



Season's greetings



Season's greetings from the RMR Chaplain Leadership team! Several times a year, we send out a special letter to all members of the region. Please join us as we recognize this special time of year.

With the holiday season upon us, we look forward to gathering with family and friends for celebration. The major holidays we usually celebrate/observe are Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas; one of gratitude, one of commemoration and one of new birth. In this season of joy and gathering I would also like us to focus on the individual.

Respect is one of our core values. Who and what do we respect? Tradition, the organization, service, values, and most importantly, our people - particularly the individual. Not limited to our fellow CAP members, our values and respect should extend to all those with whom we interact. Every person we come in contact with deserves our respect. How we show that respect is a question we all might ask.

It's easy to love our neighbors, friends, colleagues, etc.- particularly if they share the same/similar values, standards, and beliefs. With many things in common, we find it easy to appreciate their contributions, their friendship and our relationship. We esteem these people as important to us, warts and all. Their opinions and actions resonate with us so we treat them well. We know them.

But all of us have so many more folks within our sphere of influence - most of whom we do not know or know well. How do we show them respect? In my experience, sometimes it is easier to be curt, less kind, impatient, and maybe even short tempered, particularly to those whose job it is to provide us a service. What we don't know is what they may have experienced that day. Holiday stress, mistreatment by a previous customer, trouble at home – all might produce a perceptively rude or sad affect when we encounter them. And, it might be us! With lots on our mind, being good to others may not be a high priority. One bad mood certainly can beget the same response.

Do we practice being calm when we are about to interact with those we don't know? If we can be aware of our state of mind and present our best selves, we will encounter others in a positive and respectful way. The holidays can often raise our stress levels, which in turn affects both us and those around us. Here are some thoughts about lowering that stress.

1. Allow yourself time to be early in case of delays. Don't be "Just in time."
2. Prioritize your to do list. Don't be in a hurry.
3. Practice patience.
4. Smile at others even when in a bad mood.
5. Recognize that others have similar stressors.

There is a scripture in my faith tradition that sums all of this up. Paraphrased it says we should treat people with patience, kindness and love unfeigned. I would challenge you to take this counsel to heart and have a blessed holiday season.

On behalf of our team, Ch David Knight, Region Chaplain; Ch Camille Barlow, Deputy Region Chaplain; and Region CDI Christel Houston, I wish you the happiest and safest season of joy.

Ch Jeff Johnson, Assistant Region Chaplain
Edited by Maj Jen Knellinger, XO, RMR

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