



**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN CHAPLAINS INC.  
(IACC)**

**STANDARDS AND CODE OF ETHICS**

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# **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN CHAPLAINS INC. (IACC)**

## **Mission:**

Our mission is to provide Christian community, professional support, pastoral education, board certification and Christian fellowship to chaplains within the Christian faith involve in the ministry of healing, sustaining, reconciling, and guiding God's people.

## **Philosophy:**

Our philosophy is rooted in the understanding that human beings are created in the image of God with uniqueness and freedom to think, behave, emote, sense, imagine, and interact. Also, grounded in the fact that human beings are created to be in relationship with others, we promote the importance of being in community respecting each member's boundaries. This community of ministers is committed to value the personal, professional and pastoral gifts of each member. We assert that as wholistic beings, both chaplains and those served are in a continuous growth process where the physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of the person are being restored.

## **Purpose and Objectives:**

The IACC is a pastoral and professional Christian association that assists their members with spiritual support as they deliver pastoral care modeling the Great Healer Jesus Christ. IACC provides pastoral koinonia, professional certification and educational opportunities enabling the chaplain to provide the best spiritual care possible.

## **Landmarks of the International Association of Christian Chaplains**

- The International Association of Christian Chaplains promotes a participative, creative and horizontal type of democracy and government.
- The IACC embraces and promotes the leadership concept of 'primus inter pares' (first among equals).
- The IACC is aware of the imminent need of recovering our theological roots and heritage in order to fulfill the mission received from Jesus Christ.
- The IACC considers the new discoveries and advances in the field of medicine, psychology, sociology, anthropology and ethics as being of high value. However, in keeping our Christian theological birthright we are committed to be Christian pastoral loyal to the proclamation of the Word.
- The IACC understands that pastoral care is born in the Word implying a dynamic dialogue and relationship between Creator and creatures. Thus, pastoral care provided in the light of the Word allows people to experience shalom and wholeness.
- The IACC recognizes that people seek chaplain's help primarily because of the pastoral role which speaks of their "unique" connection with the Living Water and Bread of Life that may

help them find meaning and comfort amid struggles.

- The IACC considers that one of the goal of pastoral care, perhaps the most relevant, is helping human beings understand and accept more fully their humanity in relationship with others and God as well as helping them to fulfill their calling as people of God.
- The IACC sees pastoral care as a ministry of compassion anchored in the grace and love of God. Pastoral care takes place in many different ways including visiting the sick, attending to the dying, comforting the bereaved, shepherding those who are struggling or facing difficulties of any kind, proclaiming visibly and verbally the Word, and fulfilling the priestly calling.

## **Fellowship and Chapters**

To paraphrase Emil Brunner, the IACC exist by fellowship as fire exists by burning. At the heart of the Association burns a commitment to let the world know we are Christians by our love. IACC believes that God's love creates all pastoral competencies and defines all clinical interventions made by the Christian chaplain. Therefore, the IACC focuses first and foremost on sharing the love of Christ with one another and equipping each other to love of Christ with one another and equipping each other to love the fields in which we serve. In this difficult time of increasing competition for careers in chaplaincy, the IACC holds high the banner of love.

The IACC's primary mode of operation is the chapter meeting. The chapter is the basic unit of the IACC, and chapter determines its own schedule, format and structure. The IACC believes that leadership is a gift and is given to serve the community rather than compel the community to serve the leader. The leader is always the first among equals, and IACC chapters are completely democratic.

Chapter meetings center on fellowship, education, receiving and certifying members. Each chapter maintains a relationship with the IACC through the Adjunct General Secretary or Convener. Chapters meetings devote time to Koinonia: to sharing needs, hurts, frustrations, celebrations, dreams, joys, goals, and confessions. Members share as priests to one another in atmosphere of acceptance. The fellowship creates a strong community bond, not a hierarchy of roles such as supervisor/supervisee, therapist/client or even pastor/parishioner.

## General Role of the Chaplain

The term chaplain comes to us from a fourth-century legend of Martin of Tours. St. Martin of Tours a member of the Roman army who was born about 316 A.D in Pannonia, a Roman province that includes modern Hungary, to a pagan family. Approximately, at age 21, one very cold day he passed the gates of Amiens in Gaul (what is today France) and saw a man freezing on the side of the road. Martin moved with compassion after seeing and hearing the pleas of the beggar being ignored by several others who had ridden by on their horses, he decided to help. Martin had little himself; he took the one valuable possession he owned-his cape-and cut it in half. He kept half as his own shelter from the cold and gave the other to the beggar.

That night, as the story goes, Martin had a vision in which he came to understand that the beggar was none other than Christ Himself! The vision shook Martin to the core. After that experience he decided to follow the Christian faith and was baptized by Bishop St. Hillary. When he related the story to others, the remaining half of the cape became a relic and an object of value as a reminder of the event. The cape (Latin cappa) was kept in a special container made for it. The container was called the cappella. Thus, we get the term chapel-that place where the robe of Christ is shared, not stored. The keeper of the cape was known as the cappellanus (the keeper of the cape). The cappellanus, is where we get the word chaplain, for chaplains are the ones who share God's love and care with those in need wherever people are. Thus, pastoral care refers to the ministry offered by men and women committed to foster the psycho-social-spiritual growth and shalom of each human being God sends to them.

The chaplain member of the International Association of Christian Chaplains is a Christian minister called to serve God's people as commissioned by the sacred Word of God. The mission is to respond with love and compassion to people's needs in their wholistic existence. The chaplain is a person with a deep experiential knowing of the God who loves sinners, redeems failures, express His power in the weak, and delights in second chances and fresh starts.

## Chaplaincy Ministry

Members of the IACC are chaplains bonded together for the sake of our calling in Christ Jesus.

- ***What is our calling?*** It is to maintain or build a bridge between a person and God when that person is separated from traditional sources of pastoral care
- ***How do they get separated?*** They get separated by becoming physically or spiritually unable to maintain their connection to God, their pastor and their community. They may be in a prison, a hospital, a military installation, a nursing home or even in their own, but, whenever separations exist, a chaplain becomes the bridge.
- ***How do we build the bridge?*** The chaplain performs the pastoral functions of healing, sustaining, reconciling, and guiding the persons in his or her area of service as a faithful witness to Christ. The chaplain becomes priest, prophet and wise counselor as the situation demands.

### **The chaplain as Priest**

1. The chaplain may plan or direct worship services.
2. The chaplain provides care through the power of deep and private communion as he or she leads persons in receiving bread and wine, anointing, reconciliation, laying of on hands, baptism or marriage.
3. The chaplain incorporates all expressions of worship into her or his ministry including singing or other music, readings, play, dance, drama and art.
4. The chaplain models that praying is the indispensable foundation for receiving the care that only God can provide.
5. The chaplain respects and ministers to the private and confidential layer of persons who desire it, including their deepest longings, secret sins and private fears so that complete its work in them.
6. The chaplain, as a representative of God, faithfully accompanies people as they begin or continue their spiritual journey.

### **The chaplain as Prophet**

1. The chaplain acts as a prophet as he or she speaks clearly on moral, ethical and spiritual issues.
2. The chaplain acts as a prophet as he or she exercises pastoral authority to empower all people and offer a voice for those who are at risk of being neglected by the establishment.
3. The chaplain also reconciles believers and communities of faith as they listen, mediate differences and clarify commitments.
4. The chaplain as a prophet calls people back to God and to their commitments with their Creator and Redeemer.

### **The chaplain as Wise-Counselor**

1. The chaplain functions as a wise-counselor as he or she offers ethical clarification and counsel concerning issues of the Christian life and personal conduct.
2. The chaplain motivates and facilitates people to exercise faith and to make decisions that will enable them to grow toward their own spiritual maturity.
3. The chaplain assists in the process of empowering self-defeating people to become free and responsible for their own actions.
4. The chaplain reaches out to victims who bear the marks of pain: the dispossessed, lonely, alienated, unwanted, rejected, abused and discriminated against, and so on, to serve them and to enable them to grow from and through their pain.
5. The chaplain listens attentively to nonverbal and verbal communication.
6. The chaplain will listen for hidden conflicts, unspoken desires, unspeakable fears, and faint hopes. He or she will communicate acceptance and nonjudgmental care in response to all self-disclosures of persons.
7. The chaplain attentively and responsively listens to people's life stories as they connect their lives to God through the remembering process.

## MEMBERSHIP

The IACC is composed of Christian chaplains and exists to serve Christ through the specialized ministry of chaplaincy. We advocate complete religious freedom for those we serve while we honestly confess our own rootedness in Christ. We respect all ministries in all contexts and from all faith traditions and we affirm that wherever love is, there is God. Thus, our places of ministry are “interfaith” contexts, but our association belongs to Christ.

The membership of the IACC is composed of *active member chaplains* and **board certified chaplains**. Member chaplains and certified chaplains share equal privileges and responsibilities. The institutions we serve created the need for different membership categories, but our goal is to be one in Christ and remove all worldly barriers and hierarchies between members. Members pray together for one another and for each other’s ministry. Members also recognize each other’s gifts in Christ and seek to encourage one another. We recognize the diversity among us as a gift of Christ.

### ❖ **Active Member**

1. An Active Member is a person actively involve in providing pastoral care and upholding Christian principles.
2. The Active Member abides to the Standards and Code of Ethics of the International Association of Christian Chaplains.
3. Have submitted an official application form for membership.
4. Submitted the annual membership dues (U.S. \$ 75)

### ❖ **Board Certified in Pastoral Care**

The International Association of Christian Chaplains, through a Peer Board Certification Committee, certifies chaplains who have met the personal, academical, pastoral, and professional requirements to the provision of high quality pastoral care. The certificate awarded by IACC attests that a chaplain has been regarded by his or her peers as one who meets high and rigorous professional and pastoral standards. The board certification denotes a continuous commitment to excellence in providing spiritual services. The International Association of Christian Chaplains believes that the certification is continuing not terminal and contingent on active participation in a Pastoral Cell or Chapter.

### **I. General Requirements**

1. Actively involved in providing pastoral care that is consistent with a Christian vocation
2. Conforming to the Standards and Code of Ethics of the International Association of Christian Chaplains Inc.
3. Have submitted a completed official Application Form for membership.
4. Submitted the annual membership dues (U.S. \$ 95)

### **II. Ecclesiastical Requirements**

1. Have ordination, license or being commissioned to function in a ministry of pastoral care.

(Copy of the certificate of a letter of ordination or ministerial license must be submitted along with the official Application Form).

2. Have current faith group endorsement or its equivalent. (A recent letter from the endorsing agency must be submitted along with the official Application Form).

### **III. Educational Requirements**

1. Have completed a college degree from an accredited institution or its equivalent. (Copy of the diploma with final official transcripts needs to be sent to the office of IACC along with the application).
2. Have completed formal theological education (e.g., M.Div., Th.M., B.D., Licentiate of Sacred Theology) from accredited institutions or its equivalent. (Copy of the diploma with final official transcripts needs to be sent to the office of IACC along with the application packet).

### **IV. Professional and Clinical Training**

1. Have completed four units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in the format of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education or The College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, or the National Association of Catholic Chaplains, or the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education.
2. Chaplains who are certified by others certifying societies of chaplains (such as APC, NACC) may receive certification with the International Association of Christian Chaplains upon submission of certificate or letter of certification along with the official IACC Application Form.

### **V. Ministerial and Pastoral Experience**

1. Have one year of ministerial experience beyond CPE residency program and beyond completion of formal theological training (e.g., M.Div., Th.M., Licentiate of Sacred Theology). This ministerial or pastoral experience must be a year of direct ministry with parishioners or clients or patients or residents or inmates or students. The pastoral experience in a specialty of pastoral care and counseling may be used toward the one year experience.

### **VI. Peer and Work-supervisor Confirmation of Personal, Pastoral, Professional Competency in Pastoral Care**

1. A letter of recommendation from a peer or colleague attesting candidates' personal, pastoral and professional competency in pastoral care. (Letter must be addressed to IACC)
2. A letter of confirmation from an immediate work-supervisor attesting candidates' personal, pastoral and professional competency in pastoral care. (Letter must be addressed to IACC)

### **VII. Personal and Pastoral Reflections' Essays**

1. An essay on personal experience related to pastoral calling. (Articulate your philosophy of life, and pastoral calling)
2. An essay on human encounters and pastoral events that have shaped applicants' personal life



and ministry. (Articulate your understanding of human nature and your theology of pastoral care).

#### **VIII. Clinical Evaluations**

1. Include Clinical Pastoral Education Final Evaluations from CPE Supervisor(s) and own.

#### **IX. Interview with the Peer Board Certification Committee**

1. Receives confirmation from the Peer Board Certification Committee of the International Association of Christian Chaplains Inc.
2. Receives Certificate as Board Certified in Pastoral Care

***PLEASE MAKE (4) COPIES OF THE ENTIRE APPLICATION PACKET. RETAIN ONE FOR COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS AND SEND THREE COPIES TO : Peer Board Certification Committee. IACC. 5804 Babcock Road. PMB 189. San Antonio, Texas 78240-2134. USA.***

#### **Membership Benefits and Continuing Education**

The IACC believes the chaplain and all the persons she or he serves were born in the image of God and are growth-oriented, despite the effects of sin. We devote time and resources to refine our growth process as Christians and ministers.

The association upholds the highest standards of educational excellence in each of these benefits. The Association believes chaplains, as much as other ministers, must “study to show ourselves approved” and that our pastoral excellence depends on both “testing the spirits” and “rightly dividing the Word.”

The IACC provides members with:

- Certificate of Membership
- A subscription to the Journal of Psychology and Theology
- Educational presentations at chapter (cell) meetings (where available)
- A copy of the Pastoral Care book of the Year
- Professional peer consultation in chapter’s meetings
- Each member has a voice in the business and programs of IACC
- Online list of job opportunities
- Accessibility to the latest news and finest resources available in the chaplaincy field.

## **CODE OF ETHICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN CHAPLAINS INC.**

As members of the International Association of Christian Chaplains we are committed to the Christian Ethics of cooperation, pastoral and professional community growth, equality, diversity, human justice and grace. We affirm and promote the value, dignity and worth of each person we encounter in our ministry. In wanting to imitate Jesus Christ's method of caring for people we covenant to:

- Meet people where they are supporting them on their own faith journeys rather than imposing specific religious traditions.
- Be compassionate and graceful to all seeking pastoral care
- Take a prophetic role in ministry but never condemning people
- Speak with authority but always in love
- Affirm faith responses and provide spiritual support in proportion to people's receptivity and spiritual hunger
- Relate with people in a manner that affirm their value
- Provide pastoral care considering each person's uniqueness and individuality along with the role they may fulfill in a system of relationships.
- Promote dialogue rather than monologue, understanding that pastoral care is done with people rather than to people.
- Invite engagement instead of passive receptivity
- Demonstrate a holistic respect of people and their cultural background.
- Be persuasive but not coercive or manipulative, accepting and respecting people's trust.
- Not exploiting pastoral relationships to meet their own needs at others' expense.
- Give people the freedom to ignore or reject the help offered by them

We are a community of Christian chaplains dedicated to the ministry of healing, sustaining, reconciling, and guiding God's people.

### **I. Human Dignity and Pastoral Relationship**

1.1 Christian chaplains are ministers called to serve God's people as commissioned by the sacred Word of God. In Christian grace and duty they respond with love and compassion to people's needs in their wholistic existence. Christian Chaplains embrace the understanding that human beings are created in the image of God with uniqueness and freedom to think, behave, emote, sense, imagine, and interact.

1.2 Christian chaplains are aware of their own belief system, core of values, cultural background, attitudes, and behaviors and how these apply in a diverse society and with the help of God avoid imposing theirs on those who come for pastoral care.

1.3 Christian chaplains understanding the high value and dignity of the human being will actively attempt to avoid allowing their personal needs get in the way of meeting the needs of others.

They are aware of the power invested in them by their role and by the people seeking help avoiding exploitation of the trust people placed in them.

1.4 Christian chaplains recognizing the sacredness of human relationships and personhood of people do not engage in sexual intimacies with those coming to them for spiritual support. Christian chaplains do not engage in sexual harassment.

1.5 Christian chaplains will actively attempt to understand and recognize the diverse cultural backgrounds of the people soliciting or receiving pastoral care to better serve them. Christian chaplains will not condone or engage in discrimination based on age, color, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and marital or sociological status or for any other reason.

1.6 Christian chaplains will provide pastoral care considering people's own spiritual resources to cope with physical, mental, social, and spiritual challenges.

## **II. Confidentiality and Pastoral Relationship**

2.1 Christian chaplains will respect the right that seekers of pastoral care have to control the amount of personal information they want to disclose. They will respect people's right to privacy and avoid illegal and unwarranted disclosures of confidential information. Generally, Christian chaplains as minister of the gospel cannot be forced to reveal confidential information. However, the person seeking spiritual help may waive the right to privacy. Christian chaplains may disclose confidential information to prevent clear and imminent danger to the person or to others. The Christian Chaplain takes the initiative to clarify her or his limits concerning privileged information.

2.2. Christian chaplains providing pastoral care to minors or to individuals who cannot decide by themselves will consult and seek consent from the parents or guardians.

2.3 Christian chaplains will obtain permission from the people they are going to provide pastoral care to take notes or electronically record their pastoral encounters. Christian chaplains are responsible for securing the safety and confidentiality of any pastoral encounter records they create, maintain, transfer, or destroy whether the records are written, taped, computerized, or stored in any other medium.

## **III. Chaplain's Competence and Pastoral Relationship**

3.1 Christian chaplains embrace the need of maintaining high standards of pastoral and professional conduct and competence in ministry. Christian chaplains actively strive to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

3.2 Christian chaplains have a responsibility to read, understand, and follow the Standards and Code of Ethics of the International Association of Christian Chaplains.

3.2 Christian chaplains are committed to continue their pastoral and personal formation to be

better equipped to serve God's people.

3.3. Christian chaplains recognize their boundaries of competence referring to others professionals as they see necessary.

3.4 Christian chaplains in teaching positions will use their pastoral skills and human awareness to uplift those under their educational care avoiding emotional, physical, social and spiritual harm at all cost.

#### **IV. Procedures for Processing Ethical Violations**

Christian chaplains embrace the principle that a community comes together not to destroy their members but to build and restore each other. Therefore, the International Association of Christian Chaplains will not engage in activities intended to harm pastoral care providers. Following the biblical counsel, the IACC will “not entertain an accusation or complaints against an elder (Chaplain) unless it is brought by two or three reliable witnesses.” In the event of an unethical violation, IACC will follow the biblical principle of restoration registered in the Gospel (Matthews 18).

**"Be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity"  
(1 Tim. 4:12.)**