

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PILGRIMAGE Lourdes

PRESS KIT

16 - 17 - 18 MAY 2025



#PMI2025



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THE BISHOP'S EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

From 16 to 18 May 2025, the Sanctuary of Notre-Dame de Lourdes will, as every year, host the International Military Pilgrimage (PMI), a unique gathering where military personnel from all over the world come to seek comfort, fraternity and hope. The theme of this 65th pilgrimage is "Soldiers, pilgrims of hope", and it invites us to reflect on the fundamental role that faith and hope play in our lives, especially for those who have chosen to serve in the armed forces.

Military life is a vocation marked by self-sacrifice, a sense of duty and an unceasing quest for peace and justice in a troubled world. But it is also a path strewn with challenges: the distance from loved ones, the risks inherent in the mission and, often, the weight of hardship. In these moments of doubt and fragility, Christian hope becomes a beacon, a light that guides and enlightens. Lourdes, a land of miracles and healings, is a unique place for spiritual renewal, where everyone can lay down their burdens at the grotto, at the feet of the Virgin Mary.

This pilgrimage is not just a meeting between soldiers. It is also an extraordinary demonstration of international brotherhood, a powerful witness to peace and unity in the diversity of nations and cultures. In a world torn apart by conflict, the witness of soldiers from sometimes opposing countries coming together to pray is a powerful sign showing how much faith can transcend borders and divisions.

For each of the participants, this PMI will be an opportunity to reconnect with what's essential. During the processions, the times of prayer and sharing, the Eucharistic celebrations, we will be invited to draw new strength from the treasures of the faith. I invite each and every one of us to live this time of grace to the full, to listen to what God wants to deposit in our hearts, and to leave with the impetus to be, wherever we are sent, builders of peace and witnesses to hope.

May this pilgrimage be for all a life-giving experience of faith and a source of comfort. Under Mary's maternal gaze, let us strengthen our commitment to serve with courage, loyalty and hope.

My prayers and warmest thoughts are with you all.

+ Dominique de Romanis

LETTER FROM THE HOLY FATHER FOR THE 64th PMI

On the occasion of the 64th International Military Pilgrimage, His Holiness Pope Francis is in spiritual communion with all of you, who come from different horizons. He thanks God for this annual meeting at the blessed Grotto of Massabielle, which enables you to forge bonds of friendship, to pool the human and spiritual riches that each of you brings, to share moments of joy, and to find in common prayer and exchange the strength needed to overcome the trials, anxieties and loneliness that you often experience in the course of your various commitments.

May you strengthen your conviction that love is stronger than hatred and division, and that you too are called to play an irreplaceable role for the common good and the service of peace in the world.

Your pilgrimage is the conclusion of a triptych proposed by Saint Bernadette. On 2 March 1858, the Virgin Mary entrusted her with the following mission: 'Go and tell the priests that a chapel should be built here and that people should come here in procession'. To come in procession: this is an urgent call to set out on a journey. First and foremost, to God, but also to our brothers and sisters, to build a more united and fraternal world.

The pilgrimage is an opportunity for each of you to renew your baptismal commitment, to encounter Christ, in particular by listening to his word, receiving the sacrament of reconciliation and taking part in the Eucharist. This spiritual pause at Lourdes is a time to rethink your military vocation from the perspective of faith, and of the love that every Christian must cultivate towards his brother, even his enemy.

Pilgrimage is also a faith experience that helps us discover the beauty of walking together, supporting each other and reaching out to others. It allows you to get close to your sick and wounded comrades-in-arms and to care for them - especially in this place where the sick are so present -, and to bring God's mercy to the military world. May this take the form of genuine, simple and humane gestures that reveal the tender face of our God. May you live this out not only at Lourdes, but wherever you are sent, bearing witness to the Gospel among your fellow soldiers.

Dear members of the armed forces, the Pope invites you to stand up and walk the road with courage and perseverance. Be proud servicemen and women, proud to honour your uniform, your motto and your homeland, but also aware that you are part of a single human family, a family that has been torn and wounded, but which Christ came to redeem and save through the power of love, not the violence of arms. Be 'sentinels of peace', as Saint John Paul II said (cf. Angelus, 23 February 2003). The world needs you, especially at this dark moment in our history. We need men and women of faith who are capable of putting weapons at the service of peace and brotherhood.

The Holy Father Francis entrusts to God's mercy all military personnel who have died in the service of their country or in international operations to defend peace. He invokes on all those present at Lourdes and their families, as well as on the soldiers engaged on various fronts, on mission to preserve peace far from their country and those who are wounded and suffering, a particular abundance of graces. He bestows a paternal Apostolic Blessing on all of them.

Vatican, 11 May 2024

Cardinal Pietro Parolin

Secretary of State to His Holiness

THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PILGRIMAGE IN BRIEF



DATES

The International Military Pilgrimage (PMI) will take place on 16, 17 and 18 May 2025, during the month of Mary. His Excellency Monsignor Antoine de Romanet de Beaune, bishop of the French Armies, chief chaplain of the Catholic cult, president of the International Military Pilgrimage, invites soldiers from all nations to gather around their Military Ordinary.

PLACE

The PMI will be held in the high spiritual place of Lourdes, where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. Nearly 3.5 million pilgrims come each year to the foot of the grotto of Massabielle, a historic point of the apparitions and of many miracles. These men and women want to take a break in their lives and make themselves available inside to experience an encounter: with themselves, with others, with God.

AUDIENCE

French soldiers, civilian personnel of the armed forces, their families and their brothers in arms from more than 40 nations are invited to participate in the International Military Pilgrimage by registering with their own national delegation.

RETROSPECTIVE

The first International Military Pilgrimage took place, for the first time, after World War II, in Lourdes. It was part of a perspective of Franco-German reconciliation.

In 1958, German and French chaplains expressed the wish to extend the pilgrimage to other nations to promote reconciliation and peace. This first edition brought together 40,000 pilgrims from eleven countries. The PMI is gradually acquiring an international dimension of prayer for peace in Lourdes, a place of conversion and evangelization. It has since worked for the brotherhood of peoples, the spirituality of armies and the support of the wounded. Today, the triptych «fraternity, peace, hope» constitutes the cornerstone of the International Military Pilgrimage.

AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT

The International Military Pilgrimage is planned and organized by the International Council composed of nineteen national delegations: sixteen European, two North American and one African.

The operational management unit of the International Military Pilgrimage is located within the French Catholic military chaplaincy. It coordinates the work and logistics of the International Military Pilgrimage with the support of the French armies.

THE PMI, ACTOR OF PEACE BETWEEN NATIONS

60 YEARS OF HISTORY

A founding event in 1944 at the grotto.

This event was reported in the Toulouse press on 13 December 1944: the presence at the grotto on the same day of soldiers from the French Interior Forces and Soviet soldiers. The grotto diary of 17 December 1944 relays the information and gives details of this singular presence: Mass on Sunday 10 December at the Rosary Basilica is celebrated in the presence of Monsignor Saliège, Archbishop of Toulouse. The assembly brings together 120 wounded from the last fighting, as well as French military authorities and representatives of the Allied armies. A ceremony has even been held before at war memorials with the official participation of civil authorities. Among the priests accompanying the archbishop of Toulouse was Father André Besombes, vicar of the Saint-Exupère parish in Toulouse and military chaplain followed by 80 soldiers from the Toulouse garrison.



It was precisely on the return from this regional pilgrimage that the Archbishop of Toulouse asked Father Besombes to organize the gathering of soldiers in Lourdes.

He organized the first meeting from 22 to 24 September 1945. A task to which he devoted himself with zeal. So much so that the pilgrimage will become national in 1947 with the agreement of the new director of the Military Chaplaincy, Father Jean Badre. In 1947, the discreet participation in the military pilgrimage of Father Ludwig Steger was related. Priest of the diocese of Rottenburg (Germany), he was also a soldier and prisoner of war since 1944 in the Sables camp, near Toulouse. He forged a solid friendship with Father Besombes, who regularly visited prisoners of war. Thanks to this friendship, the will to make this pilgrimage a great gathering will be born. In its early days, the military pilgrimage to Lourdes was part of a perspective of Franco-German reconciliation.

In 1956, with the creation of the new German Army, the country's military chaplaincy was set up.

Relations between the two French and German Catholic chaplaincies are increasing. Very quickly the importance of a gathering of foreign armies in the grotto emerged; those armies that not so long ago fought each other. In 1958, the Catholic chaplaincy of the French armies decided to extend it to other Nations wishing to promote reconciliation and peace. On 6 February 1958, in Fontainebleau, the chaplains of Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, the United States and France decide on the modalities of participation in the first International Military Pilgrimage, which will be held from Friday 13 June to Monday 16 June 1958. This first PMI brings together 40,000 pilgrims from 11 countries. It has since worked for the brotherhood of peoples, the spirituality of armies and the accompaniment of the wounded. This Fontainebleau meeting can be considered as the ancestor of the International Preparatory Conference (IPC) which meets every year in October in one of the member states in order to decide on the orientations and modalities of the next PMI.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF AUTHORITIES

Within the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes, the international conference is held for high civil, military and religious authorities. Chiefs of staff, general officers, ministers, ambassadors and bishops from different delegations come freely together in a closed environment for an exchange. This space for dialogue is precious because of the varied profiles of the participants, with rich and diverse experiences. This diversity allows for a crossed, original perspective on the issues addressed.



THE PMI, AT THE SERVICE OF THE WOUNDED OF THE ARMED FORCES

302 FRENCH AND FOREIGNERS WOUNDED

In 2024, nearly 302 wounded and sick were carried on as part of the International Military Pilgrimage and thus lived the grace of Lourdes. Among these participants, 63 were French, war wounded or sick from the military community. Those are treated in army training hospitals or at the National Institution of Invalids in Paris.

THE PILGRIMAGE: A PRAYER OF THE BODY

Faith not only comes through the head! It takes our whole life with its joys and sufferings. In Lourdes, sick people have the first place. They come to seek consolation, comfort, hope. Everything is organized for and around them and they are called to let themselves be carried away in the sacrament of the sick, through Stations of the Cross, baths in swimming pools and the International able-bodied & wounded Challenge.

OUR LADY OF ARMIES' HOSPITALITY: SERVING GOD IN HIS SUFFERING BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality, an association of the Diocese to the French Armies, has been given the task of setting up the structures to take care of these men and women during their stay in Lourdes.

ARMY HEALTH SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Around thirty professionals from the military health service: military doctors, nurses and nursing assistants volunteer their time with the sick, who go to the International Military Pilgrimage and provide them with medical care. They benefit from the help of the Hospitallers of the Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality. To serve their wounded and sick brothers, they give a few days of their leave.

VOLUNTEERS

To fulfill this mission, the army health service volunteers are assisted by 290 other volunteers. They are supervised by the association's hospital staff, which provide routine service to the sick during the three days: dressing, tidying up, cleaning, meals, services, escorts, etc.

DAY VOLUNTEERS

In addition to these volunteers, there are around fifty pilgrims every day who provide assistance to the Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality. There are therefore a total of four or five people per day and per patient who work to enable them to live their pilgrimage.

VISITORS ALL OVER THE YEAR

Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality also takes care of the support of the sick and wounded of Defense throughout the year. To do this, it assigns trained visiting volunteers to army training hospitals, who are responsible for visiting and providing listening, presence and moral comfort to the sick. They are in contact with the nursing staff and the military chaplain of the hospital. They thus ensure a real watch at the most vulnerable and can offer spiritual support.



THE INTERNATIONAL ABLE-BODIED & WOUNDED CHALLENGE



Real festive time in the program of the International Military Pilgrimage, the challenge takes place in the meadow of the sanctuary of Lourdes. With various physical tests, it brings together wounded and able-bodied on Saturday afternoon. Twenty-five teams of all nationalities compete in joy. Each team is composed of about ten runners pushing a stretcher on wheels with an injured person installed.

A CONCEPT: CHANGING THE VIEW ON THE WOUNDED IN THE ARMIES

This initiative of the Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality and the National Institution of Invalides aims to change the way we see physical or mental situation in which the wounded armed forces are. It allows the injured people to look differently at their own situation: by going beyond their limits, further integrating the notion of effort and moderate risk-taking. This opens up new perspectives for them. They are invited to overcome their injuries, to reconnect with their environment, possibly to rely on their faith in order to progress.

AN ORGANISATION

The challenge, co-organised by the United States and the Hospitalité Notre-Dame des Armées, is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Eleven of the nineteen nations making up the International Council are involved in organising the challenge or manning the stands.



A CHALLENGE

Open to joy

It is a joy for all to see the trials overcome. Everyone savor the graces unveiled in these moments. Donations and fraternity re-bond between those who just yesterday trained and fought together.

Head and legs!

Putting teams of all nationalities in competition, the challenge consists of a one-hour relay race (four laps of 1000 meters) interspersed with sports and intellectual workshops: blowpipe shooting, laser rifle, boccia test, sawing of trunks, quiz ...

Challenges that allow everyone to win points and bring victory into their team.



THE PMI, A MAJOR EVENT FOR THE ARMED FORCES

The strong influence and the number of pilgrims linked to the world of defence make the PMI «a great event» for the Armed Forces, authorised by the Minister of the Armed Forces.

Under the presidency of the Bishop of the Armed Forces, Chief Chaplain of the Catholic faith, the PMI relies on the services of the Catholic military chaplaincy. These services are the interlocutor of the headquarters of the Marseille defence zone (EMZD-MRS). The prefecture of Tarbes, the municipality of Lourdes, the police and the Gendarmerie all contribute to the success of the International Military Pilgrimage.

SUPPORT

Various operational units were set up to meet the needs of the event. Both in terms of human and material resources: pilgrim security, reception, transport and movement of authorities, liaison and interpreting, technical team, international support service, international protocol service, accommodation and logistics of the international camp, etc.

The staff are selected on the basis of their technical skills and qualifications within the French or foreign Armies. In total, nearly 500 people from the French and foreign armed forces are mobilised for this event.

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY CAMP

An international camp is activated in the «Youth Village» to provide low-cost accommodation for some of the mobilised personnel and for military pilgrims of all nationalities who wish to do so. It is located on the heights of the Sanctuary.

This year, it will be able to welcome around 1,600 military personnel, including French, German, Polish, Austrian and Croatian elements in charge of support. Thus, 250 military tents, three field kitchens and a trailer laundry are set up to provide accommodation, logistics and food for French and foreign military pilgrims.

The Army Health Service provides medical support for the camp, in addition to its mission with the Our Lady of Armies' Hospitality.

CELEBRATIONS AND CEREMONIES TECHNICAL TEAM (ETCC)

Each year, 30 volunteers form the ETCC of the International Military Pilgrimage. Most of them are military personnel with specific technical skills.



Prior to the event, the ETCC identifies the needs of the celebrations and ceremonies organizers, ensures technical authorizations and prepares the administrative files concerning the equipment and personnel. Eight days before the International Military Pilgrimage, the ETCC is in charge of all the temporary infrastructures necessary for the smooth running of the various celebrations and ceremonies: assembly and dismantling, electrical cabling, sound and video control, scenery, transport of ecclesiastical equipment, etc. It is a big family with its own codes and rituals, all part of a generous commitment to serving pilgrims.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMING SERVICE (SEI)

The International Military Pilgrimage was set up in 2006. It is composed of 250 active military personnel, including a large contingent of French, Croatian, Spanish, German, Austrian, Italian and Swiss military police.

It provides security for the ceremonies, controls and supervises access and the placement of pilgrims. It also ensures the permanent and secure management of the civil, military and religious authorities present.

INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOL SERVICE (SPI)

Created in 2018, the SPI ensures the welcoming and placement of authorities and delegations during international celebrations and ceremonies.

It is composed of 130 soldiers from the German, Canadian, Croatian, Spanish, American, French, Hungarian, Italian and Swiss armies.



TIME FOR SACRAMENTS

Each year, a large number of adult baptisms and confirmations are celebrated during the Christian Initiation Mass in Lourdes. Thus in 2024, 179 baptisms and 378 confirmations were received in Lourdes by the French military community.

These sacraments lived in Lourdes are prepared throughout the year by the chaplains in their units. The catechumens live the baptismal stages and the decisive call in the regions.

CELEBRATIONS

International or specific to each delegation, the celebrations are numerous: international Mass, Christian initiation Mass, celebration of reconciliation, Marian procession, etc.

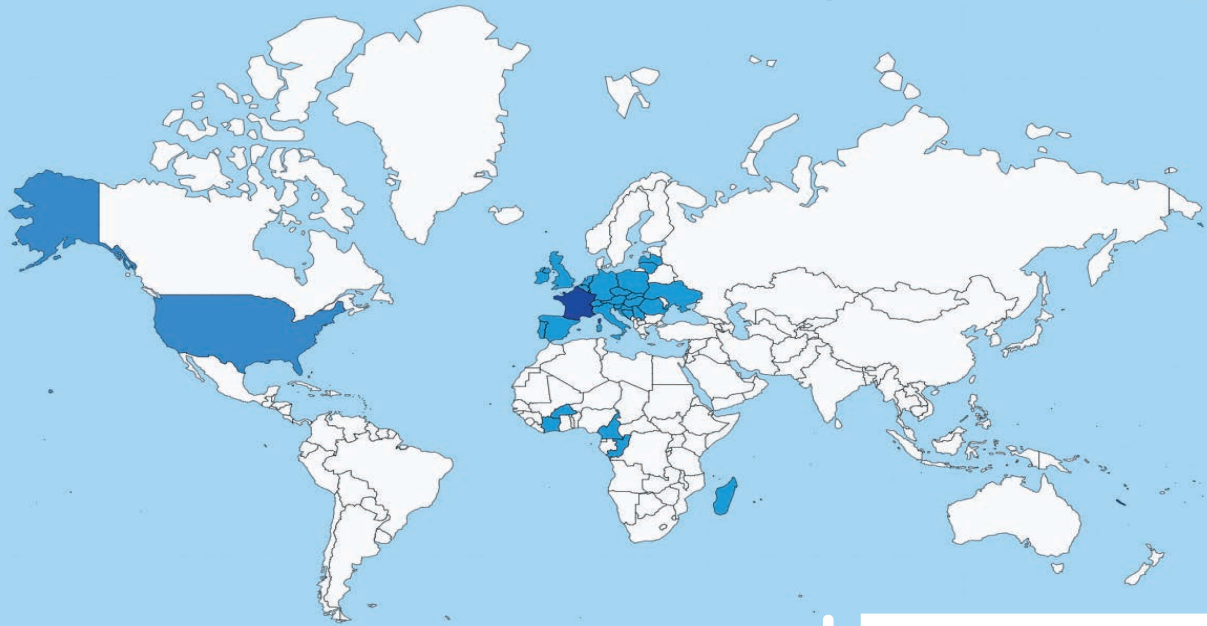
THE 64th PMI

In 2024, the PMI brought together more than 15,600 participants from 37 countries. This high level of participation shows the interest in the PMI, which is proof of the spiritual and fraternal needs that military personnel have to deal with today's crises.





The 64th PMI in figures



37

COUNTRIES

109 journalists
incl. **81** foreigners

15 622
PARTICIPANTS

302 sick & wounded
incl. **199** foreigners

3 650

ITALIAN

5 850

FRENCH

378 confirmations
incl. **179** catechumens

993

CROATIAN

**INTERNATIONAL
CAMP
1 625**

Netherlands 25
Croatia 79
France 1 089
Switzerland 20
Czech Republic 36
Austria 117
Poland 100
Germany 129
Lithuania 30

Able-bodied & wounded
Challenge

395 sportsmen

11 countries

39 teams

23 wounded

115 supervisors

45 hospitalists

16
MILITARY
MUSICS

Germany
Austria
Ivory Coast
Croatia
Spain
France
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
U.-K.
Slovakia
Switzerland

#PMI2024

THE 65th INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PILGRIMAGE

« SOLDIERS, PILGRIMS OF HOPE »

The theme of the 65th International Military Pilgrimage, "Soldiers, pilgrims of hope", invites each participant to take a step of faith and hope, in line with the Jubilee Year.

In a world marked by tensions and challenges, this pilgrimage is a reminder that military personnel, committed to peace and the protection of nations, are also bearers of hope.

On their way to Lourdes, a place of faith and fraternity, they are called to rekindle their confidence in a future guided by justice, solidarity and peace.

Together, in prayer and sharing, the soldiers gathered at Lourdes bear witness to the fact that hope can illuminate the trials and uncertainties of life, under the gaze of the Virgin Mary.

A PRESENCE OF ALL THE ARMIES OF FRANCE

During the International Military Pilgrimage, military personnel from every army (Army, Air Force, Navy and Military Police) are invited to Lourdes to pray together for peace, joining many other nations.

In 2024, around 6,000 French servicemen and women took part in this unique event, during which some of them received the sacraments of Christian initiation.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF BERNADETTE

Bartrès, the mill of Boly, the dungeon... The high points of Bernadette's life before her meeting with the beautiful Lady. Pilgrims are invited to walk in the footsteps of the saint by rediscovering the different places that marked her life.

MILITARY MUSIC

Throughout the PMI, a dozen of French and international military bands perform to animate ceremonies, celebrations, concerts and festivals. This year, to mark the 90th anniversary of the French Air Force and the 80th anniversary of the Air Force Band, the French delegation is inviting the Air Force Band from Bordeaux. The formation will play a musical part in the celebrations specific to France, as well as in the international opening, the international military music festival and the international military ceremony.

- **Music for the celebrations** : the dozen international musical groups will enliven the international celebrations, as well as the opening and farewell ceremonies.

- **International Festival of Military Music** : on Saturday, the bands from each country offer free musical performances. This year, the band of the Air Force Band will be representing France.
- **Concerts** : On Saturday afternoon a concert of Italian music is held, and on Sunday evening one of German music.

TWO EXCEPTIONAL CONFERENCES

Two exceptional conferences open to all will be held during the 65th International Military Pilgrimage. On Friday at 11pm, in the Basilica of the Rosary, brother Paul-Adrien, O.P., a Dominican priest and video-maker who has over 450,000 subscribers on YouTube, will meet young military personnel, accompanied by a French military chaplain.

On Saturday at 3.45pm, Dr Christine Roullière Le Lidec, a doctor and recognised expert on psychological trauma, and Nicolas Méric, a specialist in management and organisational psychology and author of the book 'La blessure morale' (Moral injury), will be giving a talk in the Sainte-Bernadette Hemicycle.

Moral injury, a notion that is still little known to the French general public, is a recent concept that emerged in the field of military psychology in the United States after the Vietnam War.

This book adapts the notion of moral injury to the French context and presents it in a didactic way, comparing it to a physical injury and to post-traumatic syndrome. The authors explain the founding mechanism of this injury, which is defined as the distress and suffering of an individual when he performs, assists or cannot prevent acts contrary to his ethics and values.

Moral injury, which concerns not only individuals but society as a whole, is becoming a decisive weapon in the 'hybrid war' that characterises the contemporary world.

This book, which invites us to take an in-depth look at this concept, is aimed primarily at the morally wounded, their families and those who care for them, and aims to strengthen moral resilience in the face of the conflicts and violence of our times, thereby encouraging individual and collective victories.

For more information :

<https://www.blessuremorale.fr>

DIOCESE OF THE FRENCH ARMED FORCES



CHIEF CHAPLAIN

Appointed by the Pope after consultation with the French government, the chief chaplain of the Catholic religion is placed with the chief of staff of the armed forces. He is assisted by a vicar general and a deputy chief chaplain for each army: Land, Navy, Air and Gendarmerie. He leads the diocese by relying for management on the episcopal council made of the four army deputy chief chaplains and regional chaplains. H.E. Monsignor Antoine de Romanet de Beaune, is a graduate and doctor of Sciences Po Paris. He carried out his national service in Cairo, then studied philosophy and theology in Brussels and Rome. Ordained a priest for the diocese of Paris in 1995, he was appointed vicar of Notre-Dame de l'Assomption parish, chaplain of Lycée Molière in Paris and delegate of the diocese

of Paris for World Youth Days from 1998 to 2001. In 2000, he became chaplain general of the Stanislas college in Paris. In 2002, he was appointed parish priest of Saint-Louis de France parish in Washington in the United States and chaplain of the French lycée Rochambeau.

Returning to Paris in 2010, he was appointed parish priest of Notre-Dame d'Auteuil parish, in the 16th arrondissement. He is also a director of COROT Entraide, a social assistance center for 18-25 year olds and a director of the Apprentis d'Auteuil association.

From 2011, he became co-director of the "Politics and Religions" department of the Collège des Bernardins research center. From 2013, he taught social ethics at the Saint-Sulpice seminar in Issy-les-Moulineaux. He is a member of the Académie catholique de France and a member of the Académie des Sciences d'Outre-Mer.

H.E. Monsignor Antoine de Romanet de Beaune was appointed Bishop of the French Armies in June 2017. He was ordained and installed on September 10 of the same year. He is the fifth bishop in the French Armies.

A HISTORICAL CHAPLAINCY AN OUTSTANDING DIOCESE

The Catholic military chaplaincy was established by the 8 July 1880 law, confirmed by the 1905 law of separation of Church and State and by the French Constitution. Indeed, the secular state must ensure the freedom of worship to those who are deprived of it. This is the case of soldiers subject to periodic penalty payments related to their mission.

The Catholic chaplaincy is backed up by the Diocese to the French Armies, erected in 1986 by Saint John Paul II on the former Vicariate of the Armies, which animates it spiritually and provides it with its own skills.

The Catholic chaplaincy has no borders. It assigns its 198 military chaplains, priests (130), deacons (17) or lay people (51) to bring to the heart of the armies moral support, spiritual dimension and



advice to the command. Wherever they are, in garrison, overseas, in theaters of operations or in French Navy buildings, soldiers can count on the listening, advice and support of their Padre.

Established in Paris, the diocese's cathedral is Saint-Louis des Invalides.

In 2024, the Catholic chaplaincy recorded 815 baptisms, 571 confirmations and celebrated 157 marriages.



ON THE BORDERS OF HUMAN AND DIVINE

«What to expect from the chaplain? A giver of meaning, an expert in humanity and that he embodies Christ, that is to say that he embodies kindness, self-denial, serenity, abandonment for love. May he be the face of Christ at the gates of hell.» This is how Admiral Gillier describes the chaplain.

Military by contract, religious or layman, male or female, the chaplain has chosen to put on the uniform and join the military to bring God to the heart of violence.

With a single rank of chaplain and placed outside the hierarchy for greater proximity, his task is to be with all soldiers, to listen, advise, support and celebrate worship.

His free presence in the daily life of the soldier and his expertise in humanity should be open

to encounters and support. His discretion, the confidence he must inspire, makes him a comrade and a confidant, a support and a pillar in the faith. In the particular context of violence to which the military is exposed, the chaplain aims as much to «moralize» men as to humanize war.

In charge of the souls who entrust themselves to him, his vocation is to work for the unification of man, to open him up to the spiritual dimension and to offer services and prayers to those who so desire.

Lastly, he has an **advisory role in command**, through his finesse in analyzing situations, his relationships with one another, his ability to establish links of truth and trust with the leader.

Padres of tomorrow: at the end of an 8-year intellectual, spiritual and military course, the seminarians will, if called upon, **be ordained priests in the service of the Diocese to the French Armies.**

The specific ministry of the mission-oriented chaplain also naturally disposes him / her to be able to serve the mission of the Church in contexts other than that of armies.

Their training aims to discern and deepen the vocation of military chaplain, as well as knowledge of the world of armies. Through military preparations, periods of reserve and ad hoc incorporations, the seminarians are immersed in the heart of the institution in order to be, once ordained, the closest to the soldiers. It is about being fully priests, that's what soldiers expect, but also fully military.

Today, 3 seminarians are undergoing their training.



65th PMI PROGRAM

This is the programme for France (in light) and for international ceremonies (in bold). For more information on the programmes of the various delegations, please contact the Communication Department.

THURSDAY 15 MAY 2025

- 18:30 Ceremony and laying of candles by the Brigade des Sapeurs-Pompiers de Paris and the
Pompiers 65 for the fire fighters who died in action during the year (Burners)
22:30 Mass for the PMI services and the French delegation (Grotto)

FRIDAY 16 MAY 2025

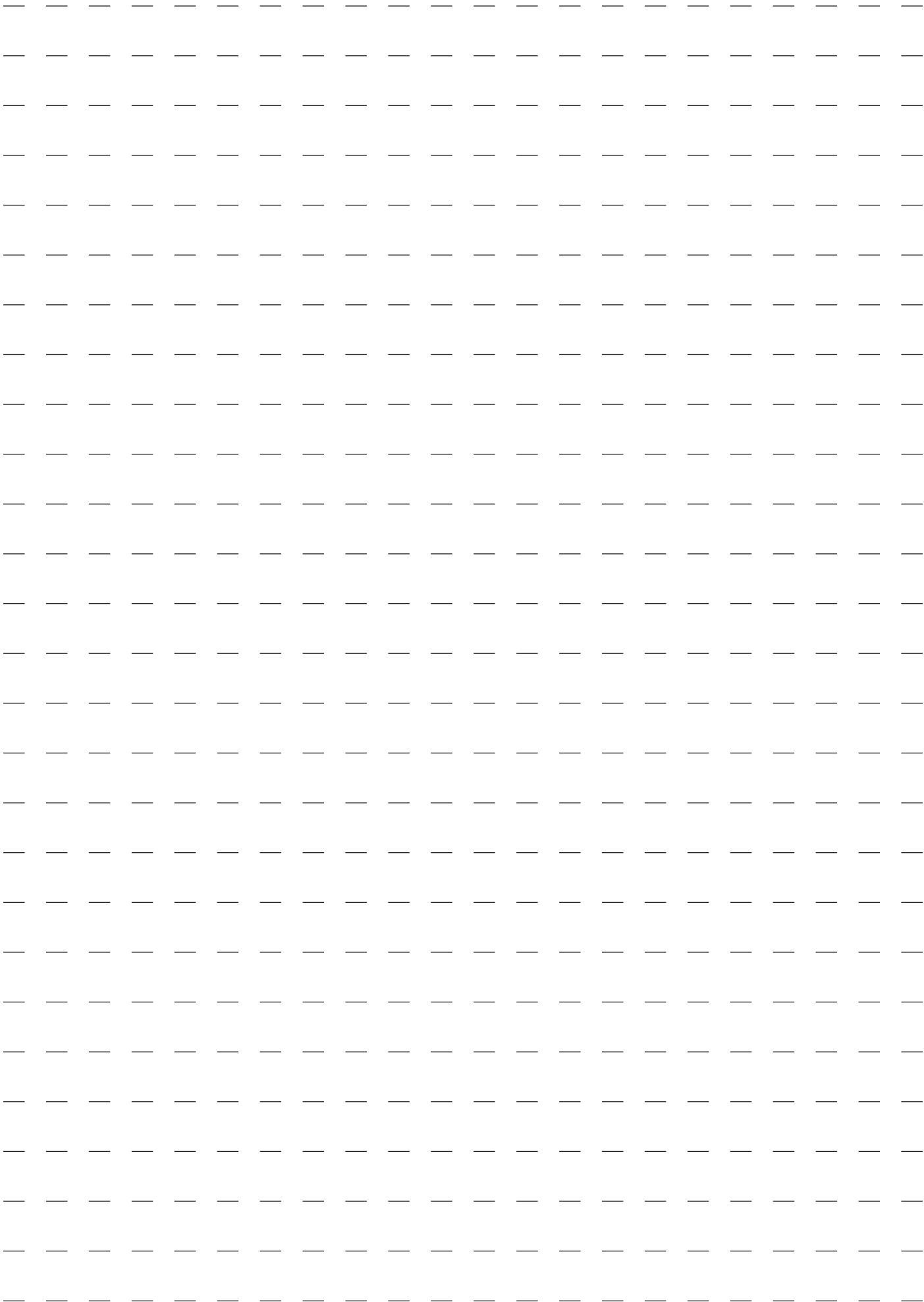
- 09:00 Opening mass France and sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (*Saint Pie X*)
11:45 International military ceremony (*Esplanade du Rosaire*)
14:00 Espélugues Way of the Cross
14:00 In the footsteps of Bernadette (*Saint Bernadette Museum*)
14:00 The way of Bartrès (*Departure from Hôtel Paradis*)
17:00 Eucharistic procession (*Saint Pie X*)
18:00 Ceremony and candle-laying by the Gendarmerie nationale
for the dead of the year (Burners)
19:30 Opening of the International Camp
21:00 International opening ceremony (*Saint Pie X*)
23:00 Youth meeting - Brother Paul-Adrien & a Padre (*Basilique du Rosaire*)

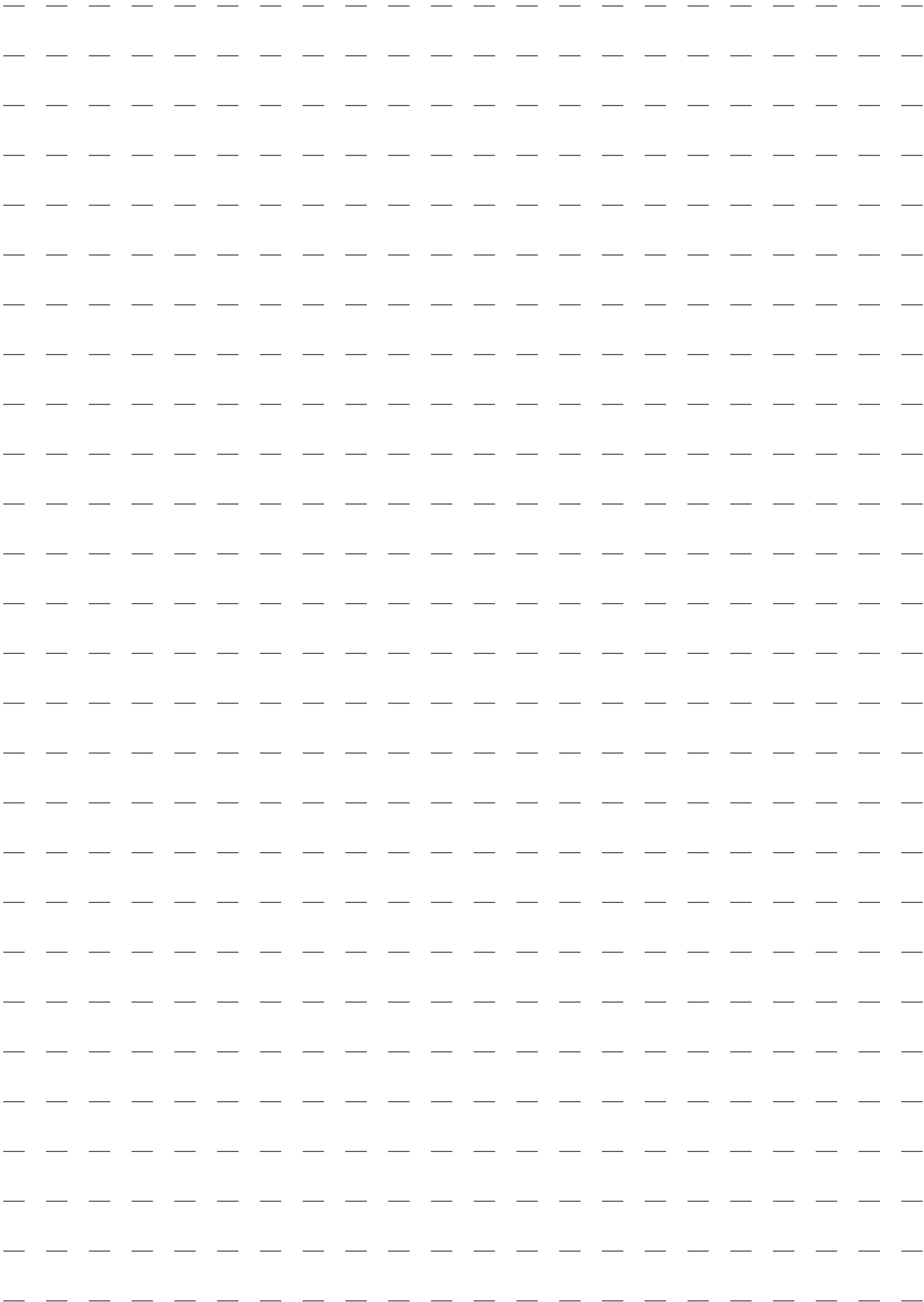
SATURDAY 17 MAY 2025

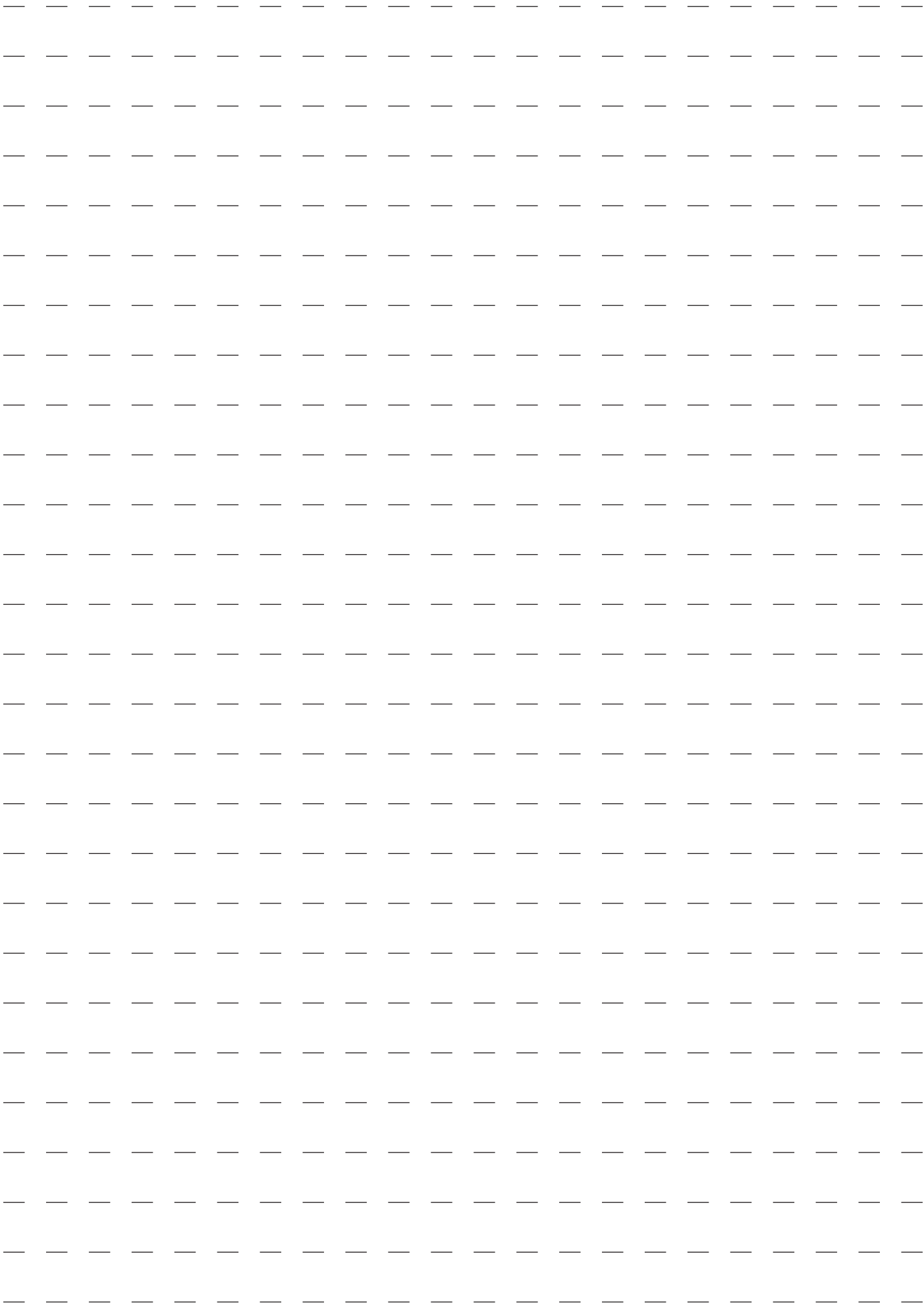
- 09:30 Mass of Christian Initiation (*Saint Pie X*)
11:45 Photos by armies of the France delegation (*Esplanade du Rosaire*)
14:00 In the footsteps of Bernadette (*Departure from the Info Centre*)
14:00 Parachuting demonstration (*Prairie du sanctuaire*)
14:30 International able-bodied & wounded Challenge (*Prairie du sanctuaire*)
14:30 International Festival of Military Music (*Lourdes*)
14:30 Espélugues Way of the Cross
15:45 Conference - La Blessure Morale - 'The Moral Injury' (*Sainte Bernadette' Hemicycle*)
16:30 Italian Concert (*Sainte Bernadette*)
17:30 French Army Health Service procession, candle-laying, tribute to staff, patients and
families (crowned Virgin)
17:45 French navy candle-laying (Prairie altar)
21:00 Marial procession

SUNDAY 18 MAY 2025

- 09:30 International mass** (*Saint Pie X*)
11:30 Photo of heads of delegation with flags (*Esplanade du Rosaire*)
11:45 Trophy ceremony for the international able-bodied & wounded Challenge
(*Esplanade du Rosaire*)
14:30 Good-Bye (*Saint Pie X*)
20:30 German Concert (*Sainte Bernadette*)









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