

Truth and Reconciliation Day

Orange Shirt Day

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September 2021



A Prayer for Orange Shirt Day

Loving God, our Creator, help us to be living signs of Your healing love.

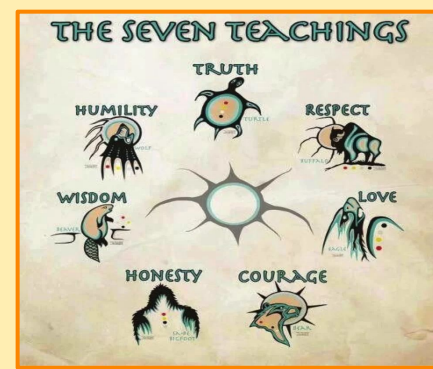
*Open our hearts to **respect**, to welcome, and to include one another.*

*Give us the **courage** to stand up for the dignity of our Indigenous sisters and brothers and of those with roots in other lands, all of us created in Your image. Strengthen us in our walk together.*

*God of **truth**, let **honesty** guide our steps along the path of truth and reconciliation, of healing and friendship.*

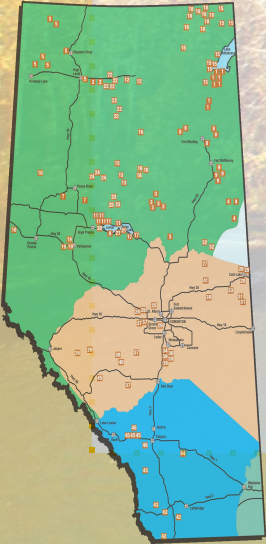
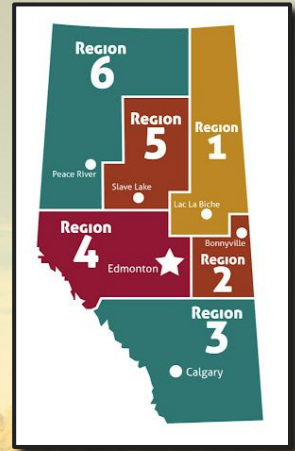
*Grant us **wisdom** to recognize and celebrate the beautiful gifts of Indigenous cultures. May we go forward in **humility**, as the children of One Creator and loving members of the family of God.*

Amen. Hiy hiy.



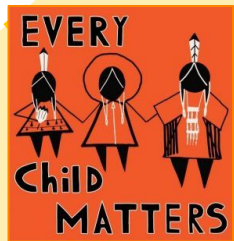
Elk Island Catholic Schools acknowledges that we are, in all the schools and communities of EICS, located within the traditional land of Treaty No.6, and home of Métis Nation of Alberta Zone 4 and Zone 2. We also acknowledge the Inuit and other diverse Indigenous peoples whose ancestors have marked their territory since time immemorial, a place that has welcomed many peoples from around the world to make their home here.

These traditional territories are a vast area encompassing large portions of central Alberta and central Saskatchewan, an area in which we live, work and play each and every day.



Inspiration for Orange Shirt Day

Phyllis' orange shirt is now a symbol of the stripping away of culture, freedom, and self-esteem experienced by Indigenous children over generations.



Official Day of Recognition - September 30

Orange Shirt Day

This is an Indigenous-led initiative inspired by Phyllis Webstad's experience at residential school when she was 6 years old. The first Orange Shirt Day was September 30, 2013.



Truth and Reconciliation Day

June 3, 2021, Bill C-5 received Royal Assent, establishing September 30 as a federal statutory holiday.

The intent of both is to honour the lost children and survivors of residential schools, their families, and communities.

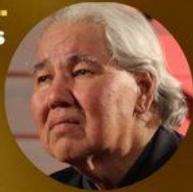
The Necessity of Remembering The Role of Education

**We should never forget ...
it's part of who we are as
a nation.
And this nation
must never forget
what it once did to its
most vulnerable people.**

- Senator Murray Sinclair

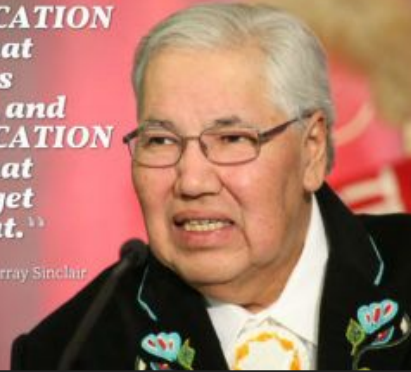
#thecurrentMMIW

cbc.ca/thecurrent



**"EDUCATION
is what
got us
here, and
EDUCATION
is what
will get
us out."**

Justice Murray Sinclair

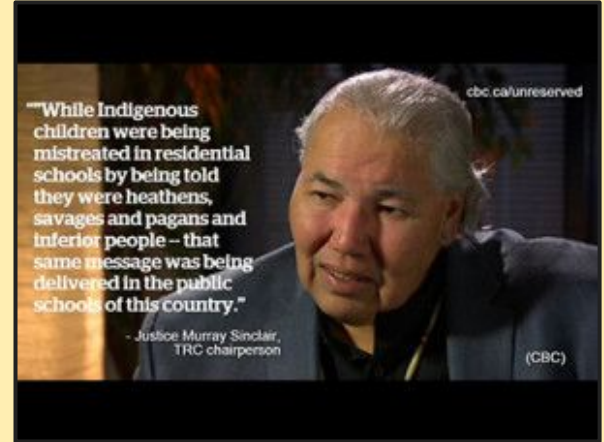


Justice Murray Sinclair,
Former Chief Commissioner
of the Truth and
Reconciliation Commission

**"While Indigenous
children were being
mistreated in residential
schools by being told
they were heathens,
savages and pagans and
inferior people -- that
same message was being
delivered in the public
schools of this country."**

- Justice Murray Sinclair,
TRC chairperson

(CBC)



The Necessity of Remembering

First Nations community leaders are concerned that the residential school graves -- and the horror they represent -- may fall to the wayside in coverage, public memory, and action. The National Truth and Reconciliation Day serves to keep that knowledge, that acknowledgement of truth, alive.

“We know from historical precedent there was national news coverage in 1907 of Indian Affairs Public Health Inspector Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce’s findings that the [Indigenous] children were dying at a rate of 25 to 50 per cent owing to inequitable healthcare funding by the federal government. And that was with blazing headlines like ‘children dying like flies,’...but then the coverage waned and children continued to die.”



Cindy Blackstock -
Executive Director of the
First Nations Child and
Family Caring Society,
member of Gitksan First
Nation, and professor at
McGill University

Namwayut: we are all one.

"I heard the words, 'I'm sorry' and then I couldn't see because my eyes were just flowing with tears. I was so happy that somebody had said, 'I'm sorry.'"





Statement of Apology by the Catholic Bishops of Canada to the Indigenous Peoples of This Land

We, the Catholic Bishops of Canada, gathered in Plenary this week, take this opportunity to affirm to you, the Indigenous Peoples of this land, that we acknowledge the suffering experienced in Canada's Indian Residential Schools. Many Catholic religious communities and dioceses participated in this system, which led to the suppression of Indigenous languages, culture and spirituality, failing to respect the rich history, traditions and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the grave abuses that were committed by some members of our Catholic community; physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, cultural, and sexual. We also sorrowfully acknowledge the historical and ongoing trauma and the legacy of suffering and challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples that continue to this day. Along with those Catholic entities which were directly involved in the operation of the schools and which have already offered their own heartfelt apologies', we', the Catholic Bishops of Canada, express our profound remorse and apologize unequivocally.

We are fully committed to the process of healing and reconciliation. Together with the many pastoral initiatives already underway in dioceses across the country, and as a further tangible expression of this ongoing commitment, we are pledging to undertake fundraising in each region of the country to support initiatives discerned locally with Indigenous partners. Furthermore, we invite the Indigenous Peoples to journey with us into a new era of reconciliation, helping us in each of our dioceses across the country to prioritize initiatives of healing, to listen to the experience of Indigenous Peoples, especially to the survivors of Indian Residential Schools, and to educate our clergy, consecrated men and women, and lay faithful, on Indigenous cultures and spirituality. We commit ourselves to continue the work of providing documentation or records that will assist in the memorialization of those buried in unmarked graves.

Having heard the requests to engage Pope Francis in this reconciliation process, a delegation of Indigenous survivors, Elders/knowledge keepers, and youth will meet with the Holy Father in Rome in December 2021. Pope Francis will encounter and listen to the Indigenous participants, so as to discern how he can support our common desire to renew relationships and walk together along the path of hope in the coming years. We pledge to work with the Holy See and our Indigenous partners on the possibility of a pastoral visit by the Pope to Canada as part of this healing journey.

We commit ourselves to continue accompanying you, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples of this land. Standing in respect of your resiliency, strength and wisdom, we look forward to listening to and learning from you as we walk in solidarity.

24 September 2021

- We acknowledge the suffering
 - - suppression of Indigenous languages, culture, and spirituality
 - - historical and ongoing trauma and the legacy of suffering and challenges
 - - grave abuses
- We ... express our profound remorse and apologize unequivocally
- We are committed to the process of healing and reconciliation
 - - fundraising to support initiatives discerned locally with Indigenous partners
 - - with guidance, prioritizing initiatives of healing
 - - listening to experiences
 - - educating clergy, consecrated men and women, and lay faithful
 - - providing documentation or records

Truth *then* Reconciliation

Learning about...

Acknowledging
the truth of our
collective past.

Learning from ...

Increasing our
understanding of
the legacy.

Doing better ...

Taking action, not
to 'solve', but to
support
relationships.

We're all at different spots on this journey.
What is important is to continue learning and moving forward.

Enduring wish of Justice Murray Sinclair - [I hope] "that Orange Shirt Day will encourage teachers to remember every student who crosses their doorstep is someone's child, and that every child matters."



How to Honour the Day

- Use this [interactive map of Residential Schools](#) across Canada to learn more about Residential Schools locations.
- [Online Celebration of Community and Culture](#) - Facebook Live Event with Elder Doreen Wabasca
 - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Spend time learning about the [Calls to Action](#) in this child-friendly format. What resonates with you?
- Go for a 2.15 km walk in honour of the 215 children from the Kamloops Residential School and reflect on discussions and learnings from today and throughout this week.
- [Roots for Trees Events throughout September](#)
 - 10am - 2pm at Hawrelak Park - Orange Shirt Day Theme
- Read *Shi-shi-etko* - [video link and supporting questions](#)
- [Art activity with Connie Kulhavy, Métis artist](#)
 - Participants will be guided through an art activity while learning about Residential Schools in a safe and gentle way
 - Registration (free) is required



Want to Learn More?

[Indigenous Canada](#) - UofA -> free, but for a small fee you can earn a certificate, or you can enroll as a regular class

[Reconciliation Through Indigenous Education](#) - UBC

Coursera offers a free course, [Aboriginal Worldviews and Education](#), through the University of Toronto

[Indigenous Voices Online Learning Modules](#) - University of Saskatchewan

Books:

- *Peace Pipe Dreams* by Darrell Dennis
- *21 Things You May Not Know about the Indian Act* by Bob Joseph

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