



## MILITARY ORDINARY OF CANADA ORDINAIRE MILITAIRE DU CANADA

11 February 2019

Dr. Carl A. Anderson  
Supreme Knight  
Knights of Columbus  
1 Columbus Plaza  
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Supreme Knight,

Blessings from the great Canadian white North! It's a pleasure for me to write to you today. I would like to do a follow-up on our short discussion of last May in Lourdes regarding possible funding assistance for our soldier's participation in the International Military Pilgrimage.

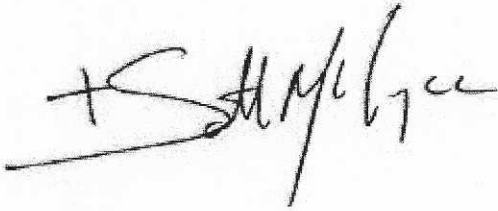
As you are aware, the Canadian Armed Forces have been an active participant in this mission for over six decades. Year after year, our objectives have been the spiritual health and resiliency of our serving members, our veterans and their families. Over the course of time, the pilgrimage has brought healing, pride, hope and, a renewed sense of purpose for all the participants. This exercise has become key to soldier-centric force multiplication in preparation and recovery from the spiritual, mental and emotional trials unique to a life in the profession of arms. The days of reflection and prayer in Lourdes give participants time to reflect, to gather and to participate in rituals that guide them to a greater sense of wholeness and purpose.

Our military leadership has at last recognised the importance and the value-added of spiritual resiliency. It sees that a resilient soldier is vital to the success in operations and in their personal life. In order to sustain this venture, the office of the Canadian Armed Force's Director Morale and Welfare Services has been providing a financial grant for the past three years with non-public funds. With these monies, we have been able to send approximately 50 pilgrims to Lourdes. You will not be surprised to hear that the government is now imposing a financial restraint on all spending especially on overseas travel. We are thus finding ourselves in a difficult predicament where we will probably have to reduce the number of participants or ask them for greater personal financial involvement. These restrictions are also preventing us from including veterans in the program, men and women who have served their country, often in difficult circumstances.

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As the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Canadian Armed Forces, I wish to build on this and solidify the care for our people. I dream that in the future, we could increase our numbers permitting the Canadian contingent to participate more fully as a nation in the events and the pilgrimage itself. In order to continue on this venue, we need your financial backing. Your support, dare I ask, would continue to make this extraordinary experience available to a wider member of Canadian Military members, veterans and, their families and truly work to increase the resilience and wellness of our members.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott McCaig', written in a cursive style.

†Scott McCaig, C.C.  
Military Ordinary of Canada