



Archdiocese
of Toronto

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Indigenous Healing & Reconciliation Fund & Reconciliation Resources – September 2026 Update

Walking Together with Indigenous Peoples - Healing, Reconciliation & Hope

Answering the call of the late Pope Francis, the Catholic Church throughout Canada has made a significant commitment to walking together with Indigenous Peoples as part of our ongoing journey of healing and reconciliation. This included the historic visit of [Pope Francis to Canada in 2022](#), an [apology](#) from the Bishops of Canada for the pain and suffering experienced at residential schools by many Indigenous families as well as financial support to help further the ongoing healing and reconciliation journey.

On September 30, 2026, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Cardinal Frank Leo, Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto, has asked all Catholic churches in the archdiocese to offer a Mass for the intention of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. On the weekend of October 3/4, 2026, Catholics will have the opportunity to participate in our annual collection to support the [Indigenous Healing & Reconciliation Fund](#). To date, the Archdiocese of Toronto has allocated \$4.5 million to projects that are supporting culture and language revitalization, education, community building and support for Indigenous families who have been affected by suicide, violence or abuse.

Recipients include **Gakino'amaage (Gek-in-noah-ma-kay): Teach for Canada** who will use funds for their initiative to invest in local educators in First Nations schools in remote locations, benefitting more than 4,300 students annually. We are also supporting the **Embrace Life Council** located in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The council will use funds for grief care packages to assist those mourning the loss of a loved one by suicide.

Our overall efforts are part of a national initiative to provide \$30 million to support ongoing healing and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of This Land. More than \$25 million has been raised nationally thus far. Additional information is available through the archdiocesan website: www.archtoronto.org/healingandreconciliation.

We thank you for your support to date and hope that you will participate in this important initiative, an opportunity to walk together and honour the invitation of the late Pope Francis to take a direct role in strengthening our relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RE: INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION FUND

1. What is the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF)?

The Indigenous Reconciliation Fund, a national initiative, was established to accept donations from 73 Catholic entities across the country, and to advance healing and reconciliation initiatives, fulfilling the \$30 million financial commitment made by [Canada's Bishops](#) in September, 2021.

The fund seeks to support projects that are determined locally, in collaboration with First Nations, Métis and Inuit partners. The Indigenous Reconciliation Fund has established the following criteria for grant applications:

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

The fund has been designed to meet the highest standards of transparency and good governance and is overseen by a Board of Directors made up of Indigenous leaders. As of September 2026, the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund has raised more than \$25 million in our efforts to meet our national \$30 million commitment. To learn more about the IRF, visit their website at: www.irfund.ca

2. How is the Archdiocese of Toronto involved with the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund?

In February 2022, the archdiocese formally [announced](#) it would commit to the fund through a pledge of \$6 million, over a five year period. In addition to raising awareness and offering opportunities to support the healing and reconciliation fund financially throughout the year, the archdiocese invites the faithful to participate in an annual special collection held in the fall, following the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

In 2026, the parish collection takes place the weekend of October 3/4. Individuals can make an [online donation anytime](#). To date, the Archdiocese of Toronto has allocated \$4.5 million to support projects through the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund. You can learn more about many of the archdiocesan funded projects [on our website](#). The archdiocese will also draw on funds in existing operations and assets, ensuring the \$6 million pledge is fulfilled.

3. How will my donation be utilized in working with the national Indigenous Reconciliation Fund?

Since the announcement of our financial commitment, the archdiocese has been working to nurture and strengthen relationships with local Indigenous partners. We have also established an Indigenous Reconciliation Fund Committee comprised of Indigenous community members along with others with experience in finance and community knowledge.

Our current efforts are focused on identifying and supporting projects, both at the local level and in under-resourced areas across the country. Project requests/proposals are reviewed at the local level through our archdiocesan committee to ensure they meet the IRF criteria.

In short, we raise funds locally, identify projects through our archdiocesan committee and send both funds and proposals to the national body for swift approval that will allow money to flow quickly to approved projects. We also fund a number of projects that will receive multi-year funding to help support stability and sustainability.

4. How can I learn more about the Archdiocese of Toronto supported projects that have been approved and funding associated with these initiatives?

As projects are approved, we will provide additional information regarding this activity and funds allocated to date online at: www.archtoronto.org/healingandreconciliation. The projects supported by archdiocesan funds are as follows:

Aboriginal Legal Services located in Toronto, Ontario received \$538,000 for the past two years to help fund their Giiwedín Anang Indigenous family dispute resolution program. In 2026, this commitment has been extended for another two years in the amount of \$589,364.

Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education located near Cornwall, Ontario received \$50,000 to introduce youth performance groups, also supported by the Archdiocese of Ottawa-Cornwall. Student groups at three schools learn traditional Mohawk songs and performance to revitalize their traditional language and culture.

The Cost of Silence Film is an abuse prevention and healing program for men originally launched with the support of the Archdiocese of Vancouver. This resource was delivered to Indigenous organizations and public libraries throughout British Columbia. Now, the Archdiocese of Toronto has taken the lead on a national outreach to amplify the awareness and training at a cost of \$178,835.

Embrace Life Council located in Iqaluit, Nunavut will receive \$250,000 over five years. The funds will be used for grief care packages to assist those mourning the loss of a loved one by suicide.

Feather Carriers, an Indigenous-based training organization in Ontario's Simcoe-Muskoka regions, will receive \$323,400 over two years for its life promotion training project, which involves culturally grounded approaches to mental health and suicide prevention.

Indigenous Spirit Fund, a branch of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, Ontario will receive \$400,000 over four years to enrich their "On the Land" culture camp program curriculum. This is in addition to an initial \$100,000 from Catholic Charities, via its ShareLife allocation, bringing the total funding to \$500,000.

Keeseekoose First Nation located in Saskatchewan received \$30,000 in support of their "Truth Telling Gathering", supported also by the Archdiocese of Regina. The event was dedicated to honouring Indigenous cultures, fostering understanding and empowering communities.

Native Peoples' Mission located in Toronto, Ontario will receive \$150,000 over five years to expand programs and outreach of the mission.

Ontario Native Women's Association, Thunder Bay, Ontario will receive \$475,000 over five years to enhance existing programming including activities related to healing and reconciliation for Indigenous women, culture and language revitalization, education and community building and spiritual and cultural teachings with elders and knowledge keepers.

Gakino'amaage: Teach For Canada located in Toronto, Ontario received \$450,000 over three years to invest in local educators in First Nations schools in remote locations, benefitting more than 4,300



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students annually. In 2026, \$600,000 has been committed for another three years to support the growth of these Indigenous educator pathways and systems.

Wigwamen Terrace located in Toronto, Ontario will receive \$475,000 over five years allowing the organization to hire additional support staff in order to provide their elderly Indigenous residents with assistance with navigating technology, access to mental health services and maintaining connections with Indigenous cultural and spiritual communities and resources.

5. How does one submit a project for consideration?

To submit a project proposal you wish to be considered or to discuss our efforts in greater detail, please e-mail the Office of Social Care & Community Outreach at: socialcare@archtoronto.org.

PRAYERS FOR REFLECTION

- 1) For all who walk together in dialogue and mutual respect with the common goal of seeking truth, healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. We pray to the Lord.
- 2) We pray that church leaders and each one of us will explore opportunities to walk together with Indigenous Peoples of This Land. May we listen authentically as we seek the truth and a path to healing and reconciliation. We pray to the Lord.
- 3) Drawing on the words of the late Pope Francis on his 2022 penitential pilgrimage to Canada, we pray that we may find concrete ways to fully appreciate the culture, history and extensive contributions of Indigenous Peoples of This Land. We pray to the Lord.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For those looking for additional resources, the following may be helpful for personal or educational use.

1) “That We May Walk Together” – Pastoral letters from the Canadian Bishops

On February 8, 2023, the Canadian Bishops issued a collection of [four pastoral letters on reconciliation](#) which are intended as a framework for local engagement with Indigenous Peoples. The letters are the fruit of many months of listening, encounter, and dialogue with Indigenous Peoples including through listening circles, the Indigenous delegation to the Vatican in April of 2022 as well as Pope Francis’ visit to Canada in July of 2022.

2) Catholic Bishops of Canada Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of This Land (3 mins. 47 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6BazS2PENo>

3) Reflections from Indigenous Community Members/Partners

Brief video excerpts from Deacon John Brown, Hon. Graydon Nicholas, Maria Lucas, Fr. Michael Knox SJ and Elder John Robinson (now deceased). These brief videos cover several different topics, most

presented by Indigenous voices. They can serve as an opportunity for education and awareness, in the lead up to National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sept. 30) and for the October 3/4 collection to support the Healing & Reconciliation Fund or for further personal or group reflection. These videos can be found [on our website](#).

4) Texts/Video from the Holy Father's Visit to Canada

Full texts and video of the Holy Father's speeches in Canada [on the Vatican website](#). Other resources can also be found by visiting the Papal Visit to Canada website at: www.papalvisit.ca.

5) "Walking Together" Documentary

For those wishing to have a more in-depth discussion/reflection on the healing and reconciliation journey, Salt + Light Catholic Media Foundation has produced, "Walking Together". The 58-minute documentary provides background regarding Canada's residential schools, the ongoing process of reconciliation which led to Pope Francis' apology in 2022, and the road ahead for healing and reconciliation between the Catholic Church and the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The film can be viewed or downloaded from the [Salt + Light Media website](#).