

A THEOLOGICAL-ETHICAL EVALUATION OF CHRISTIAN–MUSLIM DIALOGUE IN THE SWISS ARMY CHAPLAINCY

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Abstract

The growing number of Muslims in the Swiss Army poses a challenge to the Christian chaplaincy by increasing demands regarding Christian–Muslim dialogue. My doctoral dissertation, upon which this paper is based, included an evaluation of this dialogue, which depends on the theological-ethical dialogue principles that are valid in the context of Swiss Protestantism. These principles focus on an explicit commitment to interreligious dialogue, on emphasising commonalities, on respect, on empowering religious minorities, and on bridge-building activities. The evaluation confirms that Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss military context is inadequate. It suggests a new concept which implements the identified dialogue principles and which allows chaplains of all faiths remaining true to their tradition and to their specific spiritual resources. This paper presents a summary overview of the primary focus and findings of my research.

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CHALLENGES FACING CHRISTIAN–MUSLIM DIALOGUE IN THE SWISS ARMY CHAPLAINCY

The Swiss Army is a militia-type army that trains its recruits for four months, after which it provides refresher courses for officers and soldiers for three weeks per year for the duration of their participation. The Swiss Army is not only a militia army, but also a training army that is involved also in a few foreign deployments. As a consequence, officers and soldiers are generally at home over weekends, other than when on weekend training exercises. Collective religious practice is therefore not as common as in armies with numerous foreign deployments, which imply the

long-term absence of officers and soldiers from home. Chaplains only speak to the troops on introducing the chaplains' service, when speaking the *Wort zum Tag*¹ before the training begins in the morning, or at promotion ceremonies. On such occasions, chaplains aim to speak in an inclusive way to address officers and soldiers of all faiths and none. The most important task of Swiss Army chaplains is, however, to advise individual personnel who seek help. The personnel address their private and their army-related problems to the chaplains. Concerns range from ethical to spiritual matters, or questions regarding the implementation of religious rights. The majority of concerns are, however, not faith-specific.

Even though the composition of army personnel has evolved to be more diverse with regard to religious identities consequent upon demographic changes, all chaplains belong exclusively to the Swiss Roman Catholic, the Swiss Protestant, or the Swiss Old Catholic churches. Muslims are presently excluded from the chaplains' team, although the number of Muslim officers and soldiers has increased in some military schools to as much as 10% (Inniger 2016: 452). The question therefore arises whether Christian chaplains can care adequately or appropriately for Muslim army personnel in all situations. Furthermore, whether Muslim army personnel would not perhaps consider the involvement of Muslim chaplains as a sign of respect and full acceptance. Additional questions that are raised include whether a multifaith army chaplaincy would be consonant with Swiss Protestant dialogue principles and, indeed, just what a multifaith army chaplaincy would look like. Eventually, the important issue arises how Protestant chaplains could remain true to their faith if they are involved in a multifaith chaplaincy. This is the underlying issue of religious diversity and what it means and implies in multi-faith situations. The involvement of Muslim chaplains is currently being debated in view of such questions. Of course, the debate considers not only Christian–Muslim relations, but interreligious relations in general. What applies for Christian–Muslim issues applies in principle to all interreligious relations in this chaplaincy. Involvement of Muslims is, however, the specific focus because of demographic pressure and topicality.²

¹ 'Word for the day' – a devotional/reflective commencement act.

² The Swiss Muslim population has permanently increased to almost 6% (Ackerl 2007: 97) while the percentage of the Jewish (0.25%), Buddhist (0.3%), and Hindu (0.5%) population is clearly lower (Universität Luzern 2014).

The Swiss Army Chaplaincy has until now rejected the idea of involving Muslim chaplains. The common arguments against Muslim involvement, and a discussion of them in view of evident Christian–Muslim challenges and social-demographic changes in Switzerland, are summarised as follows.

One argument advanced by the Swiss Army Chaplaincy is that Christian chaplains care competently for all officers and soldiers (Schweizer Armee 2013: 216) and that the presence and expertise of Muslim chaplains is simply not necessary. However, contemporary research on this issue questions this argument. Cimşit (2013: 22) states that the pastoral care for Muslims provided by non-Muslim chaplains may be adequate to some extent, but this can reach its limits if faith-specific questions or problems arise. An extended evaluation of this research (Inniger 2016: 89–183) confirms that in specific situations—for example if a Muslim soldier mourns a family member, or if a Muslim soldier is involved in an accident, or if a Muslim soldier has specific questions regarding the implementation of religious rights—involvement of Muslim chaplains would be necessary. Therefore, the argument that Christian chaplains can care adequately for Muslim officers and soldiers in all situations should be reconsidered.

Another argument is that Muslim officers and soldiers themselves do not consider the chaplaincy service as such to be necessary (Inniger 2016: 366). Seyyar (2013: 87) for example states in this regard that Islam provides pastoral care for all social groups in the same way that all other religions do. Swiss Muslim leaders confirm that an Islamic care service is the logical consequence of the charity pillar of Islam,³ because caring for others is a crucial Islamic duty (Inniger 2016: 369). My research into this dimension confirms, in fact, that the majority of Swiss Muslim officers and soldiers consider the chaplaincy service to be essential and they would like Muslim caregivers to be involved in this service as well as the Christians (2016: 340). The argument that Muslims do not consider this care service as essential should therefore be revised; it is manifestly an unsound position.

One further argument brought forward against Muslim involvement in Swiss Army Chaplaincy is that the lack of public and legal recognition of Muslim organisations in Swiss cantons counts against Muslim involvement in the chaplains' team (Inniger 2016: 366). It is a fact that Muslim organisations in Switzerland have, until now, lacked public and legal

³ Giving charity is one of the five pillars of Muslim faith and life (Editor).

recognition compared to Roman Catholic, Old Catholic and Protestant churches, which enjoy recognition in the majority of Swiss cantons. Nevertheless, this argument must be rebutted, first and foremost because of discriminatory aspects. It is in the interests of the Swiss Federation to avoid discrimination against the second largest religion in Switzerland. Rather, it is in the best interests of the Swiss Federation to integrate minorities, including religious minorities (see Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 1974). If the Swiss Army Chaplaincy involved Muslim chaplains, this would be a helpful measure to promote integration. Therefore, a lack of recognition is not a reason for excluding Muslims in the Swiss Army chaplains' team. Lack of recognition is moreover a reason for including them, since inclusion of Muslims avoids discrimination and supports integration. According to Loretan et al. (2014: 65) any form of involvement of Muslims, who still lack recognition, is an opportunity to promote cooperation between state and Muslim organisations and to further the cause of future recognition.

As well as addressing these more general issues and arguments, my research aims to contribute to the wider debate from a Swiss Protestant perspective by evaluating current Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army chaplaincy and by presenting a new care concept.

A SWISS PROTESTANT PERSPECTIVE ON CHALLENGES FACING CHRISTIAN–MUSLIM DIALOGUE IN THE SWISS ARMY CHAPLAINCY

My question here is whether or not the involvement of Muslims in the chaplains' team, and the change from a one-faith to a multifaith chaplaincy, should be promoted from a Swiss Protestant perspective. Through undertaking an in-depth study of significant Swiss Protestant official theological-ethical statements, arguments, guidelines and practices, five dialogue principles that characterise the Swiss Protestant tradition regarding Christian–Muslim dialogue have been identified (Inniger 2016: 38-63). The consideration of these principles ensures that a Swiss Protestant perspective is taken. These principles, which can be transferred to the Swiss military context (Inniger 2016: 87), are as follows:

- The Swiss Army Chaplaincy is committed to Christian–Muslim dialogue (principle 1).
- The Swiss Army Chaplaincy sees first and foremost the unifying commonalities between Christians and Muslims without neglecting the existing differences (principle 2).

- The Swiss Army Chaplaincy respects Muslim officers and soldiers and Islamic attitudes, concerns and needs (principle 3).
- The Swiss Army Chaplaincy empowers Muslims to stand by their religious conviction, and, therefore, it considers the concerns of Muslim officers and soldiers in this care service (principle 4).
- The Swiss Army Chaplaincy aims to build bridges between Christians and Muslims in the context of the Swiss Army (principle 5).

My research evaluates in some detail the current state of Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army Chaplaincy against these principles and recommends changes based on the consideration of them. In particular, it aims at providing an appropriate concept of interreligious cooperation in the Swiss Army Chaplaincy.

Regarding the evaluation of current Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army Chaplaincy, ecumenical, interreligious and governmental partners confirm the validity of these dialogue principles (Inniger 2016: 59-62). My research investigated whether or not these principles of the Swiss Protestant tradition regarding Christian–Muslim dialogue have been implemented in the context of the current Swiss Army Chaplaincy (2016: 89-183). The investigation was carried out among Muslim officers and soldiers, Swiss Army commanders and chaplains, and national and international experts. It is apparent from the results that these principles have not been fully accepted and implemented in the Swiss military context. Discrepancies between the current state of Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army Chaplaincy and Swiss Protestant dialogue standards evince specific shortcomings regarding the implementation of these dialogue principles. These shortcomings concern, for example, the lack of specific Islamic expertise among Christian chaplains and the lack of specific support for Muslim personnel in the matter of the implementation of religious rights and in the matter of spiritual care. There is also lack of trust among Muslim army personnel regarding the Christian care service, not least because of Christian monopoly and the specific Christian credo of this service, which states that all Swiss Army chaplains witness, by accomplishing their task, ‘Jesus Christ in today’s age of pluralism’ (Schweizer Armee 2014). The shortcomings also concern the marginalisation, systematic rejection and exclusion of Muslim caregivers from the chaplains’ team and, in consequence, the lack of sensitivity for religious minorities in the Swiss Army.

Clearly, the implementation of these five principles is incomplete. Research shows that Christian–Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army

Chaplaincy is inadequate and should be reconsidered. Recommendations for the improvement of the situation are necessary if the current Christian–Muslim dialogue in this chaplaincy is to correspond to Swiss Protestant dialogue standards. Therefore, the results of my research recommend the implementing of the Swiss Protestant theological-ethical dialogue principles in this chaplaincy. This will lead to a Swiss Army Chaplaincy that adequately promotes Christian–Muslim and interreligious dialogue. The aim of this new conceptualisation is that all officers and soldiers would experience the chaplains’ commitment to interreligious dialogue as beneficial (principle 1) and that the principle of unifying commonalities would be emphasised in such a way that this service really is accessible to all personnel (principle 2). Moreover, such a conceptualisation would emphasise the principle of respect in such a way that the missionary credo will be reconsidered, that rules regarding inclusive public speech will be established and respected and that participation of Muslim and other non-Christian caregivers will be supported (principle 3). Such a conceptualisation would implement the principle of empowerment in such a way that Muslim officers and soldiers have access to the same opportunities and resources (principle 4). Finally, this conceptualisation would develop a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy in which bridge-building between all army personnel and from all faiths and ideologies can be experienced by officers and soldiers (principle 5).

TOWARD A MULTIFAITH SWISS ARMY CHAPLAINCY: A RECOMMENDATION

Considering the above-mentioned Swiss Protestant perspective, it is evident that one can recommend a new care-concept to the Swiss Army Chaplaincy. This conceptualisation implements the identified dialogue principles, meets the requirements of Swiss Protestant dialogue standards, and promotes Christian-Muslim and interreligious dialogue. My dissertation research concludes with the recommendation to establish a Swiss Army Chaplaincy that is multifaith-oriented and that includes Muslim chaplains (and chaplains of other faiths), so furthering Christian–Muslim and interreligious dialogue. The following preliminary remarks explain the idea of the recommended multifaith concept (see: Inniger 2016: 204–231). The chaplains of such a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy would be committed to interreligious dialogue (principle 1). Moreover, it is the idea of the recommended model to implement the identified dialogue principles by including the terms ‘humanity’, ‘respectful coexistence’, and

‘spiritual well-being’ in the commitment of this new conceptualisation (cf. 3.2). Through the use of these terms the dialogue principles would be implicitly implemented.

The term ‘humanity’ emphasises our common humanity insofar as this chaplaincy does not differentiate between Jews, Hindus, Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists, or between atheist, non-denominational and humanist soldiers; it sees, first and foremost, human beings. This care service is a human-to-human service that respects the existence of the unifying commonalities of all human beings (principle 2). Furthermore, the reference to ‘respectful coexistence’ emphasises that diversity is respected and intercultural and interreligious awareness is promoted. ‘Respectful coexistence’ is necessary in an army where people live so closely together. The term ‘respectful coexistence’ implicitly defines the identified dialogue principles of respect (principle 3) and building bridges (principle 5). The term ‘spiritual well-being’ is, above all, the main concern of any chaplaincy including, of course, the Swiss Army Chaplaincy. The intention of the Swiss Army to provide appropriate care and to consider the spiritual needs of all personnel is included in this term. The essence of the Swiss Protestant principle of empowerment resonates in this term (principle 4). If the recommended multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy can help all soldiers and officers to experience humanity, respectful coexistence and spiritual well-being, the identified dialogue principles would then have been implemented and the purpose of this chaplaincy fulfilled.

This suggested model of the Swiss Army Chaplaincy would be committed to the spiritual well-being of all Swiss Army personnel. It would respect freedom of belief and conscience, and, therefore, the individual faith and life approach of every officer and soldier. The faith tradition of chaplains would, however, remain in the background because this service is a human-to-human service. The Swiss Army Chaplaincy would be committed to our common humanity, to respectful coexistence, to religious diversity, to non-proselytising, and to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, and especially, to Swiss law, human rights, human dignity and the values of justice, freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance (Inniger 2016: 211-212). Nevertheless, providing faith-specific care would thus be a primary positive outcome.

A multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy would offer its services to all officers and soldiers in such a way that there would be congruence between the religious identities and needs of all personnel and the religious identities and skills of the multifaith chaplaincy team. The tasks of

this chaplaincy would in general concur with the traditional tasks of the current Swiss Army Chaplaincy, except that these tasks will be carried out by members of a multifaith chaplains' team and not by Christian chaplains alone. Although my dissertation recommends abandoning the one-faith concept by shifting to a multifaith concept, it resists the temptation of providing an exclusive service in which, for example, Christians care for Christians and Muslims care for Muslims. The research recommends establishing a multifaith chaplaincy in which the assigned chaplain—no matter from which religion—is capable and qualified to care for all officers and soldiers of the various military units and schools. A faith-specific model would foster an unhelpful pick-and-choose mentality. It is possible to renounce faith-specific service with regard to day-to-day issues, because officers and soldiers can meet their specific religious or spiritual needs on free weekends. They also have the possibility of taking leave for certain times during the training if they have specific religious needs. Moreover, the organisation would be complicated if faith-specific care were to be provided. Furthermore, such a model would obviously not unite, but divide Swiss Army personnel. In this respect, the question would arise: who in fact is Christian, and who is Muslim?

Since 1995, the Swiss Army has not been registering the religious affiliation of army personnel. Secular Christians and Muslims are less interested in a faith-specific service than they are in receiving practical and helpful guidance. Even the most observant Christians and Muslims may be pleasantly surprised and impressed regarding the open-mindedness and professionalism of a chaplain of another faith. The claims for faith-specific care regarding day-to-day issues would, above all, strictly contradict the intentions of my research, which considers—with regard to the Protestant faith—the unconditionality and universality of God's grace (Inniger 2016: 18-21) and the universal dimension of religion. Faith-specific care would involve a diminishment of faiths and religions by banishing them to narrowly defined communities. If chaplains only care for officers and soldiers of the same faith, universal religions would be reduced to religious groups and subgroups; in consequence, faith-specific chaplains would service only the members of these groups and subgroups. The religions represented in the chaplains' team are, however, not religious groups but universal religions with a universal message, calling people together in the name of peace and love. They are dedicated to humanity, respectful coexistence and the spiritual well-being of all human beings. In the name of these universal religions chaplains could

provide the recommended human-to-human service. Faith-specific care would only be provided in very specific situations.

The practical tasks

If the Swiss Army decides to establish a multifaith chaplaincy in line with the recommendations of my research, all chaplains would be assigned to different military units and schools. They would share, regardless of their religious affiliation, all general tasks of this chaplaincy. A first task of chaplains would be their involvement with the military staff and in military life, establishing contact and building confidence in a military context. In this context, chaplains would care for army personnel with regard to concerns of implementing religious rights (facilitating the implementation of religious rights and the religious practice of individuals, and advising commanders regarding these issues), with regard to social concerns (daily life in the army, problems with superiors, questions regarding a military career, mobbing, writing a will), personal concerns (personal or professional development, friendships, relationships, family, sorrows), ethical concerns (ethical questions, military operations), and spiritual concerns (spiritual needs and prayer). Caring also includes a general triage function.⁴ This means that chaplains should, in a spirit of empowerment, recommend that personnel contact, as appropriate—be it a doctor, psychologist, social worker, the commander or the head of the company in which the personnel serves. Furthermore, the general tasks of chaplains will include presenting the chaplains' service, and visiting troops, officers and soldiers in training, officers and soldiers under arrest, and those in the infirmary. Tasks would also include speaking publicly, for example, at the occasion of the *Wort zum Tag* in the morning, at the occasion of promotion ceremonies, flag presentations or when closing a military unit, and at other occasions of meetings and gatherings. Cooperating in working groups and foreign deployments would be necessary as well as attending refresher courses and chaplains' gatherings. Supporting the Swiss Army Care Team and providing help in emergencies would also be an important general task for chaplains who are specifically trained for this.

⁴ Army chaplains in Switzerland have this triage function because they can be contacted without the permission of commanders and other officers. Because of this uncomplicated and easy access, Swiss Army chaplains are very often contacted, and more often than not, they recommend that soldiers seek further help.

Although the recommended concept avoids faith-specific care services regarding day-to-day issues, it considers that in a few specific exceptional cases the tasks of chaplains can be better carried out by faith-specific chaplains. In a multifaith chaplaincy these chaplains will be available. Specific situations would be clearly defined: Chaplains would provide faith-specific advice if commanders or chaplains' colleagues transfer faith-specific questions on behalf of personnel; they would advise indirectly via the chaplain or commander.⁵ Moreover, if officers and soldiers have faith-specific concerns in connection with grief and death, assigned chaplains or commanders would facilitate a face-to-face meeting with a faith-specific chaplain. Furthermore, chaplains would be involved in faith-specific tasks when overseeing rituals in connection with military accidents and incidents. Finally, chaplains would be involved in faith-specific tasks and when issuing faith-specific documentation and information. If these specific situations are clearly defined, a pick-and-choose mentality can be ruled out from the outset, but all the tasks of a chaplaincy would be covered.

The chaplains' qualification

In the recommended multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy, the following qualifications of chaplains would be required. First, candidates must give proof in an assessment that they understand and accept the function and commitment of the Swiss Army Chaplaincy. They must also understand the advantages of a multifaith chaplaincy. They must be fully motivated to be involved in this chaplaincy. Furthermore, candidates must give proof that they are able to change perspective⁶ as necessary, and that they have a good knowledge of the Swiss religious landscape and of the implementation of religious rights. Secondly, candidates must be theological professionals of an officially and legally recognised Swiss church (Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, or Protestant), of the Orthodox or of a Swiss Free church, or of a Swiss Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu or other religious

⁵ Muslim officers and soldiers sometimes do not contact Christian chaplains because they know from experience that they cannot adequately meet Islamic standards, for example, if Muslims would like to know from a chaplain how they can deal with ritual cleansing in out-door camps (Inniger 2016: 341-342). If, however, this specific situation is not mentioned in the information sheets, the chaplain of this Muslim soldier could contact his or her Muslim colleague for advice.

⁶ Changing perspective does not mean changing one's own faith, rather it means understanding the faith of others and their related needs.

organisation under private law. The candidates should be recommended by their churches or religious organisations for this service. Thirdly, candidates must give proof of their religious and theological training and expertise by possessing a Master's degree in Theology, Religious Science, Interreligious Studies, Jewish or Islamic Studies or an acceptable cognate field of study. The candidates must also give proof of training and expertise regarding counselling and care. The experts of the Swiss Army Chaplaincy would then decide whether or not the candidate has adequate and appropriate qualifications to start chaplaincy training. Fourth, the candidates have to provide evidence of experience regarding military service and they have to be fluent in one of the four Swiss national languages (German, French, Italian or Rhaeto-Rumansh). In addition to this, they must have a good working knowledge of at least one other Swiss national language.

Advantages of the model

The advantages of the recommended multifaith concept of chaplaincy are obvious. First, every officer and soldier knows that the assigned chaplain belongs to a chaplains' team in which the chaplains work closely together with colleagues of every religious affiliation. As a result, officers and soldiers of different faiths know that their religion is represented in the chaplains' team and is respected and honoured by all chaplains, irrespective of their specific religious identity and affiliation. This awareness, and the platform of mutual acceptance it provides, is confidence-building. Secondly, Swiss Army chaplains from every faith carry out their tasks in a neutral way and to the benefit of all officers and soldiers. Army personnel can confidently trust that their assigned chaplains are committed to a human-to-human care service. Thirdly, it is confidence-building if officers and soldiers of every faith know that the established information sheets of the Swiss Army regarding individual religious practice were authored by experts of their own faith; the suggestions about how to implement religious rights and how to practice religion under specific circumstances stem from chaplains of one's own faith. Fourth, officers and soldiers know that, if faith-specific questions arise, their assigned chaplain or their commander can contact a faith-specific chaplain who can advise the assigned chaplain or the commander regarding specific questions and situations. These advisors are integrated into the military service and serve in different military units or schools. Fifth, army personnel will know that a faith-specific chaplain can be called on

site if an accident occurs, or if an officer or a soldier loses a family member and is grieving. Also in the case of faith-specific ceremonies, a faith-specific chaplain is available. In such situations the persons affected or their related parties should express their wishes regarding the religious affiliation of their chaplain.

REMAINING TRUE TO ONE'S OWN FAITH IN A MULTIFAITH CHAPLAINCY

Although this research proposes that Muslim and other non-Christian chaplains should be included in the chaplains' team, it also proposes that Christian chaplains of a multifaith chaplaincy remain true to their own faith. Swiss Protestant army chaplains, for example, remain Protestant chaplains. They have their own faith-specific traditions, their specific resources, and their specific motivation. In a militia army, Protestant chaplains minister to their own congregations on Sundays. The Bible remains the basis of their faith. In this context the question arises: How can a Protestant chaplain remain true to his or her faith while being involved in a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy in which the service is a human-to-human service, and in which the chaplain's faith remains in the background? Regarding this issue I suggest that all chaplains involved in a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy should, in the spirit of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, discuss this question. All the chaplains have their own background and their faith-specific resources. My research focusses necessarily on Christian, and specifically Protestant, resources.

In the first instance, my research points to how a Christian-Biblical background and Protestant-specific resources nourish, inspire and empower Protestant Swiss Army chaplains and how this background and these specific resources define the chaplains' attitude (Inniger 2016: 232-244). The enumeration of Christian-Biblical and specific Protestant resources regarding chaplaincy does not claim to be complete, but it points out what this research understands regarding faith-specific resources. Even if these resources, which Protestant chaplains share with other Christian chaplains, remain in the background when caring for others, they nevertheless influence the chaplains' attitudes. These resources include the following.

1. *Faith in God, the Creator.* One resource of Christian chaplains is faith in a God who created all human beings (cf. Isaiah 45:18). For Christian chaplains who are involved in a multifaith Swiss Army

Chaplaincy, this faith fosters the view that all army personnel are part of God's humanity. On this basis, Christian chaplains value all army personnel equally, that is, as equal, and equally, creatures of God.

2. *Faith in God, the Good Shepherd.* Another resource is faith in God the Good Shepherd (cf. Psalm 23:1-4). This does not imply that Christian chaplains necessarily speak about their faith experience regarding the Good Shepherd. Rather, this belief is embodied in the chaplains' attitude. Army personnel who contact Christian chaplains during difficult times might feel comforted if chaplains are able to non-verbally communicate their faith that every human being is cared for by God. Christian chaplains should, instead of speaking about personal faith and beliefs, respectfully ask the soldier a question such as: 'Have you ever experienced in your life things that make you calm and confident?' Very often, army personnel begin to speak in such moments of how they have dealt with similar situations or from what or where they have drawn support. Sometimes, they mention the faith of their grandmother or the charisma of a teacher or a neighbour from earlier times who inspired them. Very often, such starting points can be used for activating the specific resources of those seeking help and advice.
3. *The Good Samaritan.* The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) can be seen as another resource for Christian chaplains. It refers to faith in a Jesus who did not distinguish between the religions of caregivers and those who receive their care. In consequence, Christian chaplains may consider care for each other as a human-to-human service modelled after this parable. It would therefore be an outstanding resource for Christian chaplains working in a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy. The man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho was a human being. The Samaritan was a human being as well. Was the man attacked by robbers concerned with the religion of the Samaritan? Did the Samaritan concern himself with the religion of the man attacked by the robbers? This human-to-human service would be a role model for Christian Swiss Army chaplains in a multifaith chaplaincy. According to Schipani (2009: 66) Jesus teaches in this parable that caregivers 'engaged in interfaith situations may discover new dimensions of meaning and love through caring especially well for those who are different or a 'minority''. Schipani adds that this parable helps to rediscover gospel truth by being open to the faith of others (2009: 66). This resource points out the understanding of Jesus as the one who calls for loving care among all human beings.

4. *The Last Judgement*. A further Christian resource can be seen in the parable of the Last Judgement (Matthew 25:31-46) in which Jesus states that whatever we do for 'one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine' (Matthew 25:40) we do for Jesus. This resource would support those Christians serving as chaplain in a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy as well. Following Schipani, this parable helps Christian chaplains to see and to serve Jesus in interfaith situations.

Pastoral caregivers may recognize and honor their daily walk into/within sacred places because visiting the sick strangers and their relatives (other-than-Christian) is an occasion to care for 'one of the least of these...'; instead of trying to 'bring Jesus' to the care receivers, they can confidently expect to encounter Christ in them and to care for Christ, as it were, through them (2009: 66).

Confidence that care is given in this spirit of Christ gives serving as a Christian chaplain in the multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy full meaning.

5. *The Easter Events*. Another Christian-Biblical resource is the belief in the resurrection of Christ (Luke 24:6a). Even if Christian chaplains do not speak about this, they believe that the resurrection signifies that God's encouragement of life is stronger than all tribulations and even stronger than death. Why should belief in the events of Easter not be included as a resource regarding Christian involvement in the multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy? As long as Christian chaplains do not preach or proselytise in the secular context of the Swiss Army they remain true to themselves if they believe in the resurrection of Christ. This faith often gives Christian chaplains the strength and the hope they need for their service.

Some further resources that are specifically connected to Protestant faith are listed below, together with the understanding of Protestant practical theologians referring to these specific resources. These Protestant resources can inspire Protestant chaplains to contribute to this service as well. Moreover, these Protestant-specific resources can help to identify an appropriate Protestant approach to caregiving in a multifaith chaplaincy, should the multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy be realised.

6. *Sola gratia: the Grace of God*. This refers to faith in God's grace which brings about salvation and justification without human contribution. In view of this perspective, Protestant chaplains should see all army personnel as beneficiaries of God's unconditional and universal grace. Bernhardt (2007: 46) confirms that all people have salutary

relations to God; indeed, such relations are essential if God's plan for salvation is unconditional and universal. This view offers Protestant Army Chaplains confidence regarding their involvement in a multi-faith chaplaincy because they have no need for proselytising; rather, they can concentrate on their human-to-human service. The light of God's grace shines on all army personnel.

7. *Solus Christus: Christ alone.* Walther (2009: 274) asks how Protestant chaplains should deal with the doctrine of *solus Christus*. She refers first to the biblical story of Noah's ark and God's covenant with Noah (Genesis 6-9) and states that chaplaincy in a multifaith context can be seen as 'a happening under the rainbow' (2009: 274). If Protestant chaplains commune with people from outside of their own faith tradition when caring for them, and when caring together with chaplains of other faiths in the same chaplaincy, it is an activity which happens under one rainbow and which can be interpreted as a human covenant revealing God's peace (2009: 274). In this context, Walther does not see involvement in a multifaith chaplaincy as a contradiction to the exclusive claim of the doctrine of *solus Christus*. She states that Protestants can, eschatologically, expect God to relieve the soteriological tension between the Reformation doctrine of *solus Christus* and the multifaith reality by having reasonable respect and appreciation for traditions from outside the Christian faith tradition and by relying on the healing and saving power that exists within them. Chaplains who so expect God to relieve this tension live in the soteriological hope that makes involvement in a multifaith care service possible and which makes the need to missionise unnecessary (2009: 273-274).
8. *True being-in-the-world.* Lartey (2003: 175-177) contributes further by stating perspectives that are helpful for Protestants in multifaith chaplaincies. With regard to pastoral care in multifaith chaplaincies he mentions the term *kenosis*, which means the process of 'emptying' (2003: 175). Lartey states that it belongs to the core of Christian understanding that Christ's emptying of himself in the incarnation is the heart of the gospel, as celebrated in Philippians 2:5-8. He refers to the fact that *kenosis* is the quintessence of the life of God, who is constantly engaging in acts of giving and of emptying himself for humanity (2003: 175-177). He states that even if the origins of the term 'pastoral care' are Christian, pastoral care should no longer refer exclusively to Christian faith and care because *kenosis* has, in this respect as well, further implications:

It is my view that the time has come for the essence of 'pastoral care' to be freed from the captivity of its 'selfhood' in terms of origin, in order that it can engage in real terms with the pluralism of the current world. Will it by so doing lose its essence and identity? I think not, for it is in such self-emptying that its true being-in-the-world may be realized. It is in giving away its very self that its truest goals will be achieved. Pastoral caregivers need the humility and trust in the divine presence that will enable us not to hold on tenaciously and obsessively to the symbols of office. Instead will flourish an 'other' directed practice that respects difference and seeks to give itself away in loving service (Lartey 2003: 176).

According to Lartey, the process of *kenosis* is necessary so that one can free oneself from old care concepts and developing openness to the experience of 'God's creative genius [that] challenges and calls us out of our lazy, monotonous repetitions of sameness into the rich colour of the diversity that surrounds us' (2003: 177). If one transfers Lartey's idea to the current inadequate situation of the Swiss Army Chaplaincy, this care service should be freed from its current captivity so that it develops openness towards interreligious dialogue. From a Protestant perspective, Protestant chaplains would, therefore, confidently be involved in a multifaith chaplaincy. In the sense of *kenosis*, this chaplaincy would sever ties with care models of the past in favour of models that reflect and realise 'true being-in-the-world'. In this context Lartey adds that *incarnation* theology is closely linked to the term *kenosis*. 'The presence and activity of God is to be found in the midst of the experiences of the world.... It's a call to recognize God's presence in the various cultures and heritages of the world. It is to stand in awe of the mystery of 'otherness'' (2003: 176). Following Lartey (2003: 176), the idea of *incarnation* allows Protestant chaplains to see, for example, the words of Jesus, who came that 'they may have life, and have it to the full' (John 10:10b), in the sense that 'the fullness of life' is given to all army personnel.

Based on these Christian-Biblical and Protestant-specific perspectives and resources, Protestant chaplains should see their involvement in the recommended multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy as 'true being-in-the-world'. Therefore, Protestant chaplains would be able to confidently serve in a multifaith chaplains' team and support atheist, agnostic, anti-clerical, non-denominational, humanist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist or Hindu personnel by seeing them all in the light of God's unconditional and universal grace, and by supporting them regarding their own growing into 'fullness of life'.

CONCLUSION

Social and demographic developments affect Swiss churches generally, and the Christian army chaplaincy specifically. Christian–Muslim dialogue is a current challenge for the Swiss Army Chaplaincy in which Protestant churches are involved. However, if Swiss Protestant churches consider their own principles, which are valid in their own tradition regarding Christian–Muslim and interreligious dialogue, there is nothing to stop the establishment of a multifaith Swiss Army Chaplaincy in which Muslim chaplains are involved as well. Moreover, this development should not be seen as a risk, but as an opportunity. The process of establishing a multifaith chaplaincy can promote awareness among Protestant churches, whose wide resources and rich experiences can be brought to bear in order to facilitate a multifaith chaplaincy. If Protestant chaplains help the chaplains’ multifaith team to cooperate under the one rainbow of God’s promise for peace, and if ‘Good Samaritans’ of diverse religious professionals care together for those army personnel who seek advice and help, ‘sincere Christian-Muslim dialogue in the Swiss Army Chaplaincy will not remain an unfulfilled vision’ (Inniger 2016: 252).

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