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Chief of Chaplains Maj. Gen. Paul K. Hurley presents the Order of Aaron and Hur to Chap.(retired Col.) Gregory J. D'Emma. Knights of Columbus stand by during the award of the prestigious honor, following Mass at the Army War College Memorial Chapel, Feb. 23.



March 2, 2017 -- Throughout 37 years as a Catholic priest, Chaplain and retired Col. Gregory D'Emma compiled quite a few stories and sermons to share. Through seven years as chaplain to the Army War College and Carlisle Barracks community, he developed quite a list of friends and colleagues to whom he served as priest, mentor, advisor and friend.

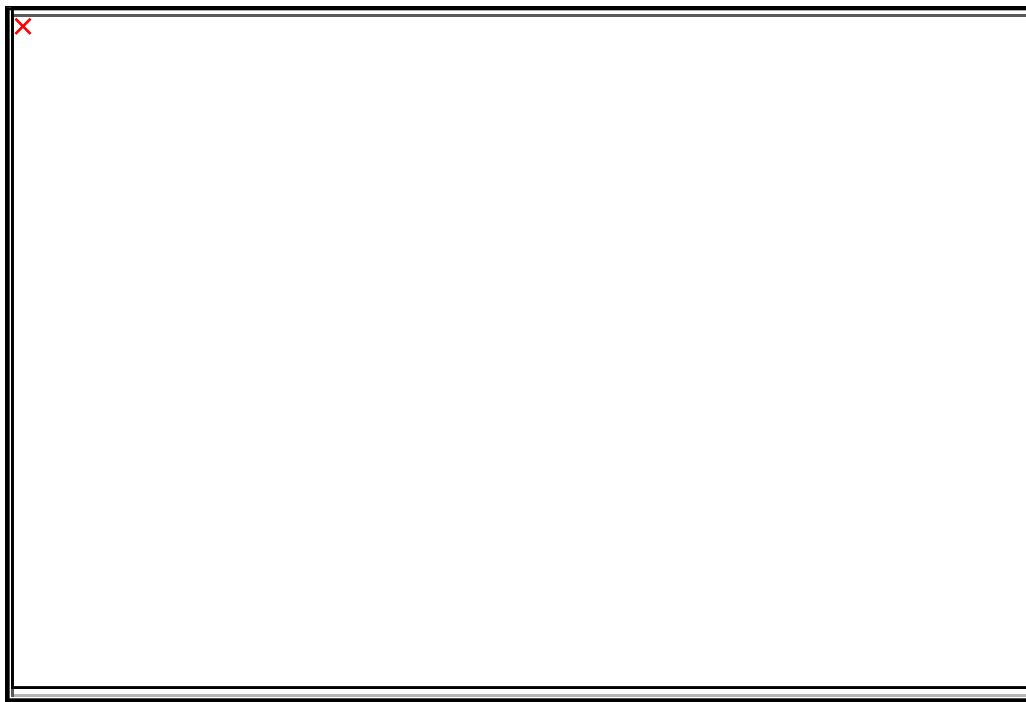
D'Emma responded with the spirit of the Aaron and Hur award when Chief of Chaplains Maj. Gen. Paul K. Hurley presented to him "the most perfect recognition for Father D'Emma's enduring devotion and service," at a ceremony following Mass at the Army War College Memorial Chapel here, Feb. 23.

"As important as it is to hold up the staff over your head, as Moses did, more important are the people who hold up the person holding the staff and I thank them, sincerely and from the bottom of my heart for all they have done for me and the Chaplain Corps," said D'Emma.

The citation for the Order of Aaron and Hur tells the story of Moses, prayer, and the Israelites. As long as Moses held up his arms with the staff of God in prayer, his people prevailed against the Amalekite warriors. But when he lowered weary arms to rest, the soldiers of Amalek prevailed. Noting this, Moses's top leaders Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on; they stood on each side, holding his arms steady and high. The Israelites overcame the army of Amalek.

"For enduring devotion and service ... this award recognizes the significant contributions that you have consistently and generously made for years in support of the Army Chaplain Corps. A caring and compassionate leader, you modeled technical excellence, exceptional wisdom, faithful calling in assignments around the world."

"It is the most prestigious award that the Chaplaincy can give," said Chap. (Lt. Col.) T.J. Wood, who assisted at Mass. The Order of Aaron and Hur recognizes those who in some remarkable way supported "the arms of the Chaplaincy."



"The truth of the matter is that if I have accomplished anything over these years, it has not been accomplished alone," said D'Emma. "No one can do that, no matter how good, great, or important."

Noting the contributions of many chaplains who have supported him, he focused especially on the many assistants who have not gotten the recognition they deserve for what they do, for

all the work that nobody sees. He recognized several enlisted military chaplain assistants from this and past assignments.

Father D'Emma recognizes those who stood by him, after being honored with the Order of Aaron and Hur, which he wears. A host of chaplain colleagues at the ceremony included Chap. (Lt.Col.) T.J. Wood, right.

"They have walked the path with me and who have, in a very real sense, lighted my way," he said, naming sergeants Wicks, Forbes and Heikkinen, Spec. Mallard, and Pvt 1stClass Price. "These young men and women took care to ensure that things would go well, the chapel would look good, that the chaplains would look good..."

"If I had to list the names of all the people who have helped and worked here, then we would not have enough time this afternoon," he said, as he recognized civilian assistants Maureen Cantwell, Lisa White, Cindy Barbee, Darlene Meier and Brittany Clements who have worked hard to make this place great.