

NOVENA TO THE MARTYRS FOR THOSE HURT BY RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS DAY 8

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:

They left everything and followed Jesus

We meet Saint Gabriel Lalemant

Ever since his ordination Gabriel begged to be sent to new France. He was a man of very frail constitution, so he was kept at Québec for the first two years. He finally got to go to Huronia. He learned the language quickly and had only one month working beside Brébeuf before he was captured by the enemy. Both he and Brébeuf had a chance to escape, but “the salvation of their flock was dearer to them than life itself.”

Let's listen to survivors:

Victoria Boucher-Grant, who attended a residential school in Fort William, Ont., remembers feeling shocked when they cut her long braids, which she had been growing for years. “And they, they took my braids, and they chopped my, they didn't even cut it, they just, I mean style it or anything, they just took the braid like that, and just cut it straight across. And I remember just crying and crying because it was almost like being violated, you know, like when you're, when I think about it now, it was a violation, like, your, your braids got cut. I don't know how many years that you spent growing this long hair.”

Boys' hair was cut, too. Campbell Papequash attended the Roman Catholic residential school in Kamsack, Sask. and recalls the devastating experience. “And then they cut off my beautiful hair. You know, and my hair, my hair represents such a spiritual significance of my life and my spirit. And they did not know, you know, what they were doing to me. You know and I cried, and I see them throw my hair into a garbage can, my long, beautiful braids.”

Let's Listen to the ways of the Holy Spirit

Peter proclaimed, “Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostle, ‘Brother, what should we do?’ Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for you children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2.36-42)

Let us pray in silence:

Let us 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 through a Child Welfare System scooped many, many children from the care of their parents and placed them in non-Indigenous foster homes.**

We repent and with the Prodigal Son we say,

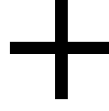
“Father, we have sinned against heaven and before you. We are no longer worthy to be called your sons and daughters; treat us like your hired hands.”

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.