armed Forces of Ukraine.

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ПІДГОТОВКА КАПЕЛАНІВ ЯК ОСНОВА РОЗВИТКУ ДУХОВНОЇ ПІДТРИМКИ В СУЧАСНОМУ УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ СУСПІЛЬСТВІ

У статті досліджується питання підготовки капеланів як важливого елементу системи духовної підтримки в Україні, зокрема в умовах сучасного збройного конфлікту та суспільної трансформації. Зосереджено увагу на ролі капеланів у різних сферах суспільного життя, як-от армія, поліція, лікарні, пенітенціарні установи та інші соціальні інституції, а також на важливості їх професійної підготовки для ефективного виконання функцій духовної опіки. В історичному контексті Україна має глибокі традиції капеланства, що зароджувалося ще в період Київської Русі. Однак сучасне капеланство потребує нових підходів до підготовки фахівців, здатних надавати духовну підтримку в складних умовах війни, стресу та кризових ситуацій. Визначено ключові етапи розвитку служби військових капеланів в Україні, зокрема з 2014 року, коли капеланство стало невід'ємною частиною структури Збройних Сил України. Окрема увага приділяється організації навчальних

програм для капеланів, адаптації навчальних курсів до потреб військових і громадянських установ, а також формуванню етики та професійних стандартів служіння. У статті також підкреслено важливість міжконфесійного діалогу та співпраці релігійних організацій у підготовці капеланів для забезпечення максимальної ефективності їх діяльності в умовах багатоконфесійного українського суспільства. Особливу увагу приділено також важливості капеланської діяльності в умовах посттравматичного стресу, оскільки психологічна підтримка є однією з основних функцій капеланів. Крім того, розглянуто перспективи розвитку капеланства в Україні, зокрема необхідність удосконалення правової бази та створення більш ефективних механізмів для забезпечення духовної підтримки всіх категорій громадян, зокрема тих, хто перебуває в умовах стресу чи війни. Підготовка капеланів в умовах глобалізації та сучасних викликів є важливим кроком до створення гармонійного та стабільного соціуму, де духовна підтримка відіграє вирішальну роль у підтримці морального та психологічного здоров'я громадян.

Ключові слова: капеланство, підготовка капеланів, військове капеланство, Збройні Сили України.

Relevance of the Research Topic. The training of chaplains is highly relevant for contemporary Ukrainian society, which is experiencing prolonged conflict, socio-political changes, and complex social processes. Chaplaincy plays a crucial role in supporting the moral and spiritual well-being of individuals facing stress and limited opportunities for normal social functioning, such as military personnel, prisoners, hospital patients, and others. The preparation of qualified chaplains capable of providing spiritual and psychological support in such conditions is essential for strengthening the moral foundations of Ukrainian society.

Through theological and practical training, chaplains develop the ability to offer support in crisis situations, enhancing not only ecclesiastical ministry but also the social aspect of spiritual care. This contributes to increasing public trust in religious institutions and chaplaincy as a whole. In the context of military conflicts and social transformations, the chaplaincy institute becomes even more significant, as it provides spiritual support that becomes an integral part of the lives of both individuals and entire communities.

Given the growing demand for qualified personnel capable of working in specific conditions, chaplain training is also crucial for creating a personnel reserve prepared to serve in state institutions and public organizations. This ensures a high level of spiritual assistance and enables a rapid response to changing social needs.

Thus, the issue of chaplain training is not only of theoretical importance but also of practical significance for maintaining the stability and spiritual well-being of Ukrainian society, which is undergoing dynamic changes and facing new challenges.

Key Research Findings. The history of chaplaincy dates back to the 4th century when

a young Roman soldier, Martin, serving in Gaul, performed a noble act he shared his cloak with a beggar. This moment became a turning point in his spiritual journey, leading him to faith in Christ and a life dedicated to serving the less fortunate. Eventually, he became the Bishop of Tours and earned the title Martin the Merciful for his selfless aid to those in need.

His cloak (Latin: Cappa) became such a significant relic that the French kings built a special sanctuary, the Chapel (Cappella), to preserve it. From this, the term chaplain (Cappellanus) emerged originally referring to the guardian of Saint Martin's cloak and later extending to clergy who cared for specific groups of people.

Today, chaplains serve in the military, police, hospitals, penitentiary institutions, educational establishments, sports clubs, and other social structures. Their mission remains unchanged: to provide spiritual support, moral guidance, and assistance to those in need. A chaplain is not just a clergyman but a person who helps others find faith, hope, and purpose, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Military chaplaincy in Ukraine has deep historical roots, closely tied to various state formations and armies in which Ukrainians served. For centuries, spiritual mentors have accompanied warriors, providing them with moral and religious support, helping them maintain their strength of spirit during the most challenging moments of military service.

Ukrainian chaplains have served in various armies throughout history. In the Polish Army, Ukrainian clergy supported believers among military units within the Polish forces. In the Army and Navy of the Russian Empire (before 1917), chaplains conducted religious ceremonies,

preached, and supported soldiers during military campaigns. In the Army of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (before 1918), Ukrainian military priests served among Ukrainians fighting in the Austrian army, preserving their national identity and spiritual connection to their people. The Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (1914–1918) had spiritual mentors who played a crucial role in fostering national consciousness and maintaining the fighting spirit of the riflemen. The Sich Riflemen Corps of the Ukrainian People's Republic (1917–1921) had chaplains who served alongside soldiers, conducting worship services, confessions, and blessings before battles. In the Ukrainian Galician Army of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (1918–1921), chaplains not only performed religious ceremonies but also served as moral authorities for the troops. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (1943–1954) had chaplains who operated in secrecy, providing spiritual support to fighters, helping them remain faithful to their convictions and their struggle for Ukraine's independence.

In modern Ukraine, military chaplaincy continues to develop. The positions of military clergy are officially recognized within the peacekeeping contingents of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, participating in UN-led missions. Chaplains play a vital role in maintaining the morale of service members, fostering their spiritual growth, and enhancing psychological resilience.

Military chaplains are not just church ministers but also advisors, mentors, and friends to soldiers who face daily challenges in military service. Their mission remains unchanged: to stand by the military, support them in their most difficult moments, and help them preserve their faith in justice and victory.

Chaplaincy is a unique branch of pastoral ministry that combines religious care with social and psychological support for various groups of people. Its distinct feature is that chaplains provide their service outside the local church, assisting those who, due to circumstances, cannot independently seek spiritual guidance. A chaplain is a clergyman representing a specific religious denomination, authorized to conduct pastoral ministry in state, military, medical, and other institutions.

A chaplain is not only a spiritual mentor but also a mediator in state-religious relations. Their

activities are coordinated with other chaplains both within the country and at the international level. Through a special ordination, a chaplain receives a blessing to fulfill their mission, which includes spiritual guidance, psychological support, and social service.

Chaplaincy is directed toward individuals in need of spiritual assistance, regardless of their religious affiliation or lack of faith. Their ministry is focused on places where people face challenging life circumstances, such as military units, hospitals, prisons, rehabilitation centers, and educational institutions.

A fundamental aspect of chaplaincy is its integrated approach: addressing spiritual needs also involves assisting with basic material necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter. However, any aid is provided without coercion or pressure to accept religious beliefs.

While pastors and chaplains perform similar functions, the key difference lies in the location and format of their ministry. A pastor serves within a religious community, focusing on mentorship and preaching, whereas a chaplain operates outside the church, supporting people in difficult circumstances, often among individuals of different faiths or non-believers.

A chaplain is accountable both to the religious organization that delegates them and to the administration of the institution where they serve. Their role is not only to teach but also to listen, understand the needs of those in their care, and respond to their requests.

The role of chaplains is particularly crucial in armed conflicts. Under International Humanitarian Law, chaplains, like medical personnel, are classified as non-combatants, meaning they do not participate in combat and cannot be taken as prisoners of war. They provide spiritual support to service members, helping them cope with the psychological challenges of war and post-traumatic stress.

Chaplaincy is a vital component of a society's spiritual life, combining pastoral ministry, social assistance, and psychological support. Through their mission, chaplains help people maintain faith, find meaning in life, and overcome difficult life situations, regardless of their religious beliefs.

A chaplain is a spiritual mentor, a guardian of the human soul, who serves as a moral, emotional, and spiritual healer. Their primary

mission is to provide support to those in need, helping individuals overcome difficulties, find comfort, and cope with life's challenges. While this role may seem straightforward, in practice, it demands great responsibility, deep empathy, and professional skills, as a chaplain works with the most intimate part of a person their soul.

Counseling and spiritual guidance form the foundation of chaplaincy. The most important principle a chaplain must follow is to do no harm. Their mission is not only to offer advice but also to create a safe space where individuals can openly share their concerns and receive moral support.

A chaplain's work is guided by two key principles:

Being present. Standing by those who are experiencing hardship, loss, or internal struggles. Supporting groups of people facing emotionally challenging situations.

Listening. Paying full attention to everyone seeking help. Devoting as much time as necessary to understand the problem and provide meaningful support.

A chaplain does not merely listen to a person but deeply analyzes their words, mood, and emotions. It is crucial not only to hear but also to understand. Here are some key aspects of effective listening:

- Demonstrating genuine interest in the speaker without interrupting them.
- Paying attention not only to the content of words but also to the person's emotional state.
- Responding gently and without judgment to avoid shocking or causing further pain.
- Maintaining a balance between understanding and moral principles: a chaplain does not condemn a person but also does not justify their sins.
- Adhering to the principle of confidentiality, safeguarding the secrecy of confessions and personal conversations.
- Chaplaincy is based not only on spiritual beliefs but also on compliance with legal norms and moral-ethical standards. A chaplain is obliged to:
 - Act within the framework of the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, adhering to legal order and church law.
 - Respect freedom of religion for every individual, without imposing personal beliefs on those who do not belong to any faith.
 - Treat representatives of other religious denominations with tolerance, avoiding any

actions that could incite religious hostility or intolerance.

- Respect state confidentiality and maintain the secrecy of information in accordance with the law.

- Guarantee equality among all believers, regardless of their denominational affiliation, if they seek spiritual assistance.

- Refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of organizations where they serve, while ensuring that the management of these institutions does not influence internal religious matters or interfaith relations.

- Coordinate the time and place of religious services, meetings, and other spiritual events with the administration of the institution where they work.

- Avoid proselytism-the deliberate recruitment of new followers at the expense of members of other religious denominations.

- Show respect for religious buildings and property, coordinating their use with the relevant institutions.

A chaplain not only helps a person find answers to spiritual questions but also provides support during life's most challenging moments. They stand by during times of grief, loss, uncertainty, and fear, helping individuals find balance and peace. Their service is based on faith, mercy, and deep respect for each individual. Thus, chaplaincy counseling and soul care is not just a professional activity, but a life calling that requires wisdom, patience, and boundless love for people.

Chaplaincy is an essential component of spiritual, moral, and psychological support for individuals in difficult life circumstances, particularly in military units, healthcare facilities, penitentiary institutions, and more. Carrying out this mission requires the chaplain to have a high level of spiritual preparation, moral resilience, and the ability to effectively interact with people of different religious beliefs and worldviews. Those who seek to become chaplains are selected from among the faithful of their religious community.

The main criteria for a candidate include: Experience in serving people, which involves active participation in spiritual-educational and social activities; Having spiritual education, which ensures the necessary level of knowledge to carry out pastoral work; A recommendation from a pastor or bishop, confirming moral resilience,

spiritual maturity, and readiness to serve outside the local church.

In addition to their primary spiritual duties, a chaplain is required to undergo specialized training, which allows them to better understand the specifics of the institution or organization where they will serve. This ensures the effective fulfillment of their responsibilities, as chaplaincy involves a wide range of tasks aimed at providing spiritual support, moral guidance, and social assistance.

The chaplain's main duties include conducting services, liturgies, festive and memorial rituals, as well as organizing weekly Bible study sessions and personal soul-care meetings. Furthermore, the chaplain performs important sacraments such as the Lord's Supper (Communion), baptism, prayer services with the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and also takes care of arranging and restoring spaces for worship and spiritual discussions.

Special attention is given to conducting ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, and participating in oaths of allegiance, graduation ceremonies, and award presentations. The chaplain also provides social support, helps those in need, oversees adherence to moral and ethical norms among their charges, and develops and implements educational programs to familiarize individuals with the basics of Christian doctrine and morality. Additionally, the chaplain conducts classes on moral and patriotic education, organizes visits to religious institutions for those interested, and runs programs aimed at preventing negative social phenomena such as alcoholism, drug addiction, suicidal tendencies, and divorce. The chaplain also contributes to strengthening families and raising children.

An important aspect of chaplaincy is the pastoral care of the sick and hospitalized individuals, providing them with moral support and comfort. The chaplain also participates in court hearings and, when necessary, offers support to those incarcerated in penitentiary institutions. Their role also extends to assisting local government authorities in the organization of burial sites. Overall, chaplaincy plays a significant role in maintaining spiritual and moral stability in society, offering essential assistance in various areas of life and supporting people in challenging situations. The chaplain is responsible not only for the spiritual well-being of military personnel, prisoners, or

patients in medical institutions but also for their families, providing them with spiritual support and hope.

In their work, chaplains interact with the administration of the institutions where they serve, as well as with representatives from other religious organizations and fellow chaplains, to coordinate and effectively carry out their mission. The collaboration of chaplains includes organizing and conducting religious events, services, talks, marriage ceremonies, funerals, and other pastoral rituals; arranging spaces for spiritual service and religious rites; and distributing religious literature among those interested. Thus, chaplaincy plays a key role in providing spiritual, moral, and social support to various segments of the population, helping to strengthen faith, resilience, and the harmony of social relations.

Chaplaincy is an important component of spiritual support in various areas of public life, much like pastoral or priestly ministry in the church. The chaplain carries out their mission in accordance with the laws of the country in which they perform their activities. This may include both citizens of the state and foreigners temporarily residing in the country who are obliged to comply with its laws.

In Ukrainian legislation, the term "chaplain" is officially mentioned only once in the text of the Law "On the Symbolism of the Red Cross and Red Crescent". At the same time, issues related to chaplaincy are gradually gaining official legal status through relevant regulatory acts and government initiatives.

Since March 17, 2009, the Council on Pastoral (Chaplain) Care has operated under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine a consultative advisory body that unites representatives from nine denominations. This was an important step towards organizing and officially recognizing the role of chaplains within military structures.

In this regard, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine has adopted several documents regulating the activities of military chaplains:

- Directive No. D-25 of the Minister of Defense of Ukraine dated April 21, 2006 – establishes the procedure for meeting the religious needs of military personnel.

- Memorandum on Cooperation in Pastoral Care of Ukrainian Armed Forces Personnel (November 10, 2008) defines the principles

of cooperation between the Ministry of Defense and religious organizations.

- Regulation on the Council for Pastoral Care under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (Order No. 115, March 17, 2009) establishes the Council as the official body for coordinating chaplaincy activities.

- Concept of Pastoral Care in the Ukrainian Armed Forces (Order No. 220, April 22, 2011) regulates the basic principles of military chaplaincy.

- Code of Military Chaplain (Adopted on June 5, 2013, at a meeting of the Council for Pastoral Care).

In Ukraine, there have been repeated attempts to establish chaplaincy as a formal institution within the legislative framework. The latest of these steps was the introduction of bill No. 3143 on August 29, 2013, which proposed the introduction of the chaplaincy institution in military and law enforcement structures (Nepipenko, 2022).

Additionally, a draft law titled "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine (Regarding the Regulation of Chaplains' Activities in the Bodies and Institutions Under the Jurisdiction of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine)" No. 3233 was introduced. This document aimed to establish a prison chaplaincy system in Ukraine similar to those operating in many European countries. Another important draft law was No. 2380a, which proposed the recognition of education and academic degrees issued by religious educational institutions. All these legislative initiatives were planned to be considered by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in February 2014.

Although chaplaincy in Ukraine still lacks sufficient legislative support, it is actively developing within military structures, law enforcement agencies, and the penitentiary system. The growing need for spiritual support for military personnel, prisoners, hospital patients, and other categories of the population fosters the further development of the chaplaincy institution and its integration into the legal sphere of the country. Thus, chaplaincy is not only a spiritual mission but also a socially important institution that is gradually finding its place in Ukraine's legislative framework, gaining the status of a necessary and officially recognized service (Sahan & Harat, 2023).

Chaplaincy is a specific area of activity focused on providing spiritual and moral-psychological

support to individuals in difficult life circumstances. This can include situations related to increased risks to health and life, as well as significant physical and psychological stress. In such circumstances, the presence of a chaplain becomes especially important, as they provide primary rehabilitation and spiritual support for those experiencing emotional suffering.

Unlike a professional psychologist, a chaplain carries out their work primarily based on religious principles and teachings from the Holy Scriptures. Their mission is not only to provide emotional support but also to offer spiritual guidance and strengthen the moral foundation of an individual in critical conditions.

Chaplaincy is governed by relevant internal and state regulations. A chaplain is accountable both to the leadership of their religious denomination and to the administration of the institution where they serve. If a chaplain's activities do not meet the requirements of denominational or organizational standards, their powers can be terminated by the decision of the appropriate governing body or in accordance with the laws of Ukraine (Kryvenko, 2014).

Chaplaincy activities can be carried out in military, specialized, or penitentiary institutions, as well as in companies and organizations where there is a demand for spiritual support. The main mechanisms for involving a chaplain are initiated by individuals who need pastoral care. They have the right to appeal to the institution's leadership with a request to facilitate access to chaplaincy support. For example, military personnel of a specific religious denomination may initiate the appointment of a chaplain for a particular military unit or garrison, enabling them to exercise their right to freedom of religion and pastoral care.

Chaplaincy is based on adhering to high ethical standards that require respect for each individual's dignity, regardless of their religious beliefs or professional status. A fundamental rule for a chaplain is the principle: «Every citizen is, first and foremost, a human being to me, then a specialist, and only after that a representative of a particular faith». This principle emphasizes the impartiality of the chaplain and their readiness to offer support to anyone in need, regardless of their religious views. The importance of chaplaincy increases in the context of armed conflicts, crisis

situations, and social challenges, where spiritual support plays a key role in maintaining the moral and psychological health of society (Kalenichenko, 2017).

Modern Ukraine requires spiritual support in all areas of public life, particularly within law enforcement and state institutions, where access to religious communities may be limited. The introduction of the chaplaincy institution ensures the constant presence of the Word of God in environments where people especially need moral and spiritual support.

It is important for the Christian community to clearly understand the significance of chaplaincy service and actively support its implementation at the level of state policy. Constructive dialogue between the church and the country's leadership will help create favorable conditions for chaplains' service, which, in turn, will strengthen the positions of Protestant churches in Ukraine.

The presence of chaplains in state structures can have a significant positive impact on society, contributing to the reduction of corruption, unjust court rulings, violations of service ethics, and non-statutory relationships in military formations. The spiritual influence of chaplains will foster the moral improvement of society, promoting the principles of honesty, justice, and mutual respect (Dolganova, 2022).

To effectively perform chaplain duties, a solid theological and practical foundation is essential. The Kyiv Theological Seminary offers the "Pastoral-Chaplaincy Leadership" program, aimed at preparing qualified chaplains. This program invites pastors, church leaders, and staff members from Christian missions and organizations, regardless of age or prior experience.

The program provides the necessary knowledge and skills for chaplaincy work, forming spiritual mentors capable of supporting military personnel, law enforcement officers, prisoners, the sick, and other individuals who require moral and psychological assistance (Stupa, 2021).

The development of chaplaincy is an important step toward strengthening the spiritual and moral foundations of Ukrainian society. With well-trained chaplains, the Word of God can effectively reach even those areas where spiritual support is most needed. The chaplaincy program is a crucial element of spiritual and social service, aimed at addressing the religious needs of individuals

in specific conditions that limit their ability to live a full social and spiritual life. The relevance of this program is determined by several key aspects.

Chaplaincy provides the opportunity to preach the Word of God and offer spiritual support to those facing difficult life situations, including military personnel, prisoners, hospital patients, and other citizens. The program is designed to ensure the qualified preparation of chaplains, using the experience of local churches and public organizations in Ukraine. This contributes to the more effective performance of chaplain duties and the provision of high-quality spiritual support.

In the event that the chaplaincy institution is legislatively formalized within law enforcement agencies, there will be a need to quickly fill vacant positions. The program helps form a prepared base of certified specialists who will be ready to carry out their duties in accordance with state requirements. With qualified preparation and official recognition of chaplains, their authority within public organizations and among law enforcement leadership will grow. This will foster greater trust in chaplaincy services and enhance their integration into various spheres of public life.

Conclusions. The training of chaplains is a crucial step in ensuring the effective fulfillment of their duties, as it encompasses both theological and practical aspects of ministry. Today, chaplaincy plays an important role in situations where access to religious resources is limited for individuals in difficult life circumstances (military personnel, prisoners, hospital patients). It contributes to the development of the spiritual and moral health of people who often do not have the opportunity to receive religious support in other forms. The chaplain training program fosters the development of practical chaplaincy, which meets the needs of modern Ukrainian society. As a result, chaplains are able to effectively perform their duties in various sectors, including military and law enforcement structures. In light of the possibility of legal recognition of the chaplaincy institution within the security forces, preparing a reserve of qualified personnel is crucial for quickly filling vacant positions. This also helps increase the authority of chaplains, which has a positive impact on the integration of chaplaincy into various spheres of public life.

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