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December 29, 2021

APPEAL for the support of TRC Healing Response: Residential School Survivors and their Families and Communities

Dear Clergy, Religious, Lay Faithful – Sisters and Brothers of the Diocese of Saskatoon:

I wish to update you regarding the status of our efforts here in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon to raise and assign \$30 million collectively in support of regionally-based Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Healing Response projects. These efforts are in conjunction with the commitment by dioceses and eparchies throughout Canada.

Our diocese looks forward to a larger announcement by the Catholic Bishops of Canada regarding the structure for collecting funds and discerning projects. As previously indicated, projects will be allocated to local and national initiatives responding to the TRC's Calls to Action, as guided by Indigenous representatives of communities and organizations (cf. *Calls to Action* #58-61, #73-76; #82). This includes consultation with Indigenous organizations that is underway here in Saskatchewan.

In order to most appropriately allocate these funds, we plan to engage Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners in establishing a “discernment circle” and eventual board to discern, allocate, and distribute funds. At this point it is envisaged that this process would be engaged over a multi-year time-frame, as funds are raised and available.

As previously outlined, the general funding priorities are as follows:

- 1) Healing and reconciliation
- 2) Cemeteries on the sites of former residential schools
- 3) Education and cultural support

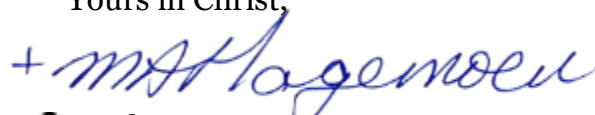
The Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan announced their province-wide fund-raising effort on July 13, 2021. A Canada-wide campaign by all dioceses across the country was subsequently announced by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) in late September, with the aim that details regarding raising and disbursing funds would be complete by late November. The CCCC has now indicated that establishing the framework for the national diocese-by-diocese effort has turned out to be more complicated than anticipated – as many issues must be clearly addressed, including: engaging local Indigenous partners; decision-making; transparency and accountability with funds raised; and assignment of funds to projects. (Find a news article at:

<https://news.rcdos.ca/2021/12/23/bishops-look-to-launch-fundraising-plans-for-reconciliation-in-new-year/>)

As part of the province-wide appeal, I affirm our own ongoing efforts here in the diocese of Saskatoon to fully participate in this collective effort. The Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan have already launched this appeal online with the support of the Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation. Further details and information about the Catholic TRC Healing Response can be found on the Foundation website at: <https://dscf.ca/catholic-trc-healing-response>. I am grateful to all those who have already supported this important initiative with donations and prayers. For those of you awaiting more details, be assured that our diocese is fully committed to providing information and to further promoting the campaign in the days and weeks ahead. It is important that this work be done with due diligence and care – both in our own diocese and in the five-year national campaign.

As Catholics, and as brothers and sisters of a much larger human community – we know that we must all take responsibility for amends and healing for past sins. We now enter this new time of opportunity and responsibility. I am aware that there is much excitement and anticipation about moving forward with this Catholic TRC Healing Response initiative, and especially with engaging Indigenous partners to carry out important helpful projects. I am also hearing from many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people a renewed sense of excitement about facilitating healing, and relationship-building as a response to the legacy of the residential school history, and to fulfill the vision given to us by God our Creator for “right relationship” - with God, other people, and all Creation. Let us continue to journey together on a path of reconciliation and healing, actively building “right relationship” through dialogue, awareness and action.

Yours in Christ,



✠ Mark A. Hagemoen