



1st Lt. James Hill
15 March 1893



Milton Lorenzo Haney
3 November 1896



Francis B. Hall
16 February 1897

Medal of Honor Nine Chaplains

In the long line of military chaplains over the years, nine stand out. From as early as 1893 to as recently as 2013, the prestigious Medal of Honor has been awarded to nine extraordinary chaplains for sacrifices, bravery, and selflessness during battle.

Civil War

In May 1863, **1st Lt. James Hill** served in the 21st Iowa Regiment during the Battle of Champion Hill, which was Ulysses S. Grant's campaign to encircle Vicksburg, Mississippi. During the bulk of the heaviest fighting, Hill came across three Confederate pickets while alone in the forest. Realizing that he was outnumbered and vulnerable, he quickly ordered the three Confederates to "ground arms" before issuing loud orders to a phantom Union detail in the woods. The Confederate soldiers fell for the ruse, became prisoners, and were marched to the rear while Hill continued to issue orders to an imaginary Union guard. For this action and his quick thinking, Hill earned the Medal of Honor on 15 March 1893. It was only afterward that Hill became the regiment's chaplain.

Chaplain Milton Lorenzo Haney was with the 55th Illinois Regiment during the Battle of Atlanta, on 22 July 1864 when he picked up a musket and joined the ranks of the regiment. The goal was to overtake a Union breastwork that had recently fallen to the Confederates. This action earned him the name "The Fighting Chaplain" by the Illinois men. He survived the war and was awarded the Medal of Honor on 3 November 1896.

On the morning of 3 May 1863, the 16th New York Regiment found itself engaged in the intense shot and shellfire of the Battle of Salem Church around Fredericksburg, Virginia. This was Chaplain **Francis B. Hall's** first taste of battle, and he rose to the occasion. One hundred and fifty-four men died in the battle, and Hall was reported to have repeatedly carried wounded men on his horse to the rear of the fight for appropriate care and attendance. He survived the war, and his valor and courage during a time of intense battle earned him the Medal of Honor, awarded 16 February 1897.

John Milton Whitehead enlisted in the 15th Indiana Regiment as a thirty-nine-year-old preacher from Westville, Indiana. Whitehead and his regiment were at the center of the heavy fighting at the Battle of Stones River near Mufreesboro, Tennessee, toward the end of 1862. The battle was so intense that Whitehead detailed the events in writing, claiming a "fearful loss of life." Ignoring the flying shells and shots whizzing by his body, Whitehead actively worked to evacuate casualties to the rear of the fighting. For his life-saving actions on the battlefield, he became known as "The Angel of Stones River." He too survived the war and was awarded the Medal of Honor on 4 April 1898.

World War II

On 19 March 1945, **Chaplain (Lt. Cdmr.) Joseph O'Callahan** served on the USS *Franklin* near Kobe, Japan, when a two-engine bomber suddenly attacked



John Milton Whitehead
4 April 1898



Lt. Cdr. Joseph O'Callahan
23 January 1946



Capt. Charles Liteky
19 November 1968

and Imperial Japanese forces engaged the ship in battle. The *Franklin* was badly damaged in the attack and the crew fought valiantly to keep her afloat. Fighting his way through the blazing inferno in darkened, smoke-filled corridors, he arrived on the deck to a mass of wounded and dying and flames burning uncontrolled. He ministered to the casualties, and still managed to fight alongside his crew by directing the crew to jettison live ammunition and flood the magazine. He inspired his fellow men and managed to get the ship back to port. For his bravery and initiative, O'Callahan was awarded the Medal of Honor on 23 January 1946.

Vietnam

Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Liteky, 199th Infantry Brigade, was in Vietnam on 6 December 1967 near Phuoc-Lac, when his men were violently attacked by a battalion-sized enemy force. Liteky acted quickly and decisively; he repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire and managed to place himself between an enemy machine gun and his wounded men and carry off fellow soldiers to safety. He administered last rites to the dying and he evacuated the wounded amidst heavy fighting. During the fight, Liteky was wounded in the neck and foot, but he survived his wounds and the war, and was commended for removing at least twenty soldiers from the thick of the fight. He was awarded the Medal of Honor on 19 November 1968.

Chaplain (Lt.) Vincent Capodanno attached to the U.S. Marine Corps after officer candidate school. While there, he established a solid reputation as a man dedicated to his fellow servicemen; he shared their hardships and attended to their spiritual well-being. So it was no surprise that on 7 September 1967, Capodanno rushed into action after an ambush by the North Vietnamese Army Force while on a mission to

rescue two Marine companies that had been attacked in the Que Son Valley. He ran through intense enemy fire to administer last rites and assist with medical aid. Between dragging men off the battlefield and coming to the aid of several injured marines, his fellow soldiers perceived Capodanno as a hero. Capodanno was instantly killed when he put himself between a corpsman and an enemy machine gun situated merely yards from his position. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on 7 January 1969.

During the Battle of Dak To, on 19 November 1967, **Chaplain Charles Watters** of the 173rd Support Battalion, was moving with one of the battalion's companies when it was attacked by an enemy battalion. He was unarmed and exposed to both friendly and enemy fire, yet he marched forward with his men aiding the wounded, assisting in their evacuations, and administering last rites to the dying. In addition, Watters carried a shocked paratrooper out of the way of enemy fire, and repeatedly risked his life running in front of enemy fire to evacuate fallen soldiers. Once all the wounded was within the established perimeter, Watters was able to assist with medical care, providing food and water, providing dressing to wounds, and giving spiritual strength. He was mortally wounded while giving aid to the injured. He was awarded the Medal of Honor on 4 November 1969.

Korea

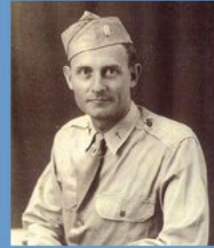
Chaplain (Capt.) Emil Kapaun, 1st Cavalry Division, served as an Army chaplain in both World War II and Korea. Preferring to serve near the front lines so he could attend to the needs of his men, Kapaun maintained a U.S. Army jeep as a portable altar in the field. At the battle of Unsan, North Pyongan province (what is present-day North Korea), Chinese



Lt. Vincent Capodanno
7 January 1969



Charles Watters
4 November 1969



Capt. Emil Kapaun
11 April 2013

assaults inflicted thousands of American and South Korean casualties. Kapaun calmly walked through the obliterating firefight to provide comfort and medical aid to his comrades and evacuate the wounded. On 1 November 1950, Kapaun and some others were captured by advancing Chinese forces. While Kapaun managed to escape the captors, he ultimately decided to stay with the wounded soldiers. This decision led to his recapture, but Kapaun managed to save the life of an American sergeant whose injuries prevented him from walking on his own. Kapaun physically supported the man for sixty miles as they walked to the

prisoner-of-war (POW) camp; this compassionate act inspired the other captives. While in the POW camp, Kapaun ministered to the sick and wounded American POWs and stole scarce food to bring to the weak, all the while praying to Saint Dismas, the penitent thief and patron saint of condemned prisoners, for protection. Kapaun died of pneumonia in the prison camp in May 1951. He was awarded the Medal of Honor on 11 April 2013, after U.S. Rep. Todd Tiahrt campaigned for Kapaun to receive the honor. ■

—Editor, *Military Review*



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