The European Network of Health Care Chaplaincy

August 20, 2008

To the participants of the
Finnish Hospital Chaplaincy Conference of 2008

Dear Fellow Chaplains,

It is most reassuring to all the chaplaincies in Europe when news comes that a national chaplaincy will hold an annual conference. There can never be solidarity in our work as spiritual health care providers if we remain alone, whether that be on a personal level, a local level, a national level or a universal level.

The Finnish Chaplaincy has proven to be a stronghold in European Health Care Chaplaincy throughout the years. Besides your national solidarity and unity, you have fostered these qualities in the ENHCC throughout its history.

Your theme, "Bridge over troubled waters" is another indication of your awareness that none of us can act alone and that no one can cross over the various currents that life affords sufficiently when left by one's self. In all the "troubled waters" of life, there is always a undercurrent that is seeks God's presence. In the Ancient Christian Syriac *Homily on Guria and Shamuna,* we are called to be bridges to men: "come and be a bridge to let them pass over to God, for whom they were longing. *Our task as chaplains is not only to build bridges but to be bridges between all levels of human*

existence. We, though, must remember that *all the bridges we build must lead to God.*

Hoping that your gathering will be successful, I assure you that Finland will be a steady bridge in a united chaplaincy within Europe.

On behalf of all the Chaplaincies of Europe, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

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