

Introduction:

All efforts to address the broken relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Catholic Church need to begin by listening to Indigenous people - Elders and Knowledge Keepers, Survivors, Chiefs, youth, and whole communities. Chief Cadmus Delorme has commented frequently that Indigenous and Church people of today were not there when the Indian Act came into being, when Residential Schools were opened, when the harsh effects of colonization began to impact Indigenous Peoples. But we have all inherited this situation, and it is for us to rise to the occasion to be instruments of healing and reconciliation. As Church, part of that inheritance is the legacy of having been complicit in the removal of children from their homes, and depriving them of their language, culture, spirituality, and family life. We have a special responsibility to engage in the work of the truth and reconciliation process. We can do that in many ways, and there is a role for each of us to play. This resource is intended as a help to discerning what each person, each parish, each community might do on this journey.

It is our responsibility now to educate ourselves in order to walk the road together of right relationships, truth, justice and reconciliation. We offer a 3-fold way of entering into this: **"Education – Encounters – Experiences."**

Here is a link provided by Cowessess First Nation. There are some very concrete ways offered for non-Indigenous people to engage in learning and action: [Community support \(cowessessfn.com\)](http://www.cowessessfn.com)

EDUCATE Yourself on TRC, UNDRIP and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (Saskatchewan)

Where to EDUCATE Yourself on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (Saskatchewan).

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission website includes reports (modern and historical), educational resources, maps, and much more: <http://www.trc.ca/>
- Truth and Reconciliation -Calls to Action: [Calls to Action English2.pdf \(trc.ca\)](http://www.trc.ca/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf) or [Calls to Action French.pdf \(trc.ca\)](http://www.trc.ca/Calls_to_Action_French.pdf).
- Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC): <http://www.otc.ca/>
- OTC-recommended books: <http://www.otc.ca/resource.html>
- OTC book a speaker: <http://www.otc.ca/resource.html>
- Video: How UNDRIP Changes Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples (5 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Tq7Mnlavqs>
- United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

Other Books and Websites:

- Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre: <https://sicc.sk.ca/>
- List of books about Residential Schools Goodreads [Residential Schools \(60 books\) \(goodreads.com\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/111111111-Residential-Schools-60-books)
- Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools - They Came for the Children - [resources 2039 T&R eng web\[1\].pdf \(trc.ca\)](http://www.trc.ca/Resource/Document/2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf)

Some other ways that non-Indigenous can take action themselves or in their parishes:

1. Learn to open your meetings with First Nations land/territory acknowledgment for Treaty 4 as developed by the Archdiocese and Indigenous people. Treaty 4 territory is where Regina is located. *"We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 4 Territory, the traditional lands of the Nêhiyawak, Nahkawé, and Nakota, and homeland of the Dakota, Lakota, and Metis peoples."*

2. Participate in the Kairos Blanket Exercise: <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>

3. Books to read:

Please see the list provided in the Cowessess community document and here are a couple more:

- Clearing the Plains – James Daschuk
- The Inconvenient Indian – Thomas King
- The Education of Augie Merasty – David Carpenter & Joseph Auguste Merasty
- Indian Horse – also as a film [Indian Horse Feature Film](#)

Holding a reading circle or book study on any of the suggested books can help move the reading of a book into shared education, encounter, and experience.

4. Films and Videos to watch:

- Reserve 107 - <https://www.reserve107thefilm.com/>
- In the Spirit of Reconciliation – <https://www.reconciliation.film/>
- First Contact (this one is highly recommended) – <http://www.firstcontactcanada.ca/episodes/season-1/>
- Muffins for Granny
- It had to be Done – https://www.nfb.ca/film/second_stories_it_had_to_be_done/
- We Were Children - [We Were Children by Tim Wolochatiuk - NFB](#)
- Residential School Videos - [Videos - Residential Schools - LibGuides at University of the Fraser Valley \(ufv.ca\)](#)
- YouTube Residential Schools - [Residential Schools - YouTube](#)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Videos - www.trc.ca/media/trc-video.html
- We Will Stand Up – Tasha Hubbard - [nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up by Tasha Hubbard - NFB](#) (Systemic racism today)

View these short videos before reading or viewing other Residential School information

- Why Don't You People Just Get Over It – Senator Murray Sinclair <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-april-4-mmiwg-ottawa-public-forum-1.4053431/how-senator-murray-sinclair-responds-to-why-don-t-residential-school-survivors-just-get-over-it-1.4053522>
- Justice for Aboriginal Peoples – Its time - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5DrXZUlinU>
- Took The Children Away - [Took The Children Away - YouTube](#)

5. Buy your gas at one of the reserve gas stations! There are First Nations owned ones in the City of Regina too. It's amazing what kind of relationship you can start by supporting these First Nations. <https://www.rezgas.com/results.php?area=SK>

While it is our responsibility to educate ourselves, and to use our voices and actions to become allies, Indigenous voices are needed in our decisions and steps forward. On this journey, we have embraced a simple saying that we learned from Indigenous friends, “nothing about us without us”. Let us begin to have conversations and collaborate with Indigenous people and communities, walking side by side. Listening to the stories of residential school survivors, stories from the Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, participating in sharing circles, and going to cultural events like pow-wows, are enriching ways that we can also build right relations that lead to reconciliation.

Below is a list of some ideas that can help facilitate “Encounters & Experiences”

Please contact Sr. ReAnne Letourneau for further details, guidelines and protocols, as she works closely with members of the Indigenous community and will connect you with them when possible.

- Host a potluck and sharing circle with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- Attend a cultural event: Pow Wow, Feast, Round Dance.
- Experience Indigenous culture through song and dance – there are families and individuals who share on the meaning of the drum and their dances through Pow Wow demonstrations and teachings.
- If you wish to invite an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, survivor into your parish to share teachings and their experiences you must contact Sr. ReAnne Letourneau.

Many of the resources listed can be found on the archdiocesan website at: <https://archregina.sk.ca/indigenous-relations>. This is where you can also find further information on what has been happening in the Archdiocese of Regina. This website page will continue to be updated as we move forward.

Conclusion:

Now is the time to acknowledge the church’s role in the pain experienced by the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, to offer support in any way that is requested, and to move forward in humility, truth, and justice.

It is important now to face the challenges before us. Acknowledging all the emotions that might arise within us is an important part of the process. When we can enter into those honestly and truthfully, it can then move us beyond initial reactions and to start to do the real work of truth and reconciliation, in responding to the TRC Calls to Action.

We hope that this document will offer some recommendations. As large actions are being taken on by some, even small actions by many people can effect change that may seem impossible now but will in time prove beneficial to our relationships with Indigenous peoples. What action will you take today?

The fundamental principle is “relationships”. People are longing for community; our parishes are in need of building communities that acknowledge and understand the true history of Indigenous Peoples, Canada, and non-Indigenous Peoples. Being involved in Indigenous Relations is an opportunity to get to know Indigenous peoples and ultimately getting to know the role of non-Indigenous peoples in that history. We can then create opportunities to encounter and have experiences together with Indigenous Peoples that build better relationships which ultimately lead to reconciliation...with families, communities, nations, and ourselves.