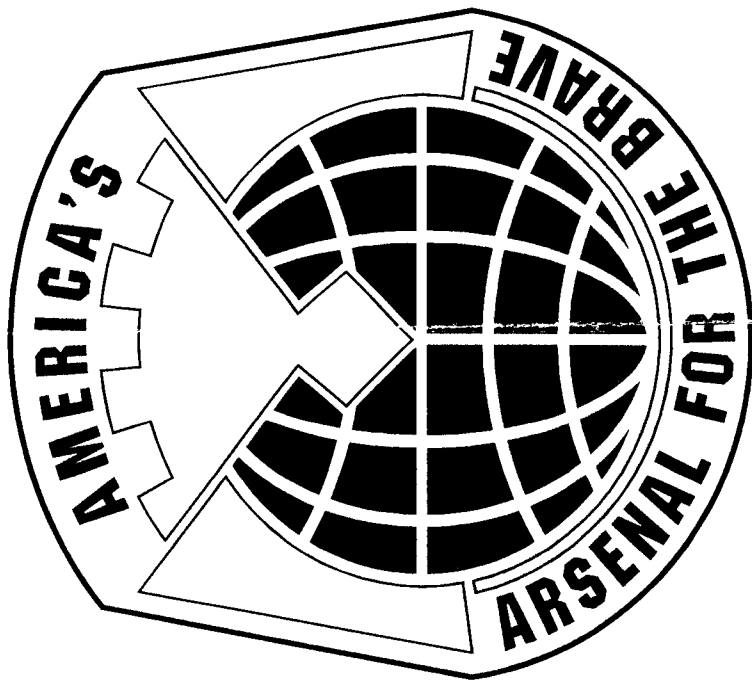


# Spiritual Thought For Sunday

Army Materiel Command Headquarters

2 August 2009



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## Spiritual Thought for Sunday

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Command Chaplain's Office  
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### Troop Greeters

**Scripture:** "With great power the apostles continued to testify....and much grace was upon them all." Acts 4:33

Warm handshakes by a line of red-shirted senior citizens welcomed us to Bangor, Maine's, International Airport terminal. The Continental United States Replacement Center (CRC) "Freedom Flight" was en route from Ft. Benning to Kuwait. At Bangor, we deplaned while the DC-10 was fueled and serviced.

I talked with Korean War Veteran William Dean. His son, a Chaplain Assistant in the Air National Guard, served in Saudi Arabia and most recently Operation Iraqi Freedom. Greeter Don Crosby has been welcoming Armed Forces personnel since Desert Storm. Jeanne and Marion Rudnicki, and Loretta Ryan served coffee and offered free cell phone use for calls home. Mr. Paul MacInnis, another greeter, drives up from Boston and stays at a local hotel, just so he can be a part of the Bangor team.

These troop greeters brightened our flight. Their positive impact is shown in so many ways, including the following:

- **Identification.** Most of the greeters wore red shirts in recognition of "Red Shirt Friday." This initiative seeks to honor the "blood of American Armed Forces shed on our behalf" related Mr. Dean.
- **Appreciation.** The enthusiasm and welcoming spirit of the greeters communicated the

thanks and gratefulness of the American people. This positive acknowledgement and gratitude was a heartwarming experience to many of us taking the CRC flight--whether going for a short stay or on a 6 to 12 month long deployment.

- **Support.** In his book entitled War in the Garden of Eden (NY: Seabury, 2008), Chaplain Frank Wismer dedicates his work to the greeters from Maine. In 1991, returning from Desert Storm, Frank's unit was treated like celebrities. Four times since, he's flown through Bangor en route to and from Southwest Asia. Writes Chaplain Wismer, "The lovely people of Bangor have welcomed me each time. They have given flesh to the notion that America supports its men and women in the armed services and made that phrase much more than a cliché. It is to them that I dedicate this book." (p. iv).

Whether we serve in the furnace-like heat of the Middle East, on the factory floor at an Arsenal or Depot, or within Headquarters offices and cubicles, may we continue to be energized by the example of the Troop Greeters.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we thank you for the tangible demonstrations of public support given individual members of our Armed Forces and Department of Defense civilians in these days. Greetings and affirmations in airports, hotels and within cities and towns inspire and uplift us. May we also realize the encouragement voiced on our behalf from houses of worship throughout our great land. Continue to guard our deployed forces. Bless Family Members who patiently await their safe return. Be close to those injured in combat, and all of us who grieve the untimely passing of those killed in defense of these United States of America. AMEN.