

Greetings from FOB Kalsu,

The Holidays are upon us here. Even though the surrounding scenery is not one of hustle and bustle of Malls and ornate displays of lights and festive colors, we are reminded daily of our national and religious rituals of celebration and time with loved ones.

We receive Care Packages daily from across the Nation with food, toiletries, literature and “toys” embedded. We have hundreds of cards, pre-drawn or hand crafted from old and young alike delivered through the postal system and posted around our living areas. We walk by date palms and upon the sands of Mesopotamian that would have been exact replicas of those experienced by the Wise Ones from the East headed for Bethlehem. We have holiday trees standing up daily around our Forward Operating Bases with ornaments and minimal lighting attached. The chapel is remade weekly to reflect the color purple of Advent and the celebration of the coming of Light.

What is noticeably missing though are the sights and sounds of children laughing and playing. Even the daily bickering that a group of healthy kids generate would be a welcome relief at times. Whole families of intergeneration wisdom, grandparents and uncles and aunts are just not here. What we have though is a family of dedicated soldiers, civilians, contractors, local nationals, and third country assist personnel that are doing a phenomenal job of uplifting the best that our nation has to offer – your American Soldier. We celebrate daily and display proudly the multinational, interracial, and dual gender community that is truly a “light” unto the world.

What I wish to offer you from us this Holiday Season is our best wishes for the culmination of this year. You have supported us in your thoughts and actions. You have thought and prayed for us through our train up and our deployment. You have kept us in your daily lives continuing to uplift us. We give you our pledge to continue our work for you, for God and for our country.

Brigade Chaplain Major David Lile

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