



# RTCA

## NEWS & UPDATES

### 2025 RTCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



For many of these faithful servants of Christ, it's a cherished time to reflect, rest, restore, and refuel. It's also a chance to unite as one big RTCA family, creating intentional time in our busy lives to share ideas and best practices, support one another, and simply be reminded of the unique race track ministry and people we have been called to serve.

Thanks to the generosity of faithful donors and industry supporters, RTCA National was blessed to once again host another terrific national conference this February!

Each year, RTCA provides an opportunity for RTCA Chaplains, each member of local councils across the country, ambassadors, and RTCA board members to gather in one place for focused training, skill-building, and spiritual renewal.



This year's conference theme was "Hello SONshine!" - an appropriate way to celebrate a mid-winter retreat in the Sunshine state while focusing on spreading the love of Jesus Christ! The 2025 RTCA National Conference was held in Bradenton, Florida at The Christian Retreat and Conference Center.





RTCA & INDUSTRY PARTNERS WORK  
TOGETHER TO SERVE THE INDUSTRY WE LOVE



RTCA National is grateful for our industry partners who joined us at this year’s conference and presented helpful information and training. Some highlights:

- A panel Q&A, presentation and discussion with Dr. Pete Hester (HISA Medical Director), Mindy Coleman (Jockeys’ Guild Counsel/ RTCA Ambassador), Tasha Saunders (Onrise VP of Operations), and Dan Waits (RTCA) regarding the significant progress and initiatives being made to address jockey mental health and wellness.
- Shannon Kelly (Jockey Club Safety Net) also gave a detailed overview of how the Safety Net process works and who it’s designed to help.



WOMEN’S MINISTRY  
WORKSHOP FEATURE  
A SPECIAL  
RTCA CONNECTION

The women’s ministry workshops continue to evolve and expand, as the national conference transforms from it’s beginnings as a “Chaplain School” to the multi-level training opportunity it is today. More women are serving on chaplaincy staffs, and spouses of RTCA Chaplains also participate in the conference. Tonya Telesco and Margie Spence (daughter/mother) led a two-day workshop of biblical teaching and inspiration.



WORSHIP,  
PRAYER,  
& REFLECTION



# CHAPLAINCY HIGHLIGHTS

SPREADING GOD'S LOVE AT THE TRACK AND BEYOND....

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↑↑ FEED THE BARN WEEK!  
↑↑ ARKANSAS CHAPLAINCY (OAKLAWN)

↓↓ CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES SUPPORT EFFORTS  
↓↓ RACE TRACK CHAPLAINCY OF CALIFORNIA  
(SANTA ANITA)



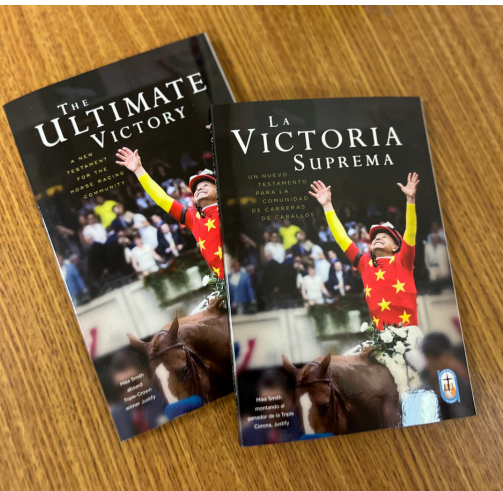
◀◀ CLOTHING CLOSET- CHURCHILL DOWNS  
KENTUCKY RACE TRACK CHAPLAINCY



↑↑ WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHAPEL  
↑↑ RTCA- PA (PARX)



◀◀ MARYLAND RTCA  
(LAUREL PARK)  
BIBLE STUDY & MEAL



## RTCA 2025 BIBLE RE-PRINTING PROJECT UNDERWAY

RTCA National Office is currently working to re-publish 10,000 NT Bibles to distribute to Chaplaincies nationwide! Chaplains, staff, and volunteers will be able to provide Bibles to anyone wanting to read the Word of God. Thanks to a generous gift from a single donor, RTCA was able to publish its first New Testament Bible titled, *The Ultimate Victory* in 2019. It's time to do it again! This is just one example that because of the generosity of our faithful donors, RTCA is able to provide Bibles and other resources to the horse racing industry.

## RTCA HOSTS PRAYER BREAKFAST AT GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM ON RACING

RTCA National hosted a Prayer Breakfast at this year's Arizona Global Racing Symposium. Over 45 people attended, and it was a great time of fellowship and prayer! Thankful for God's blessing upon our time together and everyone's participation. We're excited to see what the 2025 event will bring!



## RTCA NATIONAL PROVIDES SUPPORT AT PALM BEACH DOWNS

*Here are some recent photos of RTCA National Ambassador Nick Caras and Chaplain Alberto Matos serving the community at Palm Beach Downs.*



# GET TO KNOW US

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## RTCA NATIONAL- WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO.

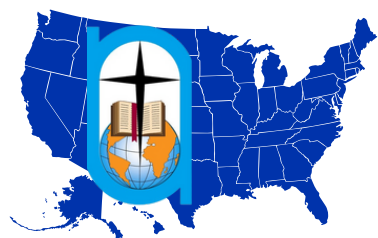
### *What we do.*

#### **OUR MISSION**

From the backstretch to the Board Room, the Chaplains, Councils and volunteers of the Race Track Chaplaincy of America (RTCA) are dedicated to sharing the love of Christ by ministering to the needs of everyone involved in the horse racing industry.

#### **OUR MINISTRY**

Our ministry focuses on meeting the spiritual, emotional, physical, social, and educational needs of those serving in the horse racing industry.



SERVING GOD. SERVING PEOPLE.

#Chaplains  
#Counsel members  
#Volunteers  
#Ambassadors

#### **Board of Directors**

Frank Lamb, President  
Corey Johnson, Vice-President  
John Shumaker, Treasurer  
Tony Valazza, Secretary  
Rick Hooper, Ambassador Representative  
Alberto Matos, Chaplain's Representative  
Melanie Case, Women's Ministry Representative  
Janet Vanbebber, Industry Representative  
Ty Bean, Council President's Representative

#### **National Staff**

Dan Waits, Executive Director  
Omar Aracena, Director of Advancement and Operations  
Karey Colwell, Communications and Donor Coordinator  
Sandy Martin, Administrative Assistant

### *Who we are.*

#### **OUR ORGANIZATION**

Race Track Chaplaincy of America is an evangelical, interdenominational, 501(c)(3) non-profit Christian organization whose purpose is to minister to the spiritual, emotional, physical, social, & educational needs of the workers within the horse racing industry.

In addition to the governance of the Board of Directors, RTCA has a staffed National Service Center, located in Lexington, KY, to oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization. The staff works to maintain and strengthen the network of Chaplaincies by providing:

- Chaplain Recruitment & Screening
- Chaplain Education
- Ministry Resources
- Benevolence
- Council Funding
- Council Start-Up & Guidance
- Annual National Conference
- Best Practices Implementation
- Relationship building with Track Management, Horseman Groups, and other Industry Partners



Dear Lord,

Take us safely across this race track today. As we maneuver each turn, speed through each furlong, thunder down the backstretch, and run home to the finish line, protect my horse and my life. May I always treat my horse with the dignity they deserve as a magnificent creation of your mighty hand. I will honor you with my life today, oh Lord. I trust you and thank you for always being with me. Amen!

[www.rtcanational.org](http://www.rtcanational.org)



#### **A Groom/Hot Walker's Prayer**



Dear Lord,

Today is another day of challenge and danger. The horses that I groom, hot walk, and care for are creations of your mighty hand. Help me to treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve. As I make my horses ready for race day, keep me safe from the hazards that are present on this racetrack every day. I honor you with my life today, oh Lord. I trust you and thank you for always being with me. Amen!

[www.rtcanational.org](http://www.rtcanational.org)



Dear Lord,

The starting gate is a dangerous place to be on this race track. I'm here because it is my job, and I understand the many risks. I ask you, oh Lord, to protect my gate crew members and myself. Protect both horse and human.

May you guide our steps in this confined space and give our riders a clean start. I honor you with my life today. I trust you and thank you for always being with me. Amen!

[www.rtcanational.org](http://www.rtcanational.org)



Dear Lord,

Thank you for the blessing of this new day. Only you know how this day will unfold for me, so I trust you to take me through the challenges that await me.

I will honor you with my life today and thank you for always being with me. This I pray, in the name of the Father, the Son - our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen!



*Race Track Chaplaincy of America provides support to local councils and chaplaincies across the country. These prayer cards (right) are a simple resource that can strengthen or help develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## 2025 RTCA NATIONAL ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT TUESDAY, APRIL 15TH

UNIVERSITY CLUB OF KENTUCKY- BIG BLUE COURSE

REGISTER NOW



[www.rtcnational.org/events](http://www.rtcnational.org/events)

Play golf & support a great cause! Sponsor packages & team registrations due by April 7th!

- Registration table opens 11:30am
- Lunch 12:00pm
- Shotgun start 1:00pm
- Enjoy Games, Prizes, Lunch & After-Round Food



## ANNUAL SALTY ROBERTS PRAYER WALK

RTCA TRACKS NATIONWIDE  
SATURDAY, SEPT. 20, 2025

## RTCA NIGHT OF FAITH, HOPE, & LOVE

DURING BREEDERS' CUP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025



## EASTER GREETINGS

*"I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow." 1 Corinthians 3:6*

Dear RTCA Friends and Family,

Can you believe it? Our long winter is coming to a close and Easter is upon us! Spring is a time of rebirth! After a long and gray winter, we look forward to the warmth of the sun and the growth all around us. Spring is the perfect season to have Easter as it reminds us of the resurrection of our Savior.

There's something fascinating about watching dormant, lifeless seeds going into the ground and watching life come forth. When a farmer or gardener plants a crop, they don't sow large, mature fruit. They sow small, sometimes tiny seeds.

At tracks and facilities daily, our Chaplains are constantly sowing seed. It's my experience that the Chaplains don't care who gets credit for sowing seed... they just want to serve faithfully and care for the individual and their family. They know that God is ultimately the One who makes everything work together for growth.

Hope you and yours have a blessed Easter season! And if possible, we hope you can attend one of the "Resurrection Celebrations" taking place at RTCA tracks and facilities... it would be such an encouragement to our Chaplains and volunteers for you to be there!

In Christ,

Dan



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