

## **Alumni Spotlight: Jesus Dominguez (MDiv '18)**



**Current Title & Military Branch:** US Navy, Command Chaplain for 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines

**Family:** Wife: Alyssa, Children: Anel and Jadan

**Favorite professors:** Hard one! Dr. McDowell and Dr. Cooper

**Favorite class:** All my Hebrew classes!

**Favorite memory:** Nearly every Hebrew class remains a fond memory.

### **What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?**

The Navy requires two years of post-MDiv experience. Consequently, immediately following graduation, I was accepted for a CPE residential program at Wake Forest Baptist. I completed one unit before I was offered a job as a prison Chaplain with the Federal Bureau of Prisons at a penitentiary in Tucson, AZ. After one year doing that job, I applied for Navy Chaplaincy and was accepted in September 2019.

### **What do you love about your work as a military chaplain?**

Serving God and country. Serving God while I serve my country by caring for the men and women of our military and their families is the most rewarding.

### **What are the particular challenges of serving as a military chaplain in general and/or in your specific context?**

Working in a secular context is challenging. This is especially difficult if the chaplain has no formal experience in counseling. Also, particularly challenging to military chaplaincy is time away from family. Military personnel in general spend many years away from family over the span of their career.

### **How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?**

I left the US Marines after fifteen years of service for the specific purpose of becoming a Navy Chaplain. Going was part of that journey. My religious endorser (Anglican Church

in North America – Jurisdiction of Armed Forces and Chaplaincy) required I attend GCTS due to its reputation for rigorous academics and their Anglican track. Gordon-Conwell's emphasis in biblical languages was really what made me truly appreciate my time there as it helped me better my relationship with God. The added benefit of having access to world-class instructors for the counseling program gave me confidence for the job military chaplains do.



**What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on the work you do now or the way you do your work?**

Languages help me in my faith life. Being able to read scriptures as they were written is food for my soul. God knows how our soul is depleted as Chaplains, given that we are the front-line workers often looking at evil straight in the eye.

My counseling minor really prepared me for 90% of the work I do. The great majority of my interactions with service members are for pastoral counseling. With the exemption that religion is hardly ever on the table as most are atheist or "nones." Proselytizing is prohibited, thus sharing the Gospel is challenging, though not impossible.

**What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving as a military chaplain?**

Obtain a Pastoral Counseling minor! It is a running joke that the chaplaincy requirement is an MDiv when so few of us actually get to work at a chapel. The great majority of our workdays are spent in counseling. Get counseling classes on conflict resolution, marriage and family, crisis and addictions, and cross-cultural counseling.

Take some classes in apologetics when available. Working in a secular context, you will want to know how to defend your faith when the opportunity comes to share the Gospel with those who are searching in many places.

Take at least one unit of CPE. It will prepare you for the work as a chaplain by way of working in a secular context, in pastoral counseling, and exposing you to pain and suffering in ways most churches never will.

**Do you have any publications or links to share?**

I was the recipient of the [Navy Chaplain Corps Professional Naval Chaplain Excellence Award](#) for exceptional performance. This is one of the top awards given by the Navy Chaplain Corps to one Chaplain out of the entire Corps, once a year.