

Biography of The Most Reverend Neal J. Buckon

Bishop Neal James Buckon, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, is the son of John and Rita Buckon, and is the second of their seven children. He graduated from Gesu Elementary School and Cathedral Latin High School. Bishop Buckon holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from John Carroll University in Cleveland, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Cleveland State University, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy from Borromeo College of Ohio. Bishop Buckon also received a Masters of Divinity Degree and a Master of Arts Degree in Church History from Saint Mary's Seminary in Cleveland, Ohio. Following his graduate theological studies he was ordained a priest in May 1995 for the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio and assigned to Saint Margaret Mary Church in South Euclid, Ohio.

In May 1975 he was recognized as a Distinguished Military Graduate and appointed as a Regular Army Officer and served in both the Infantry and Transportation Branches of the United States Army. After serving on active duty for seven years, he resigned his commission, traveled the world (visiting over one hundred countries), and entered into the ministry. While a Co-sponsored Seminarian, he served in the United States Army Reserve as a Chaplain Candidate and was subsequently accessioned into the United States Army Chaplain Corps in 1996.

His previous Infantry assignments include serving as Rifle Platoon Leader and Weapons Platoon Leader with the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, 1st Armor Division, Erlangen, Germany; and Battalion S4 and Company Commander with the 3rd Battalion, 19th Infantry, 24th Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Georgia. His Transportation Corps assignments include serving in Mannheim Germany as a Platoon Leader and Company Operations Officer with the 28th Transportation Battalion, and as a Platoon Leader and Transportation Officer in the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the Allied Command Europe, Mobile Force (Land) (AMFL) (including deployments to Denmark, England, and Norway). His Chaplain assignments include serving as the 2nd Psychological Operations Group Chaplain in Cleveland, Ohio (including a deployment to Bosnia); the Division Artillery (DIVARTY) Chaplain for the 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Georgia; the Army Central Command – Saudi Arabia (ARCENT-SA) Chaplain in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; the Division Engineer (DIVENG) Chaplain for the 1st Armored Division, Giessen, Germany; the Engineer Brigade Chaplain and Senior Catholic Priest for Task Force Baghdad, Iraq (OIF-1); the Deputy Garrison Chaplain in Heidelberg, Germany; the Garrison Chaplain of the Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, Oklahoma; the Chaplain for Catholic Ministry, Multi National Corps – Iraq (MNC-I); and the 18th MEDCOM Command Chaplain in Yongsan, Korea. He served his last assignment as the Eighth United States Army (EUSA) Chaplain for Current Operations and Catholic Chaplain in Yongsan, Korea. He retired from the Army on 31 December 2010. He was ordained a bishop on 22 February 2011 for the Archdiocese for the Military Services.

His awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (3 Oak Leaf Clusters), the Parachutist Badge, and the Ranger Tab (RC 11-74).

Bishop Buckon is a Knight Commander of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem; and a 4th Degree Knight of Columbus. He is a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the Catholic War Veterans, and the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). Bishop Buckon was inducted into the United States Army Reserve Officer's Training Corps National Hall of Fame at Fort Knox, Kentucky on 10 June 2016.