

Sacred Fire and Prayer Wave for Healing and Reconciliation
In Support of Indigenous Delegation to Rome – March 28 – April 1, 2022
Friends in the Lord, Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle

Proverbs 28:13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

This year has brought great sadness and shame to this land called Canada and to its Catholic faithful with the sweeping discoveries of unmarked graves raising awareness of our part in residential school history. These events have increased the discomfort of the Catholic faithful trying to reconcile their understanding of the Catholic faith and how the horrors of residential school experiences occurred under the care of its leaders.

The summer and fall of 2021 witnessed individual apologies from many dioceses involved in running residential schools across Canada, a formal apology by all Catholic bishops in Canada followed by a \$30M National Financial Pledge to support healing and reconciliation initiatives, and an announcement of Pope Francis' willingness to visit Canada.

This time of heightened awareness has potential to be a pivotal moment in the history of the Catholic church in Canada as Pope Francis hears directly from Indigenous Peoples in personal encounters with each of three distinct groups of delegates - First Nations, Metis, and Inuit – and in a final audience with all delegates together. We, the Catholic faithful, have an opportunity to be in spiritual solidarity with the delegation in Rome, by educating ourselves on the history of residential schools in Canada and by praying that Spirit may guide these grace-filled encounters.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops facilitated working groups to develop education, reflection, and prayer materials for use during this time. These materials are found on the [CCCB website here](#). Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle (OLGC) has developed a prayer card and invites dioceses, parishes, other organizations and individuals to download the prayer for their use and/or for printing; it can be found on the [OLGC website here](#).

We express our gratitude to you as you receive this invitation. We will pray that Our Lady of Guadalupe intercede with her Son to shower abundant graces among and between us, for the conversion and healing of hearts, as we continue our journey of truth and reconciliation.

In the Catholic church, light has always had a special significance because it represents Christ. The light signifies our prayer, which is offered in faith, entering the light of God. In Indigenous spirituality, the Sacred Fire starts a ceremony or sacred event; it is a sacred practice meant to make individuals feel open, grounded, and connected with people on Earth and those who have moved on.

On March 28, 2022, as the encounter begins, in solidarity with the Indigenous Fire Keepers keeping the Sacred Fire in your region and across this land, we invite all of you to light a fire or a candle and to pray. It is suggested each Diocese partner with Catholic Women's League of Canada, Knights of Columbus, and other groups to ensure commitment to continuous prayer across each region's prayer time.

ATLANTIC TIME ZONE	EASTERN TIME ZONE:	CENTRAL TIME ZONE:	MOUNTAIN TIME ZONE:	PACIFIC TIME ZONE:
NS, PEI and NB, NL	QC, NU 8 am – 11 am	MB 12 noon -3 pm	AB, NT 5 pm – 8 pm	BC 9 pm – 11 pm
5 am- 9 am	ON, NU 11 am – 1 pm	SK 3 pm – 6 pm	YT, NT 8 pm – 11 pm	