



June 3, 2021

1 page via e-mail plus 2 attachments

To all clergy and staff of the Archdiocese of Toronto,

As you are aware, there has been considerable media coverage and discussion in recent days following the discovery of children's remains at the former residential school in Kamloops, British Columbia. The school was operated for many years by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The order issued a formal apology in 1991 in addition to paying settlements to residential school survivors.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement earlier this week, shared with you and posted on our website. I am now attaching my own statement along with an attachment covering some frequently asked questions that you can use in your own ministry or to share with the faithful through your website or other appropriate channels.

I would encourage parishes to address this issue through the following:

- Parishes with flags should fly them at half-mast for a period of nine days, representing 215 hours.
- Parishes where makeshift memorials (with children's shoes) have been established should permit these displays on church property for a period of nine days to allow for collective prayer and reflection.
- Parishes are asked to read my statement this weekend during Holy Communion or livestream services or share through the appropriate parish communication channels.
- Parishes should offer the Prayer of the Faithful noted below through the entire month of June.
- A moment of silence may be observed at Mass this weekend to remember those who have suffered and to pray for our Indigenous brothers and sisters. This can take place after the Prayers of the Faithful or other suitable moment.
- Distribution of the attached FAQ document as appropriate to provide background and context on this important issue.

### **Suggested Prayer of the Faithful to be used throughout the month of June**

*For the children who died in the former Kamloops Indian Residential School and for all those impacted by this tragedy, that there may be healing founded on truth and that the Spirit will inspire our ongoing commitment to reconciliation. For this, we pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

Thank you for your continued support and attention to this important issue.

St. Kateri Tekakwitha, pray for us.

Sincerely in Christ,

*† Thomas Card. Collins*

Thomas Cardinal Collins  
Archbishop of Toronto