



January 18, 2023

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On January 28, 2022, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) established a registered charity to support and advance healing and reconciliation initiatives and to manage the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund. This Fund accepts contributions from dioceses across Canada towards the \$30 million financial commitment made by Canada's bishops in September 2021. In response to this, the Diocese of Saint John announced a special collection to be taken up on an annual basis for the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund the last Sunday of January.

In July 2022, the Holy Father made a penitential pilgrimage to Canada and invited us all to walk together on the path of reconciliation. His words, his actions and his presence on Canadian soil made a deep impact on the Church in Canada and was an important moment of solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Your generous financial support of the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund will be part of our action plan moving forward to support various initiatives for healing and reconciliation involving our Indigenous brothers and sisters. Funds from this national campaign will support regional and local projects and initiatives according to the following priorities:

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

You may contribute to this fundraising appeal using the special collection envelopes at Masses for the weekend of January 28-29. You may also contribute at anytime on our website via cheque or email money transfer (<https://dioceseofsaintjohn.org/donations>). Additional resources including a link to the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund are available on our diocesan website, <https://dioceseofsaintjohn.org/indigenous-relations>.

I am counting on your continued prayer and collaboration as we advance the cause of healing and reconciliation for our Indigenous sisters and brothers. Entrusting ourselves to the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we ask God, our Creator, to bless all efforts towards healing, forgiveness, reconciliation, and a renewed fellowship.

United in prayer and solidarity,

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC  
Bishop of Saint John