

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

DRUM BEAT NEWSLETTER

Healing and Reconciliation Ministry



June 2026



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

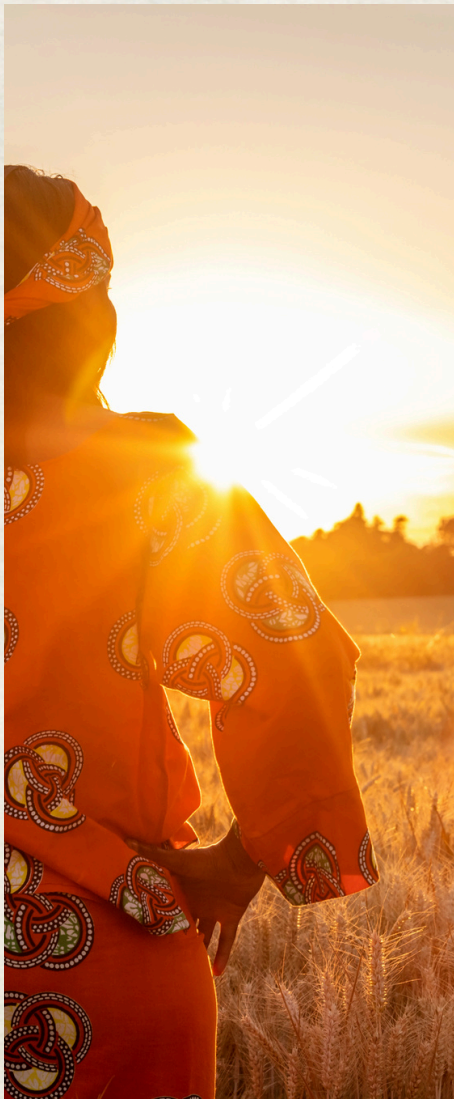
Let the drum guide our hearts forward.

WALKING TOGETHER IN TRUTH, HEALING, AND HOPE

National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 21

June invites us once again to honour the rich cultures, histories, and enduring contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. For our parish community, National Indigenous Peoples Day is a sacred opportunity to pause, reflect, and renew our commitment to the long journey of reconciliation – a journey rooted in the Gospel and lived through relationship, humility, and hope.

As we celebrate this year's National Indigenous Peoples Day, our parish continues to root its reflection in three enduring pillars that guide our journey: **truth, healing, and hope.**



Walking in Truth

Truth is the foundation of reconciliation. It includes acknowledging the deep and lasting harm caused by the residential school system. For generations, Indigenous children were taken from their families, their languages suppressed, their cultures forbidden, and their identities wounded. These truths are painful, but they are essential to name.

Pope Francis, during his 2022 penitential pilgrimage, spoke words that continue to echo in our hearts:

"I am deeply sorry. I ask forgiveness for the ways in which many members of the Church cooperated... in projects of cultural destruction and forced assimilation."

At St. Patrick's, we remember that our parish stands on the traditional territory of the Williams Treaties First Nations, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. This land acknowledgement is not a formality. It is a reminder of our shared history and our shared responsibility.

Walking in truth means allowing our hearts to be moved by stories of suffering and resilience. It means recognizing that reconciliation begins with honesty – with seeing clearly, listening deeply, and acknowledging the truth with humility.

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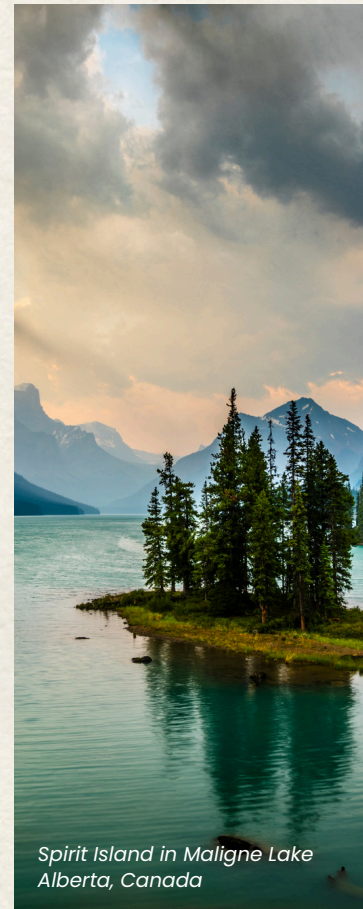
Walking in Healing

Healing is sacred work. It is slow, patient, and often painful. But it is also holy. It is not something we can impose; it is something we nurture through compassion, accompaniment, and the rebuilding of trust.

For Indigenous communities, healing often involves reclaiming language, ceremony, and cultural identity – gifts that were suppressed for generations.

Healing also requires us to listen to Indigenous voices with openness and humility. It means honouring the leadership of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Survivors. It means supporting Indigenous-led initiatives that strengthen culture, language, and community well-being.

In our parish, healing takes shape through relationship-building: attending Indigenous-led events, inviting Elders to share teachings, and supporting local initiatives that honour Indigenous voices. It includes educating ourselves and our children about the true history of this land. It includes praying for healing – not as a passive act, but as a commitment to transformation. Healing is not a destination. It is a journey we walk together, trusting that God's grace is at work in every step.



*Spirit Island in Maligne Lake
Alberta, Canada*



Walking in Hope

Hope is a theological virtue – a gift from God that strengthens us to persevere even when the path is difficult. Hope does not deny the pain of the past; rather, it believes that new life is possible because God is faithful.

Indigenous communities have shown extraordinary resilience, creativity, and leadership. Their strength is a sign of hope for all Canadians. From language revitalization to cultural renewal, from environmental stewardship to community healing, Indigenous Peoples continue to lead with courage and vision.

WALKING TOGETHER IN TRUTH, HEALING, AND HOPE

National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 21

For us as a parish, hope means believing that reconciliation is possible. It means trusting that small acts of solidarity matter: learning the truth, supporting Indigenous voices, and raising children who understand our shared history. Hope invites us to imagine a future where relationships are restored, dignity is honoured, and justice is lived.

Hope is not passive. It calls us to action. It calls us to walk with Indigenous Peoples not only in moments of celebration, but also in moments of struggle. It calls us to be a Church that listens, learns, and loves with the heart of Christ.



Walking Together:

To celebrate this year's National Indigenous Peoples Day, let's join together:

- **Learn** about Indigenous histories and cultures
- **Listen** with humility and openness
- **Support** Indigenous-led initiatives
- **Participate** in National Indigenous Peoples Day events
- **Pray** for healing, justice, and renewed relationships

Reconciliation is not a single act but a way of living the Gospel. It is a call to walk with Christ, who leads us toward justice, compassion, and restored relationship.

PRAYER FOR NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

Dear God,

*We give thanks for the First Nations,
Inuit, and Métis Peoples of this land.
Bless their Elders, youth, families,
and communities.*

*Heal the wounds of the past and
guide us on the path of
reconciliation.*

*May we walk together in truth,
healing, and hope.*

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

