



**Society of the Sacred Heart™**  
**United States – Canada**

**Statement of Solidarity**  
**Orange Shirt Day in Canada: Every Child Matters**  
**Monday, September 30, 2019**

As Religious of the Sacred Heart in the United States – Canada Province, we are called by our [2016 Chapter Calls](#) to stand in solidarity with “those who have been wounded, displaced, and excluded,” and “to defend justice, peace, and the integrity of creation in response to all of those who are searching for meaning in their lives.” (General Chapter 2016)

Between the 1860s and the 1990s, approximately 150,000 Metis, Inuit and First Nation children were forcibly sent to Church-run residential schools in Canada. Orange Shirt Day is the day Canadians honour the indigenous children who were sent away to these residential schools and commit themselves to learn more about the history of those schools.

The “orange shirt” refers to the new shirt Phyllis Webstad was given by her grandmother for her first day of school, which was taken away from her along with the rest of her clothing. “The message Phyllis wants to pass along on Orange Shirt Day – and every day – is that every child matters,” a feeling she never knew in her experience at a residential school. Orange Shirt Day was started by Phyllis to educate people about these residential schools and fight racism and bullying.” (<https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/what-is-orange-shirt-day>)

In solidarity with the indigenous children who were forcibly sent to residential schools, in recognition of the resiliency of the surviving victims of these schools and in tandem with the efforts of those working for reconciliation, we invite you to wear orange on Monday, September 30, 2019. We also encourage you to educate yourself and others on this part of Canada’s history as well as the United States’ history of displacement of and cruel treatment toward indigenous peoples.

**Canadian Resources:**

History of the residential schools and lesson plans for teachers: <https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/what-is-orange-shirt-day>; <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/teacher-resources.html>

Videos on the St. Joseph Mission Commemoration Project: <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/>

The Story of Orange Shirt Day: <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/about-us.html>

In her 2018 CBC Massey Lectures series, titled *All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward*, prize-winning journalist Tanya Talaga (author of *Seven Fallen Feathers*) explores the legacy of cultural genocide against indigenous peoples: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/the-2018-cbc-massey-lectures-all-our-relations-1.4763007>

CBC's two-part series on Canada's history of slavery: [www.cbc.ca/ideas](http://www.cbc.ca/ideas)

Jennifer Henry, "Unlearning Racism Against Indigenous People in One Generation":  
<https://www.kairoscanada.org/unlearning-racism-indigenous-peoples-one-generation>

Kairos Canada, Kairos Blanket Exercise (KBE): Education on the roots of racism related to indigenous people: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/indigenous-rights/blanket-exercise>

### **United States Resources:**

NPR News, Native American Boarding Schools 101 (7 minutes) 2012; *History of US Indian Boarding Schools, interviews*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIG2-7yI3mc>

Indian Boarding School Plans (10 minutes) 2008. US Government and Christians develop a joint plan to rob Indian children of their culture; "Missionaries are soldiers in disguise":  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Avt-5cfb3ng>

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2014. (The history of the United States told from the perspective of indigenous peoples.)

Miranda, Deborah, *Bad Indians*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013. (Includes excerpts from a history of the California mission, the Mexican period, the Gold Rush, government schooling and the historical trauma as it affected one particular family through the generations.)