

AMI CONFERENCE REPORT OF WORKING GROUPS 29 SEPTEMBER 2006

NOTES FOR COMD KA

WORKING GROUP I: THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER AND THE FAMILY

- **Consequences of physical separation**
 - Disintegration of social life, infidelity, absence of parental love of both parents for the children, cultural shock (change of decision making role for wife in husband's absence) and depression, anxiety
- **Challenges to christian life**
 - Lengthy hours on duty, frequent postings, easy access to luxury items (duty free alcohol and tobacco), mixed marriages, same sex marriages, domestic violence, IT explosion
- **Possible solutions**
 - Counseling services (including drug abuse and alcoholism programmes), family life education, spouses' formation programmes, closer family supervision (direct interaction with children to control negative effects of internet and TV and re-introducing reading culture, sports, games, community development) and competent family planning education.

WORKING GROUP II: THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN AND A MILITARY LEADER

- The military leader requires a well balanced mixture of legal authority, charisma and professional knowledge. Christian values enhance his leadership qualities and guide him better when faced with ethical dilemmas. He should strive to live by the principle of "**servus servorum**".

CHALLENGES:

Abuse of power
Lack of vision
Absence of core values

Lack of spiritual life

Excessive secularization
Pressure to conform
Informal hierarchies of influence
Pressures of personal life

Conflict between leading and serving

SOLUTIONS

Education for self reflection
Build capacity to define goals
Teach Biblical underpinnings
of core values
Encourage role modeling of
Virtues and values
Elevate the role of Chaplaincy
Flexibility with integrity
Provide better alternatives
Accept openness as three
dimensional human being
Humility and good example

WORKING GROUP III: THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER AND THE FAMILY

- **Differences of approach** to Christianity and religion in the military exist among countries i.e. Europe: individuality is emphasized, religion is **illegal** in the Armed Forces.
- Soldiers live **outside military barracks** and cannot be easily influenced by the Chaplains.
- Secularization has **downgraded the administration** of sacraments.
- **Shortage of priests** in Europe and Christian **population is shrinking** (most Catholics are traditionally so by birth and not new conversions).
- **Low funding** for AMI so few country members.
- Urgent need to **support through AMI** catholic lay associations e.g. CMA, CWA, Couples for Christ and Marriage Encounter.