

One Good Priest Can Make A Difference

Father Bill Devine: Bringing the Lord's Presence to Soldiers in Iraq

I want to thank the Knights of Columbus for the Catholic prayer books [*Armed with the Faith*]. There is no way I can adequately describe how much these books are appreciated.

I received a large order three days ago. I had given out all that I had two months ago so these were very welcome and needed. Every Marine took the prayer book. They came up to me and asked me to bless their scapulars, medals, rosaries and book. Their large hands dirtied by war held these objects of grace.

A number used the book to go to confession. Others asked me to explain how to pray the rosary. This book is and will be a source of strength and God's grace long after I leave.

Over the past few months that I have been here many will come into confession with this book as a guide. On Sunday nights when I pray the rosary, many have these books with them and use them. I often ask them to pick one prayer from the book and pray it every day.

Please convey to the Knights my appreciation. These books are simple enough for those who have been away from their faith to understand. They are profound enough for those who have been strong in their faith and can see the richness and tradition of our faith, our Church.

It is a privilege to be a priest, to see the confidence and trust these young men place in me because of what I represent. I am

humbled and inspired by their faith and their commitment.

I will continue to get to as many Marine units as possible. There are three priests for approximately 20,000 Marines. Please keep us in your prayers. Thank you and the Knights of Columbus for your support.

— Excerpts from a letter sent by U.S. Marine Chaplain Father Bill Devine to Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, acknowledging receipt of *Armed with the Faith*, the Catholic prayer book published jointly by the Knights and the Military Archdiocese. Father Devine is a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston.

Father Devine blesses a soldier following a Mass at a military camp in the Iraqi desert.