

NCTR to work with SSA to identify and transfer residential school records

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The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) and the Sisters of Saint Ann (SSA) are pleased to announce a new working relationship to access the SSA's records concerning their teaching and support roles in residential schools. This relationship builds on the SSA's earlier disclosure and release of records to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2012-2013 — records which were subsequently transferred to the NCTR when it was established in 2015.

The NCTR acknowledges that the SSA responded to the TRCs original requests by providing relevant records. In collaboration with the NCTR the SSA are re-examining existing records to identify any new information related to the Sisters' role in the residential schools, and to improve upon or clarify any missing information related to the environment and context of the administration and functioning of the residential schools.

“The Sisters are making efforts to take responsibility for their role in residential schools,” said Stephanie Scott, NCTR Executive Director. “This collaboration between the NCTR and the Sisters of Saint Ann leads the example for everyone involved across church and government organizations to take an active role in uncovering how they contributed to the residential school system and to help Indigenous communities and Survivors to access these truths.”

The Sisters of Saint Ann are fully committed to the journey towards truth, reconciliation and healing, and are humbled and inspired by the courage of all Indigenous peoples impacted by this dark time of colonial history. Recognizing that reconciliation begins with truth, and is enabled by action, the Sisters aspire to contribute towards greater understanding of what took place with the full release of records and information; and, to ultimately contribute towards restorative healing, hope and wellness.

“We are grateful to the NCTR for their guidance and support in this process of improving the quality and accessibility of the records we have shared,” says Sister Marie Zarowny of the Sisters of Saint Ann. “One’s need for information, to uncover truths and to understand the past, doesn’t dissipate over time. If we can help even one person to learn more about their history, to be able to take one step further forward towards healing, then we must do all we can to ensure the records related to our activities are available and easy to access.”

About the NCTR

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) was created to preserve the memory of Canada’s Residential School system and legacy. Not just for a few years, but forever. It is the responsibility of the NCTR to steward and share the truths of Survivors’ experiences in a respectful way and to work with Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, researchers, communities, decision-makers and the general public to support the ongoing work of Truth, Reconciliation, and healing across Canada and beyond.

About the SSA

The Sisters of St. Ann were founded in 1850 by Blessed Marie Anne Blondin in Vaudreuil, Quebec and have served in the Pacific Northwest since 1858. After their arrival, the Sisters staffed over 30 schools (including four residential

schools) and ten hospitals throughout BC, the Yukon and Alaska.

The Sisters of Saint Ann acknowledge, with gratitude, the unceded, ancestral and traditional homelands of the Lekwungen speaking peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

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“Ka-kí-kiskéyihétan óma, namoya kinwés maka aciyowés pohko óma óta ka-hayayak wasétam askihk, ékwa ka-kakwéy miskétan kiskéyihamowin, iyinísiwin, kistéyitowin, mina nánisitotatowin kakiya ayisiniwak, ékosi óma kakiya ka-wahkotowak.”

Cree Proverb

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