



National Day  
**for Truth and  
Reconciliation**

September 30<sup>th</sup>



Dear Co-workers:

This Thursday, September 30, we will recognize Canada's first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This is a day to reflect on the appalling legacy of the racist Indigenous residential "school system", and to honour those who died, as well as the survivors, their families and communities.

This year has brought the violence of Canada's colonial history into stark relief, as the graves of more than 5,000 children in these institutions have been found over the years. Work continues at many sites and the deaths of many more children are expected to be documented before this is complete.



We, at Good Shepherd, believe it is imperative that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action be realized. Since their release in 2015, most of the Calls to Action have not been implemented. The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is one of those that have.

These are well thought out and compassionate measures to address a cultural genocide. As an organization that is dedicated to bettering our communities through social justice, we embrace Truth and Reconciliation and commit to repairing the seriously damaged relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through the principles of reconciliation.

In the coming weeks, we will be introducing measures that will move this commitment forward. Our Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression audit is one of those measures. Its findings will guide us and recommend ways to take effective action.

Finally, I must address the historical role of the Catholic Church in the operation of the residential school system. As a Catholic agency, Good Shepherd must be accountable for learning, embracing truth, and disrupting the ongoing impacts of colonialism. We have a role to play in addressing the historical and current consequences of colonization borne by Indigenous peoples.

Last week, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops apologized unequivocally for the historical role that the Church played in residential schools. We hope that the Conference won't stop there and will offer reparations to the survivors and families of those lost to this horrific system.

Meanwhile, Good Shepherd commits to promoting, educating and taking concrete actions towards Truth and Reconciliation.

May their souls Rest in Peace,

Brother Richard MacPhee, OH  
Chief Executive Officer