

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Forces and Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada we greet you in this holy season in which we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, the Prince of Peace.

We rejoice with families of the Forces for whom this Christmas represents a homecoming from the conflict mission in Afghanistan. We hope your reunions with spouses and children and extended families will be filled with much love and happiness.

We know that this Christmas, a number of families are making adjustments to accommodate the needs of loved ones who have come home with serious physical injuries or emotional wounds manifested in post traumatic stress. We honour their service and sacrifice for the sake of others' freedom. It must never be forgotten. Canada owes them the best of medical care and pastoral support.

We remember that for some, this Christmas is the first without a loved one who died in the course of the Afghan mission. Hearts grieve their absence around the tree and table. We are thinking of them too. Great was their commitment to serve, their courage in conflict and their passion for peace. In your hearts and in ours, indeed in the heart of this nation, their names will live forever and be held in the utmost respect.

We are aware that many other families are impacted this Christmas by the deployment of Forces personnel in a wide range of missions in the interests of humanitarian relief and world peace and security. We hold them and all of you in our prayers.

Finally, we take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the ministry of our chaplains in the regular and reserve Forces. They are a gift we cherish and for which we continually thank God.

With blessings for a Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The Rt. Rev. Peter R. Coffin

The Most Rev. Fred J. Hiltz

*Living the Marks of Mission*

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