

February 21, 2020



Fort Leonard Wood Religious Support Office would like to invite you and your high school graduate to a **Graduation Celebration on Saturday 9 May at 1530 at Main Post Chapel**. During the program there will be a time for the seniors and their parents to come forward to receive a blessing. There will be a cake and finger food reception following the program.

We would like to ask that you bring a blanket with you to the service as a gift to your senior and that you write a note of blessing and encouragement to them that you will give with the blanket during the service. You will also be given time to say a blessing/hug your graduate at that time. We have enclosed sample blessings to assist you in writing your own. If possible we suggest that mother and father write a blessing and you may wish to include other close members of the family such as grandparents or god parents or other spiritual mentors. The blessing portion of the program will read as follows:

Presentation of the Blessing Blankets: (Words said by DRE)

DRE: *There was a day when your parents held you in their arms and rocked you to sleep. They wrapped you in a blanket to keep you warm and comforted. Very soon you will be launching into a new life away from the security of your home and faith community. Parents please present your blanket to your graduate with your written blessing and/or words of blessing. (Pause till families are finished)*

Chaplain: *As you go out into the world, may this blanket be a reminder of your parent's love and the nurture of your faith community. Today we come before God to bless you and thank God for the gift you have been to your family. In raising you, they have come to a deeper understanding of the nature of God's love, joy, forgiveness. Wherever you go, their love goes with you. Whatever you do, you will always be in their hearts.*

Parents and others attending are invited to join in saying the blessing printed below.

Blessing from the Parents and Congregation: *We bless you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. May the blanket you receive remind you of your parents' love, the warmth of your faith community, and the power of the Holy Spirit. And may you always remember that in God's family you are never alone.*

Please be here at least 15 minutes before the blessing event. You can keep the blanket with you to give during the program when you come forward for the blessing. There will be a receiving line for the graduates at the end of the program.

Enclosed you will find a graduate questionnaire for your graduate to fill out for a display of the graduates. **We will also put together a power point to show at the event with each graduate's senior picture and two childhood pictures, name of their high school and their parents' names.** **Please return the information sheet and pictures to the Religious Support Office or scan and email them to martha.a.strong.civ@mail.mil NLT Friday 1 May 2020.** The pictures can be a surprise to your graduate or you can let them pick the pictures. All pictures will be returned to you on the day of the event. You may also send pictures electronically in a text message to 715-572-4324 if that is more convenient.

Thank you for your support of this event to honor your graduate.

Very Respectfully,

Mrs. Martha A. Strong
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