

On behalf of the Catholic Church, I acknowledge and accept responsibility for the grave harms that were caused by our participation with Canada, in implementing Canada's Indian Residential School assimilation policy.

In its implementation of Canada's assimilation policy, the Catholic Church, adopted practices and procedures designed to prohibit First Nation, Metis and Inuit children from speaking their languages, practicing their cultures and learning about their rights by separating them from their families and communities.

Most children in the care and control of the Catholic Church Indian Residential Schools endured malnutrition, neglect, trauma, and substandard education. Many died under questionable circumstances, many from diseases, especially tuberculosis, which disproportionately infected children at Indian Residential Schools due to negligence by our Catholic Church employees.

Many of these children were buried in unmarked graves at the school sites and their parents were not notified of their deaths and never given the opportunity to bring their children home for proper burial. Other children suffered physical abuse, psychological abuse, spiritual abuse, and sexual abuse by Catholic Church caregivers and other Indian Residential School employees. When these abusers were exposed, the Catholic Church failed to report them to the proper authorities, and instead, transferred them to other schools.

The belief underlying the policy of assimilation was that First Nations, Metis and Inuit cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior to that of Europeans. This Eurocentric view can be traced to the Papal Bulls of 1455 and 1493, when my predecessors, of those times, denied all sovereignty to non-Christian First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. In implementing the Papal Bulls, the colonizers seized all property, claimed ownership of 'discovered' 'new' lands, and enslaved and eliminated all the original owners of the land which history confirms, were First Nations people.

The Catholic Church now acknowledges that the consequences of its participation in implementing Canada's assimilation policy upon First Nations, Metis and Inuit children were profoundly damaging and has had a lasting impact on First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples and their communities.

The Catholic Church accepts that its role in Canada's assimilation policy which removed children from their homes in order to separate them from their families and communities with the objective of destroying their languages, traditions, and cultures was wrong and, I apologize.

In moving towards a better more productive and respectful relationship, I commit the Catholic Church to support the co-development of processes with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples for the renunciation of the Doctrine of Discovery, reparations, restitution, repatriation and real conciliation and the reconciliation of their respective rights.

On behalf of the Catholic Church, I apologize for the role it played in carrying out Canada's policy of assimilation through its Indian Residential School system.

On behalf of the Catholic Church, I extend my profound remorse and sincere apology to each and every survivor, your families and communities. I humbly ask for your forgiveness.