



## Pilgrimage to Lourdes: The Experience of Spiritual Renewal

The American Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor once remarked that a person goes to Lourdes to pray for himself or herself but ends up praying for others. Perhaps more than the cures that still occur in this holy place, this is the miracle of Lourdes: each pilgrim invariably finds that he or she is no longer alone in the struggles of life that we all have. *Malades*, their family members and volunteers discover the importance of being with one another, sharing in one another's delight and in carrying one another's burdens.

In Lourdes we experience how 'catholic' or universal the church and the Order really are. Although we can take pride in the significant achievement of our first Canadian pilgrimage, we discovered also that national groupings tend to break down when we are all praying and socializing together. This was the Order's aim in establishing the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes to heal the divisions following World War II and the partition of Europe into East and West. Unexpected encounters and connections arise from this mingling of people from around the world. For example, during the International Mass, Luc Harvey sat beside a young American Jesuit who plays the banjo. Luc invited him to join our Canadian group for supper that evening. The Jesuit surprised us by helping to celebrate Bishop Poisson's birthday with a serenade of rousing French Canadian folk songs.

(continued on page 4)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the  
President

2

Message from the  
Principal Chaplain

3

Pilgrimage to Lourdes

4

Testimonies

7

Lourdes 2017

9

Feast of Saint John the  
Baptist in Toronto

10

Calendar of Events

12

A New Member of the  
Order of Ontario

13



**National Pilgrimage to  
Lourdes,  
From May 4 to May 8, 2017**

Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum

# Message from the President

## THE FIRST CANADIAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: UNITY AND COURAGE

It is with pride that I wish to share my impressions following my return from our first National Pilgrimage to Lourdes with our own malades.

### UNITY

Two words come to my mind. The first is: Unity because this pilgrimage during the Year of Mercy allowed all of us to create strong relationships with the members of the Association. The Knights, Dames, volunteers and the malades from Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal regions lived a unique experience of sharing, of praying, and of peace. This pilgrimage enabled us to work better together in our service to the malades and their families while praying and deepening the mystery of God's Mercy as we were invited to do by Pope Francis.

Lourdes and its annual Order of Malta pilgrimage is a fundamental experience to be lived, and I invite all our members and friends to take part in it. In the sight of Mary, humbly with our malades, we crossed the Door of Mercy in this Jubilee Year before reaching the underground Basilica and praying before the Blessed Sacrament. Sunday's pontifical High Mass is always a moment of intense prayer, and for the first time, the flag of the Canadian Association flew proudly.

Our daily masses and Liturgy of the Hours, in addition to activities with our malades, created interactions of high quality. I was particularly proud when our Prince Grand Master publicly mentioned, during the presentation of medals Saturday evening, that our Association was on its first solo pilgrimage with our own malades.

### COURAGE

The second word that comes to my mind is: courage. Here, I want to salute the courage of those members of our Association who pledged during the 2015 pilgrimage, at a consultative meeting, to work towards the realization of our national pilgrimage with our own malades in 2016. The task was huge and required a great deal of planning. I gratefully thank the members of the organizing committee: Mr. Mark Dunphy, Mrs. Pauline Dunphy, Dr. Bill Sullivan, Mrs. Gabrielle Komorowska, Mr. Patrick

Rechner, Mr. Luc Harvey and our Executive Director, Ms. Julie Tanguay. They all performed excellently and with dedication.

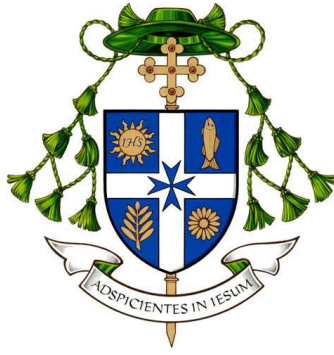
In closing, I give special thanks to our Principal Chaplain, the Most Reverend Raymond Poisson, Bishop of Joliette. He has been a regular presence in Lourdes for the past 6 years. He has brought a high degree of spiritual support to our malades and pilgrims. During the pilgrimage, Bishop Poisson presided the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharistic celebrations.

To all of you, I renew my thanks for this historical pilgrimage and I invite members and friends of our Association to take part in the next Lourdes pilgrimage in 2017.

*André A. Morin, President  
Knight of Magistral Grace in Obedience*



H.E. André A. Morin with Mr François Payeur



## Message from the Principal Chaplain

### A TRADITIONAL PILGRIMAGE WITH SURPRISING EFFECTS

Together, we accomplished a pilgrimage to Lourdes, under the banner of our country Canada, accompanied with several malades in need of care in order to undertake this spiritual visit to the Virgin. Together, we crossed the threshold of the Holy Door of the Lourdes' Shrine, grateful for the Lord's mercy at the heart of our lives. Together, we prayed with thousands of pilgrims, of volunteers and members of the Order of Malta while taking part in high quality liturgical gatherings.

In parallel with this more formal part of our presence in Lourdes, we shared lodgings and meals and we also shared daily Eucharist as a distinct Canadian group. The most notable effect of these few days lived in togetherness was the growth of friendship, respect and mutual regard. I suspect that this pilgrimage has already become a source and motivation of a different life within the Canadian Association: from now on we will be more united and stronger so that each and everyone of us in our respective regions will be able to shoulder the so wonderful mission of serving the poor and the sick. Those who took part in this pilgrimage are no doubt looking forward to being together again during the fall investiture where we will bear witness vocally to this lived experience.

In my capacity as Principal Chaplain of the Canadian Association, I met with His Eminence Cardinal Burke, Patronus of the Order, and also with His Excellency Bishop Jean Laffitte, our newly appointed Prelate of the Order. Their team already offers a precious spiritual support and a promising pastoral accompaniment. No doubt we will listen to their message through all available means. I bring back their cordial greetings to all Canadian members.

May the Lord shower us with the abundant graces of His mercy!

+ Raymond Poisson, Bishop of Joliette  
Principal Chaplain of the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta





# The Experience of Spiritual Renewal



*(continued from cover page)*

A priest from Burkina Faso who happened to be separated from his compatriots joined our Canadian group during one of the nightly candlelight processions. It turned out that he is a moral theologian specializing in bioethics. He was pleased to hear of the work of the International Association of Catholic Bioethics (IACB) because, in Africa, Catholic bioethicists are few, and they tend to work in isolation.

Another aspect of the pilgrimage to Lourdes for many was the experience of spiritual renewal. The spring that Bernadette dug up following Our Lady's instructions is an apt symbol of this. The spring continues to flow at a rate of 80,000 gallons per day, constantly refreshing its healing waters.

This sense of spiritual renewal in many who participated in our pilgrimage did not mean that the trials of life suddenly disappeared. Inclement weather, fatigue, and even a nasty viral infection that was making a tour among our group beset us, but as others have remarked in these pages, we managed somehow to retain a sense of solidarity, an attitude of wonder, an inner calm, and a sense of humour. One of my favourite memories was standing in line waiting to enter the Basilique Pie X for the International Mass as sizable hailstones pelted down at us. Someone—I think it was Roman--murmured, "We've been praying too many Hail Mary's!"

Any first pilgrimage is difficult to organize, but this one proceeded along as smooth a path as we could have hoped. No doubt the leadership of our President, André Morin, the spiritual accompaniment of our Chaplain, Bishop Poisson, the hard work of our Organizing Committee led by Mark and Pauline Dunphy, the support behind the scenes of Julie Tanguay, and the help of every participant in the pilgrimage coalesced to make this first pilgrimage an enjoyable and edifying experience.

As a result of our pilgrimage, we have discovered that God comes to us, not generally through spectacular apparitions like the ones St. Bernadette was graced to have, but in ordinary events in our lives, through the mediation of the people and events we encounter. We interrupted our usual routines and circumstances in life to go away on pilgrimage, but we have returned to find God present all along in what we left behind. Our pilgrimage reveals to us some aspect of the mystery of God accompanying us in our daily lives, even and especially during experiences of adversity.

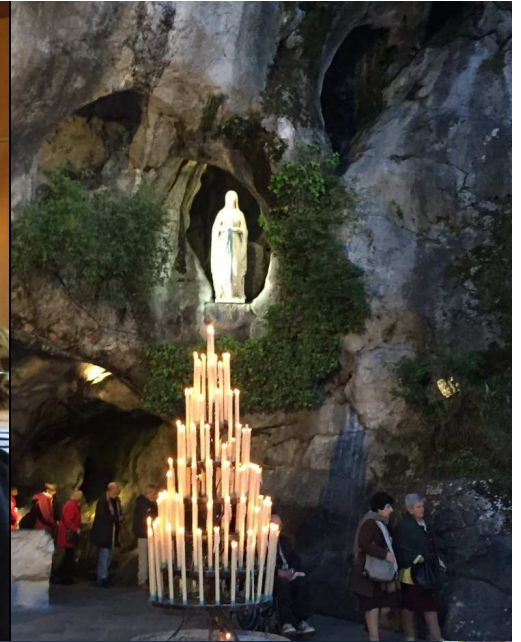
Our first Canadian pilgrimage took place while legislators in Canada were developing a regime to allow assisted suicide and euthanasia under certain conditions. A request for assisted suicide or euthanasia always indicates suffering that has become unbearable for someone and a loss of meaning and hope in life. Such a person believes he or she would be better off dead. May one of the fruits of our first Canadian pilgrimage be a firm commitment to move ourselves and our society towards engendering hope in such persons by ensuring that they have access to comprehensive palliative care and by our loving presence, prayer, support, and caregiving.

*Dr. Bill Sullivan, Hospitaller  
Knight of Magistral Grace*









# Testimonies

## LOURDES, WHY DO I RETURN?

It has been nearly five years since my first pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Order of Malta and I am delighted to have been there. Because of lack of time and resources, I had initially decided to wait for this pilgrimage, that I was supposed to do only once, until the direction at my workplace could allow me to have a few days off during one of the busiest time of the year. In my mind, this pilgrimage was to be a once in a lifetime pilgrimage since, although strongly encouraged by the Order, it is not obligatory.

My fourth pilgrimage took place in May 2016 and I hope that there will be many more. Why do I return? It is not for tourism; I tend to avoid large crowds. It is not also for the commercial booths where one can buy rosaries in bulk or statuettes of the Virgin Mary that can be lighted by two AA batteries, that are an incentive to return; I have enough religious articles at home. I return for three reasons.

### Collegiality among the volunteers

It is a pleasure to catch-up each year with friends met during the first pilgrimage. Volunteers and members of the Order are there every year, all wearing the work uniform, everyone for the same cause: to give to the malades a spiritual pilgrimage while giving the best of ourselves. These new friends are a source of inspiration; they incite me to do more volunteer work; their dedication to their task is a model to follow; their compassionate smile to the malades radiates the convivial and reciprocal friendship we share.

### The malades

They come from everywhere, some with heavy handicaps, others with lighter ones but all are on a spiritual journey. The biggest miracle that occurs each year in Lourdes is the simplest one: we are witnessing the fact that they are not alone, and that compassion is a relief. When they are visited, the malades are beautiful and inspiring.

### A meeting with him who invites me

One does not go without the other: without volunteers Lourdes would be bereft of malades, and without malades what would we do in Lourdes, if only to pray at the Massabielle grotto, await a miracle, an apparition, or idle curiosity? I can testify that there is something more satisfying. I feel called to Lourdes for the same reason, as was my call to join the Order, to give in order to receive. There is a reason why malades decide to undertake this long trip to Lourdes, and it is for the volunteers to respond to the call from the Lord who invites us: “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me” (Gospel of Matthew 25:40). That is why whenever a malade asks me what I

am doing in Lourdes, I reply: “I am here to serve my Lord God.”

We can serve God anywhere but the reason I return to Lourdes is because it is an occasion for me to relive each year the delight to meet again my friends, the malades and to pray with them at the Massabielle grotto, knowing that I am answering a call.

*Fra' Mathieu Dupont  
Knight of Justice*





## WITH GRATITUDE FROM THE CERALDI FAMILY



Johnathan Ceraldi and Christina Ceraldi during the pilgrimage

On behalf of my parents, Tony and Pat Ceraldi, and my brother John, a thank you to our President, André Morin; the Board of the Canadian Association; Executive Director, Julie Tanguay; Bishop Poisson; the Hospitaller, Dr. Bill Sullivan; the Organizing Committee; members and volunteers who contributed to ensuring their pilgrimage in Lourdes was a very personal and meaningful experience.

My parents, Tony and Pat, thoroughly enjoyed their first time in Lourdes as Malades and they were overjoyed to fulfill their life long dream to visit our Blessed Lady of Lourdes shrine. With the generous help of the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta members and volunteers, they were well cared for and comfortable throughout the pilgrimage. They were also deeply moved by the kindness and attention shown to them.

My mother Pat noted her wonder at what she was seeing and feeling. She was in awe at the fact that indeed our loving Mother Mary visited this land. With this realization and the strong presence of Mary, the awareness of her own illness faded, and she was filled with tremendous peace. The care and attention given to her filled her with acceptance and love. The singing, the processions, the various masses, the visits to the Grotto, the sense of community, and the caring assistance filled her heart with overflowing joy. She treasured every aspect of the pilgrimage. Her highlights were: the Way of the Cross, the Candle light evening procession, and

the Baths. The Bath was in particular, “an out-worldly experience for her; the women who cared for her body were so solemn and the chanting of their prayers so sincere”.

Accompanying my parents was an amazing personal gift from our Lady of Lourdes. It was an honor and blessing to help them make their dream a reality; to care for my parents, support them with their illness throughout the pilgrimage. For my brother John and I, looking after my parents and witnessing more intimately their struggles has brought us all much closer. My heart was filled with contentment to see the delight and enjoyment my parents experienced during this pilgrimage. Little did I know about this wonderful plan the Lady of Lourdes had in store for me when I visited Lourdes at the age of 25 while back - packing throughout Europe.

Lourdes is a special unique part of the world: a place where heaven exists; where people of all walks of life gather in joyful community, prayer, faith, and compassion; to give and receive love, healing and peace both from each other and from our Loving Mother Mary. My parents and brother experienced all the above and are forever grateful to the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta. May our Lady of Lourdes continue to bless our Canadian Association’s future pilgrimages.

*Christina Ceraldi*  
*Dame of Magistral Grace*



## LOURDES, A REVELATION!

When I was a teenager, I thought Lourdes was an important pilgrimage destination in the Pyrenees, once visited by an aunt who had accompanied Jean Vanier and people from Faith and Light in the spring of 1970.

My pilgrimage during Spring 2016 with fellow members of the Order of Malta was, for me, a revelation, and an extraordinary spiritual and human experience. Being part of the first pilgrimage with malades of the Canadian Association was an exceptional opportunity to discover this place of fraternity and prayer where everything becomes possible.

Spontaneous discussions between Dames and Knights gathered from all around the world make us realize that we are a universal Order without real boundaries. Thus, to live the charisma of the Order of Malta among “Our Lords, the Sick” takes its full meaning.

I became aware that the miracles happening in Lourdes are more of a spiritual nature where, walking in the footsteps of little Bernadette towards the virginal “Immaculate Conception”, we can only be profoundly moved. Throughout the pilgrimage our Principal Chaplain guided us. I was touched by the great liturgies in the Saint Pius X Cathedral and by the more intimate visits to the grotto. I returned from Lourdes more convinced than ever of the relevance of our mission and the vibrancy of my commitment to the Order of Malta. The seed has been planted; this experience must be renewed.

*Luc Harvey*  
*Knight of Magistral Grace*

## LOURDES 2017

We are already planning our second national pilgrimage for next May (May 4-8, 2017).

This last pilgrimage exceeded our wildest expectations, due in part to the liturgies of Bishop Poisson, the enthusiasm of Luc, the cohesiveness of the group, the kindness of the malades and their caregivers, the thoughtful commentary of the Sullivans on our Way of the Cross, our experiences in the extreme cold, etc.

While we cannot guarantee the same next year, you can be sure that you will experience the shadow of Bernadette in your prayers at Lourdes, as well as the presence of Our Lady of Lourdes in all that we do, especially in our care and compassion of the thousands of the sick we see there.

Our Lady of Lourdes asked Bernadette to ask people to come there in pilgrimage, and to pray and build our church together. Help the Order do this: start identifying possible malades now and begin to think about coming! (A trip to Lourdes requires planning as it is not easy to get there.)

Help us make the second pilgrimage in 2017 another success!

*Mark Dunphy, Lourdes Committee*  
*Knight of Magistral Grace in Obedience*



## Toronto Hosts a Distinctive Celebration of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist

*Text: Bruce Adams, Knight of Magistral Grace  
Photos: George Onuska*

This year the Toronto Region's feast of Saint John the Baptist held special significance for the Order. On Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the birth of our patron saint as we have done traditionally, with a Mass led by H.E. Cardinal Collins followed by a formal dinner. However, this year, we also observed two ceremonies of vital importance: first, and prior to the Mass, a Robing ceremony that marked the beginning of a journey to Knight of Justice for one of our Professed Knights, Dr. John Kennedy. Second: during the Mass, the investiture of a new Knight of Magistral Grace, Dr. Marko Mihic.

The ceremonies and Mass all began with Knights and Dames of the Order of Malta and our guests from the Johanniter Order processing into the church, followed by the procession of clergy where His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins greeted a congregation of more than 80 worshipers. He performed the blessing of the investiture sword, the decoration and the robe of the Novice Knight of Justice.



Once the Robing ceremony or "Novitiate" began, you could hear a pin drop as our long-time confrere, Dr. John Kennedy, was clothed in the Habit of the Knight of Justice by Fra' Mathieu Dupont, who was presiding. The ceremony concluded with a long and warm applause from a crowd that was touched by the significance of a member who has just made a commitment of poverty, chastity and

obedience aspiring to perfection according to the Gospel. Next, a beautiful Mass led by His Eminence brought to the forefront those virtues that we as Members of the Order of Malta must uphold and reminded us that we must also carry out our resolve that is God's will. During the Mass, His Excellency, Dr. Andre Morin presided over the investiture of Dr. Marko Mihic. The ceremony concluded with a poignant moment as Dr. Mihic received a blessing from H.E. Thomas Cardinal Collins.

The church ceremonies were immediately followed by cocktails and a formal 4 course dinner at the University Club. During the celebration, the Toronto VP, Bruce Adams, summarized the activities of the Toronto Region and thanked local members individually for their work. Our President also provided an update on our national and international works while emphasizing the spiritual significance of the feast day. His Eminence, Cardinal Collins then inspired all of us with his address that focused on the importance of discipleship and how we, in our modern world, can find ways to act upon our faith. Finally, Dr. Bob Fredericks, who was one of our 20 guests from the Order of Malta based in the United States and who is the Chairman of the Board of the Prison Ministry, spoke about the work that is being done with incarcerated people in both the US and in Canada. His summary of the program and his examples of true service to the Lord was an appropriate closure to the day as it compelled each us to consider how we can contribute to these acts of mercy.

While the jam-packed agenda for this year's feast day was a test of our endurance, the combination of sacrament, ceremony and the showcasing of our works was a fitting tribute to our Patron Saint and a powerful reminder of the Order of Malta's relevance after more than 900 years.





## Visit of the Museum of the *Sœurs Hospitalières de l'Hôtel-Dieu* of Montreal

On May 28, Dames, Knights and Friends of the Order of Malta took part in our annual cultural activity. Once again, we visited the Museum of the *Soeurs Hospitalières de l'Hôtel-Dieu* of Montreal that relates the history of the foundation of Montreal by Jeanne Mance and Paul Chomédey de Maisonneuve. This was the second visit to the Museum within a few years; the first one having sparked much interest. Those who were unable to take part in the initial visit were much taken by this year's visit. A heartfelt thank you to the guides and to the Hospitaller Sisters for their warm welcome.

*Luc Harvey*  
*Knight of Magistral Grace*



## IACB

During the pilgrimage to Lourdes, the IACB (International Association of Catholic Bioethicists/ L'Association internationale catholique de bioéthique) held its Annual General Meeting with the Presidents of other National Associations.

This year's meeting was an historical one because, with the support of our Grand Hospitaller, H.E. Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel and of the Board of Directors of the IACB, the Prince Grand Master, along with the Sovereign Council, approved the statutes of the organization. That will allow its incorporation in Canada.

During the meeting, H.E. André A. Morin was elected the first president of the new entity. Several members of the Canadian Association were also appointed to the Board of Directors: Dr. Bill Sullivan, Mr. Bruce Adams, Mr. Luc Bigras, Mr. Frank Crothers and Dr. Noël Kinsella.

The IACB will continue to play an important role on behalf of the Order and the National Associations who are involved in bioethics. Funding for IACB is ensured by contributions from National Associations, including our Association and by donations from generous donors.

## **Calendar of Events of the Canadian Association**

**August 20, 2016**

First aid at the Archdiocesan Marian Pilgrimage at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes  
Heritage Park, Mission (Vancouver)

**September 4, 2016**

Feast of Our Lady of Philermos (Toronto)

**September 8, 2016**

Mass of Our Lady of Philermos (Montreal)

**September 16, 2016**

Vigil of Arms, under the honorary presidency of the Prelate of the Order  
St. Patrick Basilica (Ottawa)

**September 17, 2016**

Investiture and Annual General Meeting, under the honorary presidency of the Prelate of the Order  
Notre Dame Cathedral (Ottawa)

**September 17, 2016**

Investiture Dinner, under the honorary presidency of the Prelate of the Order  
Rideau Club (Ottawa)

**September 25, 2016**

Visit of the Citadelle of Québec, the Vanier Mausoleum,  
and conference at the *Mess des officiers* with Dr Fernande Soucy-Hirtle (Québec)

**October 13, 2016**

Mass of the Feast of the Blessed Brother Gerard (Montreal)

**November 2, 2016**

Mass of All Souls (Toronto)

**November 12, 2016**

Training session (Vancouver)

### **Other Events**

**October 7, 2016**

Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, KoC (Toronto)

**October 26, 2016**

CCRL George Weigel Presentation (Toronto)

**November 10, 2016**

Cardinal's Dinner  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre (Toronto)



## Order of Ontario for René U. Pitre



It is with great pleasure that I bring to your attention the appointment of our Confrère, René U. Pitre, to the Order of Ontario. Mr. Pitre, a Knight of Magistral Grace since 1987, lives in the Ottawa area. The award of Ontario's highest honour was made on January 20, 2016 for his exceptional contribution to the development of French and francophone institutions in Ontario. Please join me in our heartfelt congratulations.

*André A. Morin*  
*President*

### In the next issue:



The Eye Clinic in Vancouver

Published by the Canadian Association of the  
Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta

1247 Kilborn Place, Ottawa, Ontario, K1H 6K9

Tel: 613 731-8897 | Fax.: 613 731-1312

Email: [smomca@bellnet.ca](mailto:smomca@bellnet.ca)

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

President: H.E. André A. Morin

Principal Chaplain: H.E. Bishop Raymond Poisson