

NOVENA TO THE MARTYRS FOR THOSE HURT BY RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

DAY 4

We remember the Jesuit Martyrs' ardent love for the Indigenous people.

But in contrast, the survivors of Indian Residential Schools tell us how they were badly hurt by government, by missionaries, and by lay helpers some 300 years later. Why and how did this happen?

We gather to ask the Jesuit Martyrs to help us to acknowledge truth, to take steps toward reconciliation, and to move forward in hope.

Theme:

"I was sick, and you took care of me."

We meet Saint René Goupil

As a young man, René had a strong desire to become a Jesuit. He entered the novitiate, but after a few months was asked to leave because of poor health and deafness. However, he still wanted to dedicate himself in service to God and his neighbour, so, after recuperating he asked to come to new France as a lay volunteer or *donné*. He arrived in Québec and began caring for the sick, because he had some medical training. He saw the Lord in the

persons of his patients. Isaac Jogues asked that René be sent to Huronia, because the Hurons badly needed a surgeon. René and Isaac were captured on their way to Huronia. They were martyred near New York.

Let's listen to a survivor's experience: Isabelle Knockwood

In her book, *Out of the Depths, The Experiences of Mi'kmaw Children at the Indian Residential School in*

Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, Isabelle

Knockwood, herself a survivor, writes, "The school had baseball equipment, and the priest substituting for the principal who was ill at the time,

organized the best players into a team that beat the teams in surrounding towns, including much older players. When the permanent principal returned, he was furious that the Indigenous kids were showing up the white neighbours and disbanded the team. This was the same priest who hid the new shoes and clothing supplied for the children; they did not deserve them.

Some money disappeared one day in 1934; the older boys spent it in town for treats for all the children. Unable to pinpoint the thief, the priest flogged all 19 older boys so severely that the Indian

Agent lodged a complaint. The issue became public and led to questions in the House of Commons; there was an inquiry and then a hearing three months later. The lawyer representing the boys defended the priest, who claimed that the punishment was restrained, even though the marks could still be seen on the boys' backs, and one boy who was beaten had had a kidney removed two months earlier. The *Halifax Herald* joined in praising the priest and all his defenders. But despite an outcome that defended the system, all associated official records have disappeared."

Let's read from the Gospel of Matthew

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison, and you visited me. (Mt 25.34-36)

We pray in silence:

We repent:

We acknowledge that we have benefited and continue to benefit from what was done to the Indigenous Peoples of this land.

We acknowledge that **we belong to the group of settlers who in our pride, tried to make the Indigenous children become like us, because we believed the white man's way was the way to success for them.**

We have benefited and continue to benefit from what was done to the Indigenous Peoples of this land.

We repent and with the Prodigal Son we say,

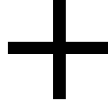
“Father, we have sinned against heaven and before you. We are no longer worthy to be called your sons and daughters; treat us like your hired hands.”

We Pray for Reconciliation:

We know that Reconciliation must go beyond verbal apologies to a just action, to respectful relationships, and when possible, to friendship. We ask St. Jean de Brébeuf and Companions to help us by their prayers to God for us and for the Indigenous people for whom they gave their lives.

Let us pray:

Father you consecrated the first beginning of the faith in North America by the preaching and martyrdom of Saints John and Isaac and their companions. By the help of their prayers may the Christian Faith continue to grow throughout the world. We ask this in Jesus' name.



Divine Praises

Blessed be God,
Blessed be His Holy Name,
Blessed be Jesus Christ,
true God, and true man,
Blessed be the name of Jesus,
Blessed be his most Sacred Heart,
Blessed be his most Precious Blood,
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar,
Blessed be the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy,
Blessed be Saint Joseph, patron of the Martyrs,
Blessed be Saint Jean de Brébeuf,
Blessed be Saint Isaac Jogues,
Blessed be Saint Gabriel Lalemant,
Blessed be Saint Antoine Daniel,
Blessed be Saint Charles Garnier,
Blessed be Saint Noël Chabanel,
Blessed be Saint René Goupil,
Blessed be Saint Jean de Lalande,
Blessed be Saint Kateri Tekakwitha,
Blessed be holy man
Joseph Chiwatenhwa,
Blessed be God in His angels and his saints.