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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **OMI Lacombe Canada Statement on the Kamloops Discovery Anniversary**

May 23, 2022

As we recognize the one-year anniversary of the discoveries at the former Kamloops Residential School, we are once again reminded of the tragic and horrifying legacy of abuse and suffering brought about by Canada's Residential School System.

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who operated the Kamloops Residential School, wish to once again express our heartfelt sadness and sincere regret for the immeasurable pain and intergenerational trauma brought to the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, especially the family members of the deceased.

The discovery in Kamloops has reminded us that bringing the full history and truth of residential schools to light, must remain a top priority for both the Oblates, and all Canadians.

For more than 30 years, the Oblates have been active participants in the healing and reconciliation journey: apologizing in 1991, participating in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, committing to its Calls to Action, and completing our obligations under the Indian Residential School Settlement Act.

Still, we know we have not done enough.

Galvanized by the discovery in Kamloops, and subsequent discoveries, we have recommitted ourselves to transparency and doing the necessary work to accompany Indigenous peoples on this journey.

Over the last year, we have worked to:

- Disclose and not block access to historical documents maintained by us and in our possession to establish the truth of what happened in residential schools
- Seek guidance from and work with First Nations and federal and provincial governments on these matters
- Work with bishops and other leaders in the Catholic Church to support the full truth

To date, we have turned over more than 40,000 documents to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). We are continuing the critical work of digitizing and transferring all of our residential school files to the NCTR. As an important next step, we look forward to the upcoming visit in July of NCTR's Head of Archives, Raymond Frogner, to the Oblates archives in Rome.

We know Indigenous communities, survivors, and family members continue to grieve and experience trauma as more of the horrific history of residential schools is brought to light. We are committed to working in collaboration with Indigenous leaders to not only play our critical role in bringing this truth to light but in supporting those most affected by it, in consultation with First Nations leadership.