

## **UPDATE ON THE JOURNEY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TOWARD TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WITH CANADA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FEBRUARY 2022**

Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, recently stated: “Children were separated from their parents because of residential schools, and for that reason alone, Catholics should not have participated in that system ... I reiterate the apology of the Canadian bishops in September 2021 as we reflect on the harm and intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools.”

The Catholic Bishops in Canada have pledged to raise \$30 million to support Indigenous reconciliation initiatives. This fundraising commitment adds to the more than \$55 million previously contributed by Catholic entities through the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

The Archdiocese of Toronto will contribute \$6 million in funds over five years toward the national \$30 million goal. By drawing on funds from existing operations and assets along with the stewardship of generous gifts and an annual collection held in the fall, near the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we will meet our fundraising commitment.

A national charitable organization has been established to administer these funds, governed by a board of eminent Indigenous and Catholic representatives. A local committee will determine funding priorities, but it is anticipated that the focus will be on supporting projects which enhance:

- Healing and reconciliation for communities and families;
- Culture and language revitalization;
- Education and community building; and
- Dialogues for promoting indigenous spirituality and culture.

### **DELEGATION TO ROME**

In light of the rapid spread of the Omicron variant during the weeks leading up to Christmas, recognizing the uncertainty surrounding travel and out of concern for the safety of all delegates, a prudent decision was made to postpone the delegation to Rome originally planned for December 2021.

The Canadian Catholic Bishops, Assembly of First Nations, Métis National Council and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami were happy to announce that the delegation is now scheduled to meet with Pope Francis during the week of March 28, 2022. A final audience with all participants will take place on Friday, April 1, 2022.

### **PAPAL VISIT TO CANADA**

There is hopeful anticipation of a visit by Pope Francis to Canada as part of the Truth and Reconciliation journey. The dates and locations for a papal visit have not yet been confirmed. Should such a visit take place, it would probably be brief, with limited stops, very different to the cross-country apostolic visit made by Pope John Paul II in 1984.

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

**The Path:** Produced by Indigenous-led NVision Insight Group, The Path is a course described as a multimedia learning experience. The program is intended to increase intercultural competency, address stereotypes and to help professionals or individuals “establish and deepen relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities and governments.” The video is 4-5 hours and participants proceed at their own pace. Cost is \$149 plus tax to take the course. Volume discounts are available. Please contact Temporal Affairs ([temporal@archtoronto.org](mailto:temporal@archtoronto.org)) if interested. While the program is Indigenous produced, it was not specifically developed for Catholic or Christian audiences nor is the content framed as such. More information can be found at the following link: <https://nvisiongroup.ca/the-path-indigenous-cultural-awareness/>

**Listening to Indigenous Voices:** Published in April 2021 by Catholic publisher Novalis, this is a 112 page, illustrated book divided into 11 modules. It was developed over 5 years under the guidance of a diverse advisory group of largely Indigenous members, most of whom are affiliated with Christian communities or Indigenous spiritual organizations. The book is supported by on-line resources that align with the various modules. The on-line resources include further reading material and video or multi-media resources. The retail cost per book is \$20. Volume discounts are available. Please contact the Office of Temporal Affairs at the Archdiocese of Toronto ([temporal@archtoronto.org](mailto:temporal@archtoronto.org)) if interested. The format and complementary on-line resources may make this program ideal for parish settings and self-guided learning. Additional information can be found through the following link: [https://jesuitforum.ca/dialogue\\_guides/listening-to-indigenous-voices/](https://jesuitforum.ca/dialogue_guides/listening-to-indigenous-voices/)