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June 7, 2021

Archbishop Richard Gagnon, President
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
2500 Don Reid Dr.
Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2

Your Excellency,

On behalf of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, representing over 70,000 members across Canada, I extend members' deepest sympathy and prayers to the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation.

As stated in the League's *Executive Handbook* under the dignity and rights of persons, "It is our responsibility, as Christian women and members of a national organization, to play an active role in opposing discrimination wherever and in whatever form it appears."

It is difficult to understand today that children at such young ages were separated from their families. While in care of people who were to educate and prepare them for their future, there appeared to be disregard for their culture and, in fact, their lives.

Although Our Blessed Mother knew that her Son, Jesus, must die for our sins, she suffered with great pain knowing that He must obey His Father. I cannot imagine the pain and suffering the mothers and fathers endured when their daughters and sons left their home never to return. The discovery of a massive grave site of 215 children calls for a deep Christian response, and those responsible, both in government and the church must make an account.

As Catholic women, we will encourage the membership to mark International Indigenous Day in a special way this year, and will continue to pray that a final peace and reconciliation will become a reality between our beloved church and all indigenous peoples in Canada.

Know that The Catholic Women's League of Canada, as a lay association of the faithful, with members in all provinces and the military, continues to pray regularly for all bishops and clergy. Members anticipate that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, under your direction and with the help of the Holy Spirit and Our Lady's intercession, will find the words and actions to bring about healing.

Sincerely,

Anne-M Gorman
National President

MR/amg