

NARRATIVE TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

TO

CHAPLAIN (CPT) STEPHEN MCDERMOTT

Chaplain (CPT) Stephen C. McDermott, a U.S. Army Reserve Chaplain, served as an Individual Augmentee, for Combined Joint Task Force-1 (CJTF-1) in Regional Command East (RC-East) while deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan from 15 April 2012 to 05 April 2013 in direct support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM XIII (OEF XIII).

Chaplain McDermott's self-less service and staunch commitment to provide only the best ministry were clearly evident by his impact to hundreds of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines, and authorized civilians. He diligently served the Bagram community by celebrating over eight Masses and personally leading 10 separate Catholic programs per week. Always the team player, he proved instrumental by bringing vital Catholic ministry to 173rd Airborne, RC-South, and to coalition partners. Chaplain McDermott also organized the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) on BAF for Service Members and authorized civilians to enter into the Catholic Faith.

Chaplain McDermott's planning and leadership skills were evident to senior leader chaplains in theater. The 5th Corps Command Chaplain chose Chaplain McDermott to be the lead planner for the theater wide Catholic Priest Conference conducted on BAF. In addition, he personally planned, organized and led five major seasonal chapel programs which were all attended with standing room only and praised by several high ranking field grade officers.

Chaplain McDermott's ingenuity, foresight, and dedication to excellence were unparalleled in revamping the Enduring Faith Chapel to better serve CJTF-1 and the entire BAF community. Immediately upon his arrival Chaplain McDermott reorganized the entire chapel which included: building new storage systems; reorganizing and inventorying the sound room and all Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim ecclesiastical supplies. In addition, he is directly responsible for planning, coordinating, and directing the installation of a new back porch and fire pit; revamping the chapel lighting and central air; installing a movie screen; building a nativity scene; painting parking lines to avoid parking confusion from surrounding offices; and installing new signs advertising the chapel. This unilateral effort on his part greatly enhanced the chapel usage for over seven separate services serving over 1,200 Service Members and authorized civilians.

CH (CPT) McDermott's outstanding spiritual leadership and performance of duty were vital to the success of the Religious Support Mission and the Combined Joint Task Force-1. His level of performance and commitment to mission success are rarely seen in company grade chaplains. His contribution is in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the Chaplain Corps, Combined Joint Task Force-1, and the United States Central Command.