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## **FEATURES OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INSTITUTE OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS IN UKRAINE: NATIONAL PROBLEMS AND PROJECTION INTO INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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The article deals with the prerequisites for the formation and implementation of the service of the institute of military chaplains, its importance and relevance in the context of more than a decade of war and a full-scale illegal military invasion of the territory of independent Ukraine. Knowledge of the role and place of military chaplains in the armed forces, the peculiarities of their pastoral activities is necessary primarily for the full functioning of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, which include people who maintain their psychological health and resilience by being as close as possible to the Christian faith and religion.

It is important to study the system of organization of military chaplaincy in the military formations of Ukraine and the Armed Forces of Ukraine, taking into account the historical experience, traditional beliefs and culture of the Ukrainian people. Chaplaincy is a term that comes from the word “chaplain” and means the service of a chaplain, the institution of clergy in society. Their functions include worship among military personnel, control over their moral condition, funeral services for the dead (deceased), etc.

Particular attention is paid to the relationship between the process of democratization of society and the formation of the institute of military chaplaincy in Ukraine. It was the

democratic transformations that accompanied the achievement of independence that became the driving force behind changes in church-state relations. The transition to a new political system required a rethinking of the role of religion in society, which, in turn, contributed to the revival of the institution of military clergy, which had previously been ignored or falsified.

In Ukraine, the concept of using chaplains in the context of national security and defense is underdeveloped, which limits their strategic importance. The role of chaplaincy could be more clearly defined within the national strategy to ensure the spiritual and moral stability of the nation, especially in times of war.

Most armies in the world have military priests (chaplains) (in the United States and France, there is an institution of military priesthood that is state-supported). At the level of national legislation, their presence is prohibited only in the armies of China and North Korea.

This situation is quite understandable and corresponds to the diversity of religious ideologies of different people, because even if we look at it from a purely pragmatic point of view, religion is a factor of state security. Religion provides psychological comfort in society, instills high moral ideals in citizens, and ultimately determines the nature of the economic and political development of the state.

We believe that it is important that Ukraine takes part in the World Interfaith Harmony Week from February 1 to 7, 2025. This global initiative was launched to promote harmony and mutual understanding between different religions of the world. There is a shortage of military chaplains in the Ukrainian army. There are many evangelical ministers who aspire to become military chaplains, but do not meet the qualification requirements under Ukrainian law. One of the reasons is that the number of those wishing to obtain chaplaincy positions in the Armed Forces far exceeds the number of mandates available to evangelical ministers under the state quota, since the distribution of quotas for the denominational representation of military chaplains is based on the denominational affiliation of the personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The institute of military chaplain is an integral part of the Ukrainian army today, especially under the legal regime of martial law. The mission of a chaplain is not confessional. A chaplain is a universal officer who performs general functions that concern every soldier, even an atheist. He helps the soldier to serve. He helps the soldier to perform combat and non-combat tasks.

**Keywords:** institute of military chaplains, martial law, pastoral activity, Armed Forces of Ukraine, chaplain, chaplaincy, military personnel, church, worship, religion, legislation, legal problems, improvement of legislation, military service, legal regime, religious rites, army, church, psychological support, financing, state, denomination.

**Formulation of the problem.** Statement of the problem. Understanding the peculiarities of the formation and development of the institute of military chaplains in Ukraine requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account a number of interrelated factors. In particular, it is necessary to pay attention to the historical, ethnic and religious peculiarities of Ukrainian society, as well as to the processes of modernization and European integration. An important aspect is also the relationship between the problem of national identity and the development of the chaplaincy service. Particular attention should be paid to the interaction between the state, church and society.

The problem of the study is a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of military chaplaincy in Ukraine, taking into account the historical perspective and current challenges, in particular, under martial law. Despite the significant importance of chaplains in ensuring the moral and psychological state of military personnel and strengthening morale, the issues of legal regulation of their activities still remain insufficiently researched, especially in the context of new challenges facing the country.

The problems of the functioning of the institute of military chaplains in Ukraine are multifaceted and relate to various aspects of legal, organizational and social nature. In particular, the issues of legal conflicts between chaplains and military personnel need to be detailed; many chaplains continue to work without proper conditions to perform their functions, and the costs of various religious rites are borne by charitable organizations and foundations, as there is no proper material support from the state.

An important problem is the integration of chaplains of different denominations into one system, where the balance between religion and avoidance of conflicts is important.

Therefore, against the backdrop of large-scale Russian aggression, which also has a humanitarian and religious dimension, the role of religion in the military sphere, in particular, the state, problems and prospects of chaplaincy service, is becoming particularly acute and relevant for both practice and research.

**Analysis of the study of the problem.** The problem of the prerequisites for the formation and implementation of the service of the Institute of Military Chaplains has been the subject of analysis by many scholars, in particular: M. M. Vashchuk, Y. V. Kryvenko, N. S. Adakhovska, I. M. Koropatnyk, V. Z. Krasnopyska, M. A. Mykytiuk, O. O. Pavliuk, S. V. Petkov, O. V. Bilash, O. O. Karpenko, and others.

However, at present, the problem of the implementation of chaplaincy in Ukraine under martial law requires additional analysis, because this topic is extremely important, especially in the present period. We believe that the legislative framework of Ukraine needs more regulation and expansion. The chaplaincy service plays an extremely important role in the legal regime of martial law, maintaining the morale and psychological stability of our defenders.

The Institute of Military Chaplaincy is a subject of research not only in Ukraine but also in many other countries. Foreign scholars and experts who study this topic mostly belong to the fields of law, religious studies, sociology, as well as military and psychological sciences, among others: O. Connor – one of the leading researchers of military chaplains in the United States, their role in the war, moral aspects of service; H. Wessel – German researcher, worked on the issue of post-war adaptation and moral support of the military in the Bundeswehr; M. Nolan – researcher. Nolan is a researcher from the United Kingdom, focusing on ethical and religious issues related to the activities of chaplains, as well as their role in supporting the military in critical situations; G. Drouin is a Canadian researcher who focuses on military chaplaincy in the context of morale support, psycho-emotional support, and chaplains' participation in peacekeeping missions; Y. Moltman is a theologian whose work is also relevant to the study of military chaplaincy, in particular his work on the theology of war and the importance of the role of chaplains in ensuring ethical standards of warfare.

**The purpose of the article** is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the formation and legal features of the institute of military chaplains in Ukraine during martial law, to study the historical stages of formation of the institute of military chaplains, to analyze the legal status of military chaplains, to study their place and role in the defense and security system of the State, and also to study the legal norms and mechanisms which regulate their activities. Special attention is paid to the international experience, which allows to identify the best practices for the further development of the legal framework of Ukraine.

**Presenting main material.** Summary of the main material. The historical stages of chaplaincy in Ukraine can be divided into several main periods, each of which had its own characteristics and roles in the spiritual and social life of society: Kievan Rus (IX–XIII centuries), the beginning of chaplaincy: During this period, Christianity became the state religion after the baptism of Kievan Rus in 988. Since then, clergymen began to play the role of spiritual advisors both at the courts of princes and in the army, at this stage chaplains performed the functions of blessing soldiers, praying for victory, blessing weapons and helping in the moral formation of soldiers); Lithuanian-Polish era and the Commonwealth (XIV–XVIII centuries), at this time chaplaincy became more organized, military chaplaincy positions emerged, especially during the war with

Muscovy and the Ottoman Empire, military clergy served both on the battlefield and in camps, providing spiritual support to soldiers, consecrating battle banners and swords: In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, due to the influence of Catholicism and Protestantism, military chaplaincy had a significant religious influence on soldiers, especially in the Polish-Lithuanian troops); Cossack era (XVII–XVIII centuries), chaplaincy became very important. The Cossacks had their own spiritual mentors who participated in battles and held services before important campaigns. In particular, until 1700, the hetmans had a system of chaplains who served in military formations.

Chaplains had an impact on the moral and spiritual state of the Cossacks, preached, performed services, and maintained communication between the army and religious institutions; Tsarist Russia (18th – early 20th centuries). After Ukraine was incorporated into the Russian Empire, the role of military chaplains was determined by the Orthodox Church, which was under the control of the tsar. The religious duties of the chaplains were included in the duties of military units that were part of the Russian Empire. Religious distinctions among chaplains between Orthodox, Greek Catholics, and Protestants could be a source of tension; the Soviet era and World War II (XX century), chaplaincy was effectively abolished due to atheistic policies. The church was strictly controlled by the state, and religious activity among the military was limited. World War II: During the war, chaplains of some denominations (Orthodox and Catholics) returned to the front. They participated in prayer services, in supporting the spirit of soldiers, and in rescuing the wounded); Modern stage (XXI century), after Ukraine gained independence, in the late 1990s–2000s, the restoration of military chaplaincy began. The establishment of the institute of military chaplains was officially recognized in 2016 with the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Military Chaplaincy”).

Today, military chaplains in Ukraine provide not only spiritual support but also psychological support, helping the military to overcome post-traumatic stress and adapt to civilian life. Each of these stages reflects the evolution of chaplaincy in Ukraine, which over time has taken on new forms and adapted to the conditions of the times, but has always remained an important element of spiritual and moral support for the military.

It is worth focusing on the early stages of the historical formation of chaplaincy, which began in the fourth century. A Roman cavalry soldier, a Christian named Martin, met a beggar on the road who was shivering from the cold. Having neither time nor enough money, he took his sword and cut off half of his cloak, called a “capa”, and gave it to the beggar [6].

The next night, Jesus appeared to him in a vision, wrapped in this half of his cloak. Later, Martin became a monk, a bishop known as St. Martin of Tours, and his cloak was kept as a shrine. The cloak was given to the French kings, who carried it with them during their military campaigns and displayed it in a camping church-tent named after the cloak, the chapel. The priests who served in this church were called chaplains. Of course, these priests not only celebrated solemn masses, but also served the soldiers, administering the sacraments, giving advice, and being there for them [6].

Over time, all priests who were present in the troops of Christian states began to be called chaplains. Thus, St. Martin of Tours is considered the patron saint of military chaplains. In Ukrainian history, the prototype of a chaplain was found in princely squads and Cossack troops. The names of many chaplains from the army of the UPR and UPA have been preserved, who shared the fate of the then soldiers in campaigns, wanderings, and sometimes death on the battlefield or imprisonment in Soviet concentration camps and prisons [6].

The history of military chaplaincy in Ukraine goes back to princely times. Christian priests accompanied soldiers on campaigns, providing spiritual support. During the Cossack period, especially after the 17th century, the Orthodox Church played an important role in the spiritual life of the Cossacks. Later, as part of the Russian Empire, Ukrainian military units were served by Orthodox clergy. In the nineteenth century, the first Ukrainian Catholic military chaplains appeared within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. During the Soviet period, religion was actively suppressed, and any manifestations of religion in the army were banned. After 1991, with the proclamation of Ukraine’s independence, the question of reviving national traditions, including religious ones, arose. Intensive development of the chaplaincy institute in Ukraine began

after the Revolution of Dignity and Russian aggression. The process of establishing and forming the institute of chaplains has taken thirty years. And it was completed in November 2021, when the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law “On the Military Chaplaincy Service”, which opened a new page in the pastoral ministry of priests and the Armed Forces [2]. According to this law, a military chaplain can be a citizen of Ukraine who is a clergyman of a religious organization registered in Ukraine and who has received a mandate from the governing center (management) of the relevant religious organization to carry out military chaplaincy activities [10].

In Ukraine, military chaplaincy officially appeared in 2016, and now there are full-time chaplains and volunteers. Until then, chaplains were only volunteers, and went to war in the early days with the military. This is a global norm: when something happens, you go there. Of course, not all units had chaplains, but they provided great support. They are from three Christian denominations: Protestants, which I belong to, Greek Catholics, and Orthodox. There is also a large unit of Muslim chaplains [8].

Thus, the institute of military chaplaincy today plays an important role in supporting the soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Its formation was the impetus for further reorganization of the activities of military clergymen, bringing the legislative framework to their activities, and turning chaplaincy into an important component of moral and psychological support for soldiers.

The current Russian-Ukrainian war has not only consolidated Ukrainian society in its confrontation with the enemy, but also revealed the priorities of social institutions, putting the Army and the Church in the first place. Today, the word “chaplain” has rapidly entered the everyday vocabulary of Ukrainians. After all, at the beginning of the war, when there were no psychologists on the front line and the volunteer movement was just being formed, priests in camouflage uniforms were among the soldiers. They combined the functions of volunteers, psychologists, and pastors.

Thus, a military chaplain is a person who, in accordance with the procedure established by law, has received a mandate for the right to carry out military chaplaincy activities, has concluded a contract for military service as an officer (exclusively in the positions of the Military Chaplaincy Service) and carries out military chaplaincy activities in units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard of Ukraine, other military formations formed in accordance with the laws of Ukraine and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

Military service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations established in accordance with the laws of Ukraine is a special kind of public service, which consists in professional activity of persons fit for it by health and age (except in cases determined by law) related to the defense of Ukraine [4].

Servicemen have the right to profess any religion or not to profess any religion, to openly express their religious or atheistic beliefs. Commanders (chiefs) of military formations and units provide an opportunity for servicemen to participate in worship and religious rites in their free time from military service [3].

This is what is enshrined in the legislation of Ukraine and makes it clear that the service of military chaplains is an exclusive right of citizens and a necessary institution in military service. After all, the Constitution of Ukraine states that everyone has the right to freedom of worldview and religion. This right includes the freedom to profess any religion or not to profess any religion, to freely worship individually or collectively, to conduct religious cults and rituals, and to engage in religious activities. The Ukrainian Evangelical Chaplaincy is an organization that in March 2014 took on the role of a provider of psychologists and pastors in the ATO zone. The organization has at least five main types of chaplaincy. In particular, Protestants train specialists in prison, military, police, medical and municipal areas [9].

Therefore, the institute of military chaplaincy is rapidly developing and promoting in our country. In particular, an interesting fact is that the first training courses for military chaplains of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were held in Lviv. The two-week training began on November 20, 2017, at the Sahaidachny National Army Academy. During the first week, the participants got acquainted with the peculiarities of pastoral care in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, attended courses on national-patriotic, legal and psychological training and

a number of military disciplines. The military chaplains spent the second week at the International Center for Peacekeeping and Security, where they took part in practical exercises in the field to familiarize themselves with the specifics of military activities [5].

After the outbreak of hostilities in eastern Ukraine in 2014, the institute of military chaplains became more visible to the general public. Thanks to the active participation of chaplains in combat zones, support of the morale of the military, organization of prayers and spiritual services, citizens began to learn more about the role of chaplains in the Armed Forces. Many media, social networks, TV and radio channels often feature reports and interviews with chaplains. The official recognition of the institute of military chaplains in Ukraine through the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Military Chaplaincy” in 2016 also contributed to raising public awareness. This legislative provision made it possible to organize training for chaplains, attract new representatives of various religious denominations to this activity, and also contributed to the launch of information campaigns on the role of chaplains.

In Ukraine, where religion, particularly Orthodoxy, plays an important role in the lives of many citizens, military chaplains are perceived as spiritual advisors who help military personnel with moral and emotional difficulties. Therefore, if people have a tradition of turning to priests for personal matters, their perception of chaplains is usually positive.

In addition to the official activities of chaplains, many of them are actively involved in volunteer initiatives – helping the wounded, organizing meetings for military families, and working with the mental health of veterans. This also helps to raise public awareness of this important institution.

However, in remote regions where media education and access to modern communications may be limited, awareness of military chaplains may be lower. Some citizens may perceive chaplains solely as priests who serve only for prayer, not realizing that their role is much broader – including psychological assistance, support in stressful situations, and help with adaptation after returning from war.

The Office of the Curia of the Lviv Archeparchy of the UGCC has published the number of chaplains in Lviv, there are four of them. They include:

- I. Pastoral care in military units;
- II. Pastoral care in law enforcement units;
- III. Pastoral care in units of the penitentiary service;
- IV. Pastoral care in educational and cultural institutions;
- V. Pastoral care of the health service;
- VI. Pastoral care in public authorities and self-government bodies, public organizations [7].

This makes it possible to understand that this institution is developing not only in military activities, but also in other areas, which is an important tool for maintaining and preserving the morale of citizens.

In addition to working with soldiers in combat areas, military chaplains provide spiritual and material assistance to servicemen undergoing treatment and rehabilitation in hospitals. In particular, in the Irpin military hospital and the Kyiv Main Military Clinical Hospital, this ministry is carried out by the Department of Social Service of the UCCEE. And if necessary, demobilized soldiers who have returned from the ATO zone are sent to undergo a course of social recovery in the inpatient facilities of the Association of Christian Rehabilitation Centers [9].

The main differences in the legal status of chaplains in Ukraine and abroad (in particular, in the United States and European countries) are largely related to the historical, cultural, religious and legal aspects of each country. Below are the main differences in the legal status of military chaplains in Ukraine and some other countries.

In Ukraine, the institute of military chaplains received official legislative recognition in 2016, when the Law of Ukraine “On Military Chaplaincy” was adopted. It establishes the legal status of chaplains, defines their duties, rights, and interaction with military structures.

Ukrainian legislation recognizes that a chaplain can be a representative of any religious denomination. However, there is a clear dominant role of Orthodox chaplains, as the majority of the country's population professes Orthodoxy. At the same time, the law provides for the right for representatives of other denominations (Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, etc.) to perform their duties. Military chaplains in Ukraine are obliged to provide spiritual and psychological assistance to military personnel, organize religious services and prayers. However, their activities should not violate the ideological neutrality of the army, nor should they distract from basic military training.

In Ukraine, chaplains are not allowed to participate in hostilities; they are part of the military's support (psychological and spiritual), but not military personnel directly performing combat functions. They also do not have the right to wear military uniforms or to hold a combat rank; the institute of chaplaincy is still in its infancy, and not all army units have permanent chaplains. Many chaplains work as volunteers or cooperate with military organizations on a voluntary basis.

In the United States, military chaplains are an official part of the armed forces and have a clearly defined role in the army structure. U. S. legislation (in particular, the U. S. Army Regulations and Religious Ministry in the U. S. Armed Forces) gives chaplains the right to be part of military service, participate in combat operations, conduct religious rites and provide moral support.

Military chaplains in the United States can be representatives of any religion (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, etc.). Each chaplain receives an official appointment from the army, and it is important that the army has chaplains of different religious denominations to serve all military personnel, regardless of their religious beliefs. Chaplains in the United States wear special military uniforms, but without insignia that indicate their religious status. They can hold officer positions and have military ranks, but their functions are focused on religious and moral service, not on direct management of military operations. They actively provide moral support to soldiers, provide spiritual care in combat and are an important part of the US Army's psychological assistance.

In Europe, military chaplains are traditionally part of the armed forces. In the UK, Germany and France, there are special military chaplaincy corps. They are part of the military structure, but perform basic functions related to religious and moral support without being directly involved in military operations. As in the United States, chaplaincy in European countries is multid denominational, allowing each serviceman to receive support from a representative of his religious community. In some countries (for example, in the UK and Germany), chaplains can be not only Christians but also representatives of other religions. Military chaplains in Europe are often involved in international peacekeeping operations, where they provide spiritual support to different cultures and religions. As in the United States, military chaplains in many European countries wear uniforms and hold officer positions. However, unlike conventional military officers, their duties are related to religious and moral care, not to military leadership or combat operations.

In Ukraine, military chaplaincy was legislated only in 2016, while in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany, this institution has been part of the army for decades or even centuries. In the United States and Europe, chaplains represent a wide range of religious denominations, while in Ukraine, Orthodox chaplains are currently dominant, although the law allows representatives of other religions to be chaplains. In Western Europe and the United States, chaplains have a more integrated role in military structures, holding officer ranks and wearing uniforms. In Ukraine, chaplaincy is only gaining its status, and chaplains usually do not have military ranks or officer status. In Ukraine, chaplains are actively working in wartime, providing psychological support to the military, and in Western countries this has long been standard practice in the army.

Thus, although the institute of military chaplains in Ukraine is not as long-standing as in Western Europe or the United States, it has been actively developing in recent years and is gaining importance, particularly in the context of the war in the east of the country.

**Conclusions.** Thus, we believe that the institute of military chaplaincy in Ukraine continues to develop and play an important role in the life of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Chaplains are an integral part of the military team, providing spiritual support to servicemen and women and contributing to strengthening the state's defense capability and national security, helping to realize the importance of fulfilling the constitutional duty under the legal regime of martial law. The role of chaplains in providing psychological support to the military is extremely important, especially in the context of active hostilities. However, the problem is that not all chaplains are properly trained to provide psychological assistance, which can lead to inefficiency in critical situations.

The absence of a unified and standardized system of training for military chaplains of different denominations is the basis for the formation of different qualifications and professional training of chaplains. The authorities should develop unified training programs that would take into account the specifics of the service and rapid adaptation to the conditions of the army environment. The insufficient integration of chaplains into the military structure and their role in the defense system is often perceived as an additional burden rather than an important element of maintaining the combat capability and moral stability of the army.

The level of legal culture and legal awareness among Ukrainians is growing, and most Ukrainians, especially in the context of recent difficult years, know who military chaplains are and understand their important role in maintaining the morale of the military and providing spiritual support. However, in some regions and certain population groups, there may be limited awareness, especially of the broader role of chaplains in military and social processes.

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**ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ФУНКЦІОНУВАННЯ ІНСТИТУТУ  
ВІЙСЬКОВИХ КАПЕЛАНІВ В УКРАЇНІ:  
ПРОБЛЕМИ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО МАСШТАБУ  
ТА ПРОЄКЦІЯ У МІЖНАРОДНИЙ ДОСВІД**

У статті опрацьовано передумови становлення та реалізації служби інституту військових капеланів, її важливість та актуальність в умовах понаддесятирічної війни та повномасштабного незаконного воєнного вторгнення на територію незалежної України. Знання про роль і місце військових капеланів у збройних силах, особливості їх душпастирської діяльності потрібні насамперед для повноцінного функціонування Українських Збройних сил, до складу яких входять люди, що зберігають своє психологічне здоров'я та стійкість, будучи максимально наближеними до християнської віри та релігії.

Важливим є дослідження системи організації військового капеланства у військових формуваннях України та ЗСУ з урахуванням історичного досвіду, традиційних вірувань і культури українського народу. Капеланство – термін, що походить від слова "капелан" і означає службу капелана, інститут духівників у суспільстві. До їхніх функцій належить богослужіння серед військовослужбовців, контроль за їхнім моральним станом, відспівування померлих (загиблих) тощо.

Особливу увагу присвячено взаємозв'язку між процесом демократизації суспільства та становленням інституту військового капеланства в Україні. Саме демократичні перетворення, що супроводжували здобуття незалежності, стали рушійною силою змін у державно-церковних відносинах. Перехід до нової політичної системи потребував переосмислення ролі релігії в суспільстві, що сприяло відродженню інституту військового духовенства, який раніше зазнавав ігнорування або фальсифікації.

В Україні недостатньо розвинута концепція використання капеланів у контексті національної безпеки та оборони, що обмежує їхнє стратегічне значення. Роль капеланства могла б бути більш чітко визначена в межах національної стратегії для забезпечення духовної і моральної стійкості нації, особливо в умовах війни.

Військові священники (капелани) є у більшій частині армій світу (у США і Франції, існує інститут військового священства, що перебуває на державному забезпеченні). На рівні актів національного законодавства їхня присутність заборонена лише в арміях Китаю і Північної Кореї.

Така ситуація є цілком зрозумілою та відповідає різноманітності релігійних ідеологій різних людей, оскільки навіть якщо дивитися на це винятково з прагматичних позицій, релігія є чинником державної безпеки. Релігія забезпечує психологічний комфорт у суспільстві, прищеплює громадянам високі моральні ідеали і, зрештою, визначає характер економічного та політичного розвитку держави.

Вважаємо, що важливою є участь з 1 по 7 лютого 2025 року України у Всесвітньому Тиждні міжрелігійної гармонії World Interfaith Harmony Week. Ця глобальна ініціатива була започаткована з метою сприяння гармонії та взаєморозумінню між різними релігіями світу. У війську України є дефіцит військових капеланів. Є багато євангельських служителів, які прагнуть стати військовими капеланами, але не відповідають цензовим вимогам за законодавством України. Одна з причин полягає в тому, що кількість тих, хто бажає отримати капеланські посади у ЗСУ, значно перевищує кількість мандатів, що є доступними для євангельських служителів за державною квотою, оскільки розподіл квот конфесійного представництва військових капеланів здійснюється з урахуванням конфесійної належності особового складу відповідно Збройних сил України.

Інститут військового капелана сьогодні є невід'ємною частиною українського війська, тим паче в умовах дії правового режиму воєнного стану. Місія капелана не полягає у конфесійності. Капелан – це універсальний офіцер, який робить загальні функції, які стосуються кожного солдата, навіть атеїста. Він допомагає солдатові служити, виконувати бойові і небойові завдання.

Ключові слова: інститут військових капеланів, воєнний стан, душпастирська діяльність, Збройні сили України, капелан, капеланство, військовослужбовці, церква, богослужіння, релігія, законодавство, правові проблеми, удосконалення законодавства, військова служба, правовий режим, релігійні обряди, армія, церква, психологічна підтримка, фінансування, держава, конфесія.