



Too many members of our military have returned from battle with physical, psychological and spiritual wounds that impact their re-integration into their families and our local communities. Forever changed and still battling the war they cannot leave behind, too many wind up homeless, divorced and estranged from their families, becoming substance abusers, without jobs, in prison, or struggling with depression and suicide.

Statistics ...

- 75% of military have deployed multiple times
- 52% of the military are between 18 – 24 yrs old
- Over 20% of veterans suffer from Post Traumatic Stress or Traumatic Brain Injury
- 18 – 23% of veterans meet criteria for Substance Abuse Disorder
- 13% of the homeless are veterans ... of that number ~ 10% are female with significant numbers having children
- Nearly 33% of female soldiers have been sexually assaulted or raped while in the military
- One military member commits suicide every 18 hours ... 18 veterans commit suicide each day
- Over 10 % of our prison populations and parolees are veterans

For more information, please contact:

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Jennifer joined the Department of Formation and Leadership in 2011, after serving in the Office of Catechesis for the Diocese of Trenton, NJ and as a pastoral associate in her home parish of Saint Paul in Princeton, NJ. She has a background in psychology, special education and pastoral ministry.

C. Russell "Russ" Ditzel, MDiv

Outreach Coordinator

Russ is the father of both a son and son-in-law who served deployment tours with the US Navy in Iraq and Kuwait. His professional background combines pastoral ministry, extensive corporate and consulting firm experience across multiple industries. He and his wife Marian are parishioners of St. John Neumann, Califon, NJ. Russ is also the Executive Director of the non-profit organization, Ministry of Compassion: Interfaith Military Family Services.

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APOSTOLATE
for
MILITARY
and

VETERAN
FAMILIES

Jesus said,

“I came that you might have life in abundance.” (John 10:10)

Wellness enhancement is vitally important to all our military members and families, even those not facing critical life issues. All veterans return home impacted in some way. Some return physically wounded. Others exhibit symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, or Military Sexual Trauma. Others seem physically unharmed but bear unseen mental, emotional, or spiritual wounds. Some have both. This inner woundedness has been described as a “wounding of the soul.”

Faith-based organizations have been recognized as a particularly valuable source of encouragement to those needing medical / psychological support.

Supported faith plays a critical role as a source of hope and well-being for them, their family, friends and community members whose lives intertwine with theirs.

Filled with the Spirit of Jesus, WE are his word of encouragement and hope, forgiveness and healing, love and strength to all in need at our moment in history.

Providing humanitarian, pastoral and spiritual care in local communities ...

The Apostolate for MILITARY AND VETERAN FAMILIES (AMVF) seeks to:

- **Increase awareness of the need for outreach to military and veteran families**
- **Establish a contact person in every parish for dissemination of information and networking purposes**
- **Share Christian hope with those on the margins or disconnected from their faith communities**
- **Develop referral capacities to other military, Guard & Reserve, veteran, community and faith-based resources**
- **Partner with local agencies in providing pastoral care and training for parishes developing outreach ministries**
- **Sponsor Retreats and Recollection Days for Military individuals and families**
- **Share Best Practices with other diocesan offices and service providers seeking to serve our military and veteran families**

MISSION STATEMENT

In May, 2013, the Apostolate for Military and Veteran Families was founded to address the various emotional, spiritual and pastoral needs of those men and women who have defended our country in all branches of military service.

As an initiative promoting the goals of the New Evangelization, the Apostolate works in collaboration with partner organizations and established veteran services that seek to heal spiritual wounds and promote the dignity of the person at all levels.

WHAT IS AN APOSTOLATE?

“Since the works of charity and mercy express the most striking testimony of the Christian life, apostolic formation should lead also to the performance of these works so that the faithful may learn from childhood on to have compassion for their brethren and to be generous in helping those in need.”

(DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF THE LAITY, 1965.)

By organizing together to share their God-given spiritual gifts and natural talents to the service of each other, members of the Church form a particular apostolate in order to spread the message of salvation, bring holiness and renewal into daily lives and compassionately serve as disciples of Jesus Christ.