

Brief history of the SSA commitment to the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In 2006, along with more than 50 other Catholic Entities involved in the Indian Residential Schools, the Sisters of Saint Anne (British Columbia) signed the [Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement \(IRSSA\)](#). The IRSSA recognized the abomination of the residential schools and established a \$1.9-billion compensation package.

Since the signing of the agreement, the Sisters of Saint Anne have worked continuously to support programs for assisting in the healing and reconciliation needed, due to the grave harm caused throughout this dark history.

In fact, in 2001, the Sisters of Saint Anne were one of the early [founders](#) of the [Returning to Spirit](#) reconciliation program that leads workshops between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous persons across Canada. The mission is to create a cultural bridge and give everyone a chance to transform the negative legacy of the Residential Schools, to one of empowerment and possibility.

In 2016, Sister Rita Larivee, SSA, in her role as president of the Catholic Religious Conference (CRC), representing the religious congregations of men and women in Canada, was a signatory and participant in developing two major documents released by the Catholic Church in Canada: [The “Doctrine of Discovery” and Terra Nullius: A Catholic Response](#) and [A Catholic Response to Call to Action 48 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#)

In 2017, Saint Paul University (Ottawa) received a \$800,000 leadership gift from the Sisters of Saint Anne (British Columbia) to support its new capacity in Counselling and Spirituality by/for Indigenous peoples. The objective is to train psychotherapists who will benefit from the full clinical rigour of current program offerings, while respecting and incorporating Indigenous cultural knowledge, values, and spiritual teachings on a regional scale through community partnerships. Saint Paul University has been training psychotherapists at the masters and doctoral levels for 43 years.

“The Sisters of Saint Anne are especially pleased to support Saint Paul University as it establishes new partnerships with Indigenous organizations in developing healing programs that will benefit their communities,” said Sister Marie Zarowny. “We are committed to working towards reconciliation and view this initiative as a step forward on that journey.”

Most recently (March 2021), the Sisters of Saint Anne donated \$150,000 to [Thompson River University located in Kamloops](#), as an endowment to establish bursaries for Indigenous students in the School of Nursing.