



17 September 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,
May Jesus and Mary be in your souls.

I pray that the summertime provided you with opportunities to rest and enjoy God's manifold blessings. I wish to thank you most sincerely for all that you do to strengthen the Body of Christ in the Archdiocese of Toronto. Through our committed faith, different and complementary vocations, charisms and ministries, we are contributing to the advancement and spreading of God's Kingdom in our midst and for this, I am truly grateful to each of you and your communities.

You will recall the memorable penitential visit of Pope Francis to Canada in 2022. During his time in our country, the Holy Father challenged us to walk together with Indigenous Peoples of this Land on a journey of reconciliation and hope. I invite you all to join me in praying fervently for those who are still healing from the wounds of emotional, physical and spiritual pain. In a particular way, we lift the up our prayers and intercession as to the gracious and loving Lord on September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

I would also invite you to prayerfully consider supporting the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF) through a collection held in parishes on the weekend of October 5/6 next. The fund was established by the Bishops of Canada in 2022 as part of our communal and national reconciliation efforts and is overseen by a National Board of Directors which includes Indigenous leaders and other members with relevant skills and expertise. As of September 2024, the national fund has raised more than \$15 million, tracking favourably to reach the five-year \$30 million commitment made in 2022.

In the Archdiocese of Toronto, our local efforts have raised close to 50% of our \$6 million commitment. I thank you most sincerely for your generosity and your dedication in assisting in these life-giving efforts in many ways. In December 2023, the archdiocese [announced the allocation of \\$2.7 million](#) to support eight worthy projects through the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund. Our archdiocesan committee reviews project requests/proposals to ensure they meet the IRF criteria, sending both funds and proposals to the national body for timely approval and disbursement. You can learn more about these projects by visiting: www.archtoronto.org/healingandreconciliation.

In walking together with Indigenous Peoples of this Land, let us draw on the profound words offered by the Holy Father during his visit to Lac Ste. Anne, Alberta, a sacred site of pilgrimage and prayer: *"May the Lord help us to move forward in the healing process, towards an ever more healthy and renewed future."*

Once again, beloved sisters and brothers in the faith, I extend my profound gratitude to you for sharing your time, talent and treasure in abundance and so faithfully. May we always continue to follow the example of the loving Lord Jesus: to love, serve and share the truth and the joy of our faith with one another.

St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Protectress of Canada, pray for us.

Yours Sincerely in Jesus with Mary,

Most Rev. Francis Leo
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto