

## **LCS Unit Order 33**

### **LANCASTER STATION**

#### **UNIT ORDER # 33**

### **CLERGY COUNCIL**

It is the policy of Lancaster Station to support and facilitate the activities of the Sheriff's Clergy Council, an interfaith and interdenominational body of local clergy and lay leaders organized with the concurrence of Sheriff Jim McDonald. As certified civilian volunteers, the members of the clergy council are an integral part of Lancaster Station's crime prevention/community relations team. Moreover, they are aware it is a privilege to be a civilian volunteer, and they serve at the discretion of the Sheriff.

Created to augment the services provided by the Sheriff's Department, the clergy council is expected to help improve service and increase the level of understanding between the Department and the community. The clergy council is in a unique position to provide the Department and the community with the following benefits:

- a unified and supportive fellowship among local clergy and peacemakers in volatile situations by virtue of their office and presence
- spiritual guidance during crisis situations, emotional support for the victims of violent crimes, visits to local families, and members for troubled youth
- an extra pair of hands to provide continuing care for residents when time constraints prevent deputies from working out a complete resolution

Clergy council members shall be afforded every courtesy and shall adhere to the requirements delineated in the Manual of Policy and Procedures, Civilian Volunteer Program Coordinator's Manual. Equally as important, station personnel shall take every opportunity to develop and explore meaningful partnerships with the clergy council.

### **Guidelines and Responsibilities**

United in religious dedication and committed to improving the quality of life in Lancaster and the surrounding

area in every capacity possible, the clergy council's overall responsibilities include assisting and supporting Lancaster Station and the following:

- providing on-call response to crisis situations (rapes, homicides, disturbances, *etc.*) *at the request of deputy personnel*
- maintaining open lines of communication between the community and the personnel of Lancaster station.

### **Membership Requirements**

Membership in the Lancaster station Sheriff's Clergy Council is predicated upon the following criteria:

- must be an adult (18 years of age or older)
- ordained or licensed minister/pastor and/or hold equivalent spiritual stature in his/her respective community
- it is strongly recommended but not required that the member successfully complete the Lancaster station's clergy / community academy or the clergy academy of a law enforcement agency recognized by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- completed background investigation
- approval of the unit commander

### **Meetings**

The Lancaster Station's Sheriff's Clergy Council will meet bi-monthly.

### **Liaison**

Functional oversight and liaison with the clergy council will be the responsibility of the crime prevention / community relations deputy and the station chaplain. All matters related to the clergy council shall be referred to him.

## **On-call Procedures**

Capable of providing spiritual support during a crisis or defusing volatile situations, the members of the sheriff's clergy council are available to visit local families, and provide deputies with an extra set of hands when time constraints prevent additional involvement. Sometimes the reporting party will need the services of the clergy much as, or more than, he needs a police report. In most situations, the station chaplains will initiate the use of the clergy council in crisis situations or at the request of the station supervisor who will initiate the use of clergy council members.

If those needs are immediate, it may be beneficial to contact an on-call member of the Clergy Council. At the request of deputy personnel and the discretion of the field sergeant, these individuals are available after-hours, and can be contacted through the Watch Deputy.

## **Call-outs**

The following is a list of the circumstances where the on-call services of the Clergy Council may prove beneficial:

- crisis situations (rape, assaults, homicides, disturbance, etc.)
- crisis intervention (a death in the family, a family or civil disturbance, etc.)
- spiritual counseling (death, divorce, loneliness, anxiety, etc.)
- any clergy-related tasks that may help diffuse difficult situations

## **Considerations**

Notwithstanding their availability, on-call clergy council members shall abide with the following:

- Clergy council members must follow directions given by the deputies at all times.
- Clergy council members cannot accompany a deputy into a private residence without verbal approval

from the resident.

- Clergy council members should be prepared to respond to Lancaster station, local hospitals, or the private residence of the reporting party.
  - Clergy council members shall not become involved in or interfere with any investigation by handling evidence, conducting discussions with the victim or suspect(s) regarding facts about the crime, or handling police equipment.
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