

ST.PATRICK'S PARISH

DRUM BEAT NEWSLETTER

Healing and Reconciliation Ministry



November 2025



Sharing stories and reflections that build understanding, healing, and unity with Indigenous peoples, a journey of truth and reconciliation.

Let the drum guide our hearts forward.

HONOURING INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY

A Day of Remembrance and Gratitude

On November 8th, Canadians pause to honour the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who have served this country in times of war and peace. From the War of 1812 to both World Wars, Korea, Afghanistan, and peacekeeping missions around the globe, Indigenous men and women have stood with courage and sacrifice.

Scripture reminds us:

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13)

This day is not only about remembering battles fought, but also about recognizing the resilience of Indigenous communities who gave generously, even when their service was met with discrimination and injustice at home.



From Discrimination to Recognition

For decades, Indigenous Veterans were denied the same benefits and supports as others. Some even lost their First Nation status in order to access military benefits. Yet, through advocacy and perseverance, apologies and compensation have begun to acknowledge these wrongs.

As people of faith, we are called to walk the path of truth and reconciliation, echoing the words of the prophet Micah: *"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."* (Micah 6:8)



Sergeant Tommy Prince | PPCL Museum and Archives in Calgary

Stories of Courage

- **Sergeant Thomas "Tommy" George Prince**, Canada's most decorated Indigenous soldier, embodied bravery, intelligence, fitness and skill. Though his country failed to honour him in life, today his legacy inspires new generations. The Canadian Forces established the Sergeant Tommy Prince Army Training Initiative in 2000 to increase the number of Indigenous people serving in the infantry, in which volunteers receive specialized training, which takes into account Indigenous views and values.
- **Code Talkers**, who used Indigenous languages to send unbreakable messages, played a vital role in protecting Allied forces during WWII.
- Indigenous soldiers served as **snipers, scouts, and peacekeepers**, drawing on traditional knowledge of the land, patience, and resilience.

Their stories remind us that God equips each of us with unique gifts to serve the greater good.



Code Talkers | National Archives, NAID: 100378007

HONOURING INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY



National Aboriginal Veterans Monument | Tamira Thomson (Veteran Affairs Canada)

Service Across Generations

- **WWI & WWII:** More than 7,000 Indigenous people served, many earning decorations for bravery.
- **Korea & Beyond:** Hundreds continued to serve, with deployments in NATO, UN peacekeeping, and Afghanistan.
- **Today:** Over 1,200 First Nations, Inuit and Métis people serve in the Canadian Armed Forces, representing diverse cultures and more than 55 languages

The National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Ottawa stands as a lasting tribute, crowned by an eagle and surrounded by animals—wolf, bear, bison, and caribou—symbols of spiritual guidance and strength.



Blood Tribe of 191st Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force | Glenbow Archives, NA-2164-1

A Call to Remember and Pray

As a church community, let us:

- **Remember** the sacrifices of Indigenous Veterans.
- **Pray** for healing and reconciliation among all peoples of this land.
- **Commit** ourselves to honouring their legacy by working for peace and justice.

A prayer for this day:

Creator God, we give thanks for the courage and sacrifice of Indigenous Veterans, past and present. May their stories inspire us to live with gratitude, justice, and peace. Heal the wounds of injustice, and guide us on the path of reconciliation. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Closing Reflection

On this Indigenous Veterans Day, may we hear the drumbeat of memory and hope. The drum calls us to unity, to honour the past, and to walk together toward a future of peace.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)



Indigenous Beaded Poppy | Ashley Lacourciere (Georgian College)