



**Ontario Provincial Council  
Community Life – Communiqué #5  
Care for our Common Home  
November 2nd, 2021**

To: Diocesan Community Life Standing Chairpersons  
From: Mary Capobianco, Ontario Provincial Council, Community Life Chairperson  
cc: Diocesan Presidents, Provincial Officers,  
National Community Life Chairperson, Sub-committee chairperson

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**Truth and Reconciliation Working Group Report  
Learning, Listening, Actioning.....Working Our Way Towards Reconciliation**

Dear Sisters in the League,

Since the last communiqué, the OPC Truth and Reconciliation Working Group (T&R WG) has been busy brainstorming ways to best assist parishes on their reconciliation journey with Indigenous Peoples.

As promised, with this communiqué, I will expand on the main goals of the working group and provide an update on some of the initiatives.

**Learning, Listening, Actioning.**

**MAIN GOALS of this working group:**

- 1. Be aware of our past** *Learning*
  - 2. Be inclusive in the present and support local efforts** *Listening*
  - 3. Strive for a better future** *Actioning*
- 1. Be aware of our past – Learning**  
The working group will be focusing on educating and raising awareness. There have been many suggested activities, presentations and resources to assist parishes. It was decided that the best way to communicate this information would be through our website. Therefore, we will be establishing a special information link specific for Truth and Reconciliation on the OPC website. We are currently working on the design and content for this and hope to launch it the first week in December. This will be the ideal place to share resources, links and prayers for Truth and Reconciliation. Look for an announcement once the launch date is confirmed.
  - 2. Be inclusive in the present and support local efforts – Listening**  
The OPC working group strongly felt that it was important to have Indigenous representation on the committee. Therefore, we are currently in the process of searching for one or two First Nations council members that would be willing to participate in this working group. A note was recently sent to all Ontario diocesan presidents asking for assistance to accomplish this goal.

In addition, listed are some other suggested activities that you or your parish council may choose to participate in.

There are 133 First Nations communities in Ontario.

- Reach out to your local First Nations community and invite a Chief to speak about their community.
- Invite an Elder to carry out a Smudge Ceremony.

- Organize a Kairos Blanket Ceremony. This is a link for a virtual Kairos Blanket Ceremony: <http://kairosblanketexercise.org>
- Read books by Indigenous authors.
- Learn more about St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

3. **Strive for a better future – *Actioning***

- Revisit and/or create new resolutions that identify injustices against Indigenous peoples and work to address them.
- Contact or write your local MPs or MPPs to address Indigenous issues pertaining to living conditions, health and education etc.
- Recognize, promote, and commemorate annual events such as:
  - June 21<sup>st</sup> – National Indigenous People’s Day
  - Truth and Reconciliation Week. - (Usually the last week of September)
  - Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> – National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day
  - Treaties Recognitions Week (Usually the first week November)

**Communication:**

In addition to the introduction of the Truth and Reconciliation section on the OPC website, there will be a bulletin issued, approximately once a month listing council activities throughout the province. This will obviously rely on submissions being forwarded from the dioceses. I ask councils and dioceses to please share their Truth and Reconciliation activities so that others may also be inspired. If you hold an activity for example, invite a speaker, host a presentation, hold a special Mass, create a special prayer or participate in some other creative activity, please send that information to me and I’ll be happy to include it in the monthly bulletin. With the Advent season almost upon us, there will be many opportunities to reach out to our Indigenous brothers and sisters. Let’s share that news with all our CWL sister’s as well.

**Personal Pledge of Reconciliation:**

One of the goals for this working group is to provide tools to help the members and parish councils as they journey towards Truth and Reconciliation. Attached is one of those tools to get you started.

The attached document has 7 simple commitments that you can weave into your life. The document may be adapted and updated to suit your own situation or council needs. Please note that this document is simply a tool that you and/or your council may choose to use as a personal promise. If you feel comfortable to make this personal promise, you may also choose to print the pledge and post it somewhere. Perhaps on your fridge or as a reminder to yourself.

In conclusion, there are a few other initiatives that the T&R WG is working on which are in the process of being finalized. Stay tuned for more news from your T&R WG!

Peace and Blessings,  
 Mary Capobianco  
 Ontario Provincial Community Life Chairperson.

*(Please see the prayer on Page 3)*

## ***The Peoples' Creed***

I believe in a colour-blind God  
Maker of technicolour people  
Who created the universe,  
And provided abundant resources  
For equitable distribution among all people.  
I believe in Jesus Christ  
Born of an ordinary woman  
Who was ridiculed, disfigured, and executed?  
Who on the third day rose and fought back?  
He storms the highest Councils  
Where he overturns the iron rule of injustice.  
From henceforth he shall continue  
To judge hatred and arrogance.  
I believe in the Spirit of reconciliation,  
The united body of the dispossessed,  
The communion of the suffering masses,  
The power that overcomes dehumanizing forces,  
The resurrection of personhood, justice, and equality,  
And in the final triumph of brotherhood and sisterhood.  
Amen

Attachment:

## **Personal Pledge of Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples**

In the spirit of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada,

I promise to:

Learn more about Indigenous Peoples and issues.

Continue to look forward to positive change for the situation of Indigenous Peoples.

Find ways to address the Indigenous-related myths and misconceptions with my fellow Canadians.

Not perpetuate stereotypes in my conversations or observations.

Encourage others around me to keep reconciliation an ongoing effort.

Read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action.

Actively encourage ongoing support of:

- National Indigenous People's Day – June 21<sup>st</sup>
- Truth and Reconciliation Week – usually the last week in September.
- National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day - Sept. 30th
- Treaties Recognitions Week – usually first week in November.

([www.ictinc.ca](http://www.ictinc.ca))