

# Moving Forward with Reconciliation with Indigneous Peoples

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# Introduction by Jim Paddon

- Why should Vincentians care?
- What can we do?
- How do we do it?

# Christians are Called to Truth, Holiness and Reconciliation Wherever Injustice Lives

“Under his (St. Vincent de Paul’s) direction, their awareness of God’s presence in their lives increased and they learned to trust in the Divine Providence.

It is our responsibility to continue exemplifying the Vincentian charism in the various cultures and circumstances where the SSVP is located.”

(Fr. Motto CM, New CGI Spiritual Advisor,  
speaking of the first followers of St. Vincent de Paul  
Ozanam Network 01/ 2019 p. 23)

# SSVP Members:

- reconcile the injustice of poverty, hunger, imprisonment, lack of necessary material goods and the suffering of natural disasters and war by responding individually, or in conferences, to meet those needs in very practical ways
- The SSVP video on “The North of 60” program highlights the hands-on, practical response that is so characteristic of the SSVP

**“I like to remember what St. Vincent says about the spirit of Christ: “It’s a spirit of perfect charity” (Volume XI, page 411).**

**This means that we, clad in Christ by baptism, must give new fruits of life. That for us, Vincentians, stands for social charity and radical justice.”** Fr. Motto CM. Ozanam Network 01/2019 p. 23

- **“radical justice”**: involves creating a vision and reality for the future
- **i.e. to reconcile systemic injustices by working to changes organizations, structures and systems to be more just and compassionate**

# Who calls us to reconcile?

Jesus prayed:

“As you Father , are in me and I am in you, may they also be one in us... The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be completely one so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17: 22 & 23)

# **“What is reconciliation?”**

“ ...the rebalancing of power  
by rectifying an unjust relationship  
that has resulted in an imbalance of power.”

Cassandra J. Opikokew Wajunta in Reconciliation and the Way Forward p. 150

It is a big word, *reconciliation*. Quite simply, it means to create harmony. You create harmony with truth and you build truth out of humility. That is spiritual. That is truth. ...”

Richard Wagamese: Speaking My Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation p. 88



# Context Matters!

According to Robert Schreiter, reconciliation is always contextualized. Because the context of every offensive act, system or situation is different, the form that reconciliation takes will differ.

He uses the post-Resurrection stories to highlight this message in his book: *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies*. (© 1998 Orbis Books)

e.g. Peter's three denials followed by Jesus' question three times: "Peter, do you love me?"

Thomas' disbelief:

Jesus invites him to touch His wounds

# Truth Matters!

“If you continue in my word, you are my disciples: and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

John 8: 31-32

In Canada, knowing the fuller truth of the Relationship between Peoples of Settler and Immigrant origins and Indigenous Peoples will help to set us free so we can reconcile and create a new future together.

Let's now look at the truth and reconciliation process in Canada.

# National reconciliation in Canada: a need for transformation

The colonization process

and abuse in residential schools

created a need for

Indigenous Peoples and Peoples of Settler/immigrant origins to  
reconcile.

# The Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2009-2015

- Was created as part of the Settlement Agreement between the Survivors of the Residential Schools, the Canadian Federal Government and the Churches, Dioceses and Religious Congregations who operated the schools.
- Had 3 Commissioners: Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair; and Commissioners Chief Wilton Littlechild and Marie Wilson.
- Hosted local, regional and territorial gatherings as well as 7 national events.
- Gave a Final 5-volume Report: June 6, 2015 included 94 Calls to Action

“To the Commission, reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country.”

# Reconciliation: Time for Reconciliation

Kairos 2015 National gathering in Ottawa

What is Reconciliation?

## Kairos Speakers:

- Ed Bianchi: Kairos Director
- Algonquin Elder Albert Dumont
- Gabrielle Fayant: Métis Youth Facilitator

<https://youtu.be/DJ624vLRFk0>

[https://youtu.be/Oc\\_uA7lcl9A](https://youtu.be/Oc_uA7lcl9A)

<https://youtu.be/2y3utFPs5UY>

# Recognizing the Dignity / Sacredness of the Other

Residential School Survivor Mike Cachagee

<https://youtu.be/5A1afqjLwpc>

TRC Commissioner Marie Wilson

<https://youtu.be/MtNMoDDDhbA>

Kairos page: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/video-playlists/time-for-reconciliation>

**Reconciliation: gift, grace**

**It is the restoration of one's  
damaged humanity.**

**(Robert . J. Schreiter, C.PP. S.:  
The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies)**



**‘Reconciliation is both  
a spirituality and strategies.’**

**(Robert . J. Schreiter, C.PP. S.:**

**The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies)**

# To Reconcile is to:

- Help to restore damaged humanity and dignity
  - Work to build structures and processes

(Robert . J. Schreiter, C.PP. S.:

- **The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies)**

# Two faces of reconciliation:

## •Social:

This is about  
providing  
structures and  
processes

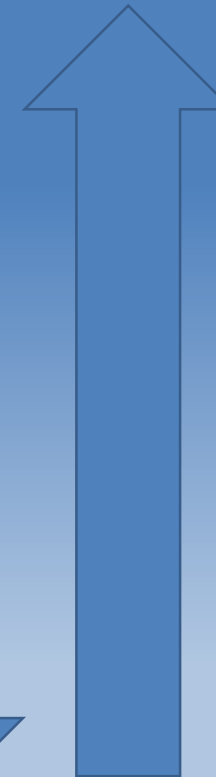
## •Spiritual:

This is about  
rebuilding  
shattered lives

(Robert . J. Schreiter, C.PP. S.:  
The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies)

# Steps in the reconciliation process:

- ❖ Awareness
- ❖ Anger
- ❖ Crying Out
- ❖ Creating a New Redeeming Narrative
- ❖ Forgiveness of Self
- ❖ Forgiveness of the Offender
- ❖ Opening Space for Repentance



We can move through the process but there are times when we will need to go back to a step, or spend more time with any given step.

(Compiled by Eva Solomon CSJ based on Robert J. Schreiter's work on Reconciliation)

❖ Awareness

❖ Anger

❖ Crying Out

❖ Creating a new  
redeeming narrative

# Turtle Island Stories

## Two very different Foundational Stories

### Indigenous Stories:

- The Land , the Water belong to the Creator to be shared by all
- We were put here for Creator's purpose and given all we need to carry out that purpose
- We are individual and interdependent

### Newcomer Stories

- The land is empty; I/we have title to it because we found it
- Your religions, your spirituality, your ways of teaching , healing, and governing are not good enough : Our ways/stories are better
- We are independent & separate

# Between the Foundational Stories:

## The Stories of Collaborators and Allies:

- The collaboration re: the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline
- The work of the Aboriginal Rights Coalition which later became part of Kairos Canada
- The 20 –year collaboration to create the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



# Significant Moments

- First contact
- Treaties
- “The Indian Act”
- Residential Schools
- Indigenous Resistance at Oka
- The Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples
- The “Settlement Agreement”
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Report
- The TRC report’s “Calls to Action”
- The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Commission and Report
- The MMIWG Report’s Calls to Justice

❖ Forgiveness of Self

❖ Forgiveness of the Offender

Recently deceased Jean Vanier says:

“Reconciliation is a bilateral affair;  
it is the completion of the forgiveness process,  
the coming together of the oppressed and the oppressor,  
each one accepting the other,  
each acknowledging their fears and hatreds,  
each accepting that the path of mutual love is the only way  
out of a world of conflict.”

Jean Vanier in *Becoming Human* p. 155

# ❖ Opening Space for Repentance

The space is opened by the one who has been offended.

The offender does not have the capacity to do that for himself or herself.

In order for that (a mutually respectful relationship) to happen, there has to be an awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.”

(RC Commission Final Report)

# Reconciliation also requires:

- Courage and Resilience
- Trust, Faith and Vision
- Time and Effort
- Collaboration and Respect
- Love
- Listen to Jah' Kota, a wise youth, who calls us to reconciliation:

<https://youtu.be/TADxOa-UgHk>

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/video-playlists/time-for-reconciliation>

# **3 R's of Reconciliation:**

**Recognize**

**Respect**

**Reconcile**

# Recognize:

- **One's self, one's experience and reality**
- **The other's self, the other's experience and reality**



# Respect:

- **See again  
more clearly  
and more deeply**

# **Reconcile: Repent & Reach out**

- Help to restore the damaged humanity and dignity of the one offended**
- Honour the other, whether oppressor or oppressed**
- Work to build just structures and processes**

# Quoting Renato Lima de Oliveira:

## in Ozanam Network Newsletter 01/2019

- “Dear brothers and sisters, we all know that, in order to be considered a “good Vincentian”, we need to fulfil certain conditions, such as following the Rule, joining a Conference, taking part in spirituality events, and practising charity with those who are suffering. There are two elements, however, which take priority on the Vincentian path: time and love.”
- Note: “time and love” are key for healing & reconciling relationships

This power point on Reconciliation was prepared by  
Priscilla Solomon CSJ  
for the SSVP AGA in June of 2019

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# Reconciliation and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

- What can you do as a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul regarding reconciliation as it relates to the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation) report?
- Do you believe we (SSVP members and fellow Catholics) can make a difference in the reconciliation process? How?
- Do you believe it is important to educate our membership and the larger Catholic population about Indigenous history, culture, faith traditions and the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples?
- Let's remember the 3 R's discussed in the AGA Reconciliation workshop presentation.
- Recognize, Respect and Reconcile.
- Recognize -one's self, one's experience and reality.
- Respect-see again more clearly and more deeply
- Reconcile, Repent and Reach Out-help to restore the damaged humanity and dignity of the one offended. Honour the other, whether the oppressor or the oppressed. Work to build JUST structures and processes.

# Possible Actions For Any Council / Conference

- Invite members of a nearby First Nations community to attend a SSVP meeting to speak about their history, culture and faith traditions.
- Whenever we are meeting, acknowledge the land we are on in relation to Indigenous Peoples history.
- Visit a First Nations community, or an Indigenous Friendship centre near you to open a dialogue on how we may work together on poverty issues as they relate to Indigenous Peoples.
- Read the TRC recommendations and consider ways to advocate for changes identified in the report.
- Attend a Pow Wow and experience and enjoy the demonstration of Indigenous music, dancing and great food.
- Post relevant information on your regional, council website or in newsletters.
- Consider a presentation of the Blanket Exercise. (allow a minimum of two hours). Kairos Canada offers this presentation as well as other presenters.
- Consider using Indigenous faith traditions as part of a spiritual reflection to demonstrate how it relates to the Catholic faith.
- Explore Indigenous resources as they relate to the care of our environment.
- Recognize the National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. December 12. This is the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- Pray for Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. (MMIWG) and support actions related to this issue.