

Education Towards Reconciliation A Call to Action

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Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul



We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.

Call to Action #59

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada





The Indian Act

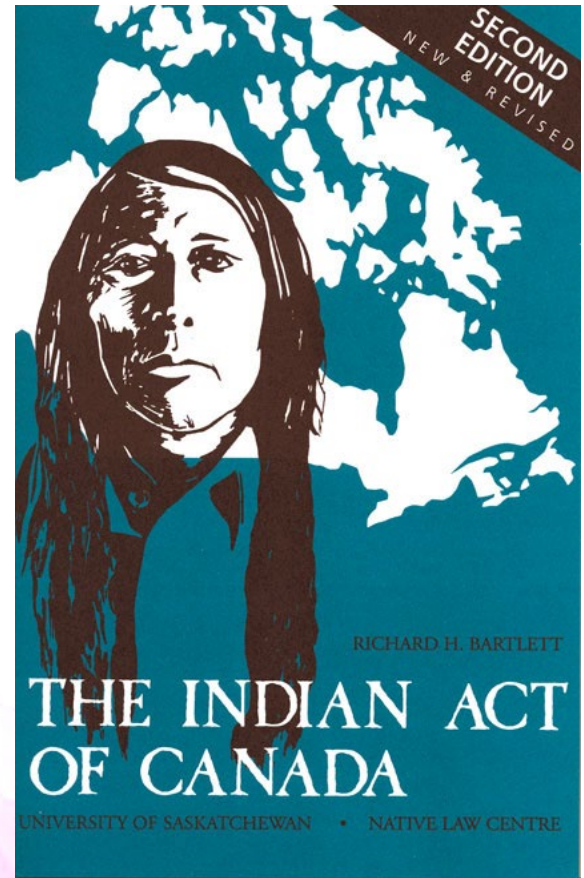
Part 1 - What is the Indian Act?

Residential Schools?

Everybody knows about abuses at residential schools

What do you know about...

... the Indian Act?



The Indian Act

What is the Indian Act?

Indian Act was passed in 1876

...many revisions

...more revisions

...many more revisions

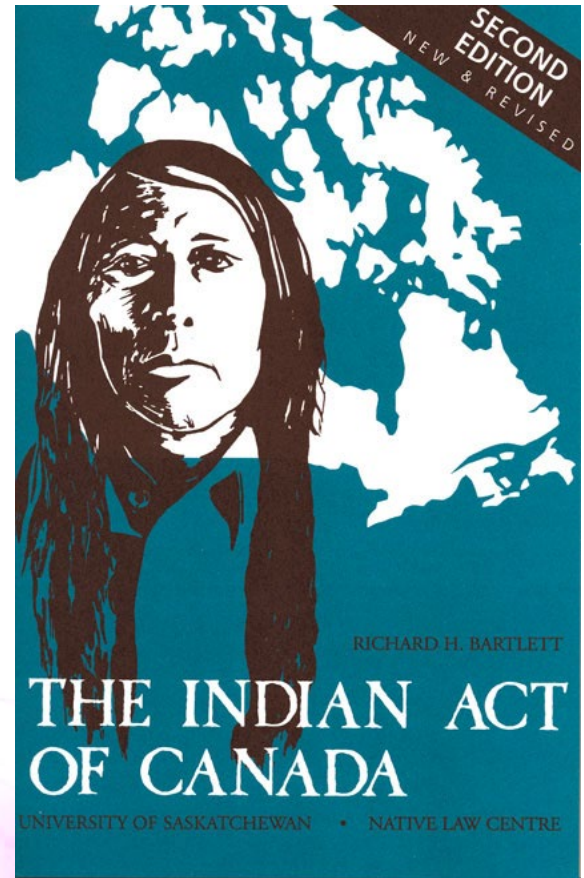
Still in force today - 2025

Federal Government gave itself
exclusive right to create legislation

Who are and are not 'Indians'?

What are Indian lands?

Legal rights, obligations and prohibitions





The Indian Act

Isn't it politically incorrect to talk about...

Indians?





The Indian Act

What is the Indian Act?

The Indian Act legally set up Indian Residential Schools
...but also did far, far more...

Primary purposes of the Indian Act:

- Assimilation (#1)
- Control and regulation
- Indian Status
- Reserve System
- Residential Schools





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The Doctrine of Discovery

Part 2 - The colonial roots of the Indian Act

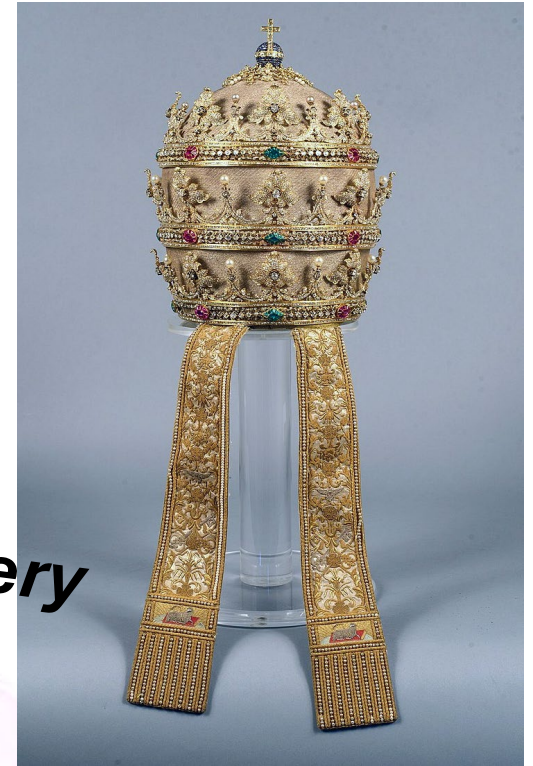
- **Hegemony justified by *The Doctrine of Discovery***

Pope Nicholas V

papal bull Dum Diversas in 1452

To King Alfonso V of Portugal

to reduce any "Saracens (Muslims) and pagans and any other unbelievers"
to perpetual slavery
and to seize their lands and possessions





The Doctrine of Discovery

The Doctrine of Discovery

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S.

2005 case: Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York

The Doctrine of Discovery had been used historically
to justify the taking of Native American land





The Doctrine of Discovery

The Doctrine of Discovery

First Nations Leaders

...repeated calls for the Pope to rescind the DoD

Two Vatican Dicasteries, March 2023

– repudiated the “so called” Doctrine of Discovery

Pope Paul III – Papal Bull 'Sublimis Deus' in 1537

...was published 85 years after Dum Diversas

...and 20 years after Martin Luther kicked off the Reformation in Europe

One of the best kept secrets in the Catholic Church up until March 2023!





Colonization

What motivated the Indian Act? Greed... justified by The Doctrine of Discovery



Age of Empires

Imperial expansion by colonization

The Doctrine of Discovery legitimized and blessed the greed of nations

For the British Crown

Upper Canada was an immense source of...

Wheat, barley, oats, corn

Oak, White Pine, Spruce and Maple
Ships, Buildings, Furniture

European Colonial Settlers

access to prime forests...

... and the most fertile land

Just one PROBLEM!





Colonization

Just one PROBLEM!

Thousands of First Nations people

Hundreds of Indigenous communities

Traditional ways

Ancestral land



THE INDIAN PROBLEM!

The solution?

THE INDIAN ACT!



The I

"The question which world today is a social struggle between nothing and those who have much."

- Frédéric Ozanam
with identity in
to identifying the

"Charity is the strength of the traveler who prevents the arrival of the enemy."
- Frédéric Ozanam





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Land and Resources

Reserves

Land use restrictions

Agriculture

Livestock

No business or commercial use

Restrictions on resources

Minerals, Oil

Timber

Hunting and fishing



Cooperatives Banned!

Permits required to sell produce





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Housing and Infrastructure

Severe housing shortages

Overcrowding

Poor sanitation

Contaminated drinking water





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Health and Wellness

Poor diet from young age

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Mental Health

Limited access to healthcare services

- Mental health support
- Specialized care

Water issues

Always numerous Boil Water Advisories

Grassy Narrows

- 10 tons of Mercury (60s & 70s)
- Water and fish contamination





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Education and Skills Development

Legacy of Residential Schools

Chronic Federal Underfunding

Limited access to programs

Cultural barriers

Eurocentrism

Lack of representation

Cultural insensitivity





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Economic Development Barriers

Access to Capital

High interest rates

Collateral

Regulatory Hurdles

Limits on leasing

Federal ministerial approvals

Restrictions on land and resources

Beads and blankets





The Indian Act

A Systemic Cause of Poverty

Intergenerational Trauma

Residential School Legacy

[Freddy Taylor's story](#)

"They tore the insides of me out."
- Neither White nor Indigenous

Systemic racism



Image credit: cbc.ca/news



Time for a 5-minute break





TRC Call to Action #59
A Catholic and Vincentian Response

The Indian Act

Part 4 – Considerations for a Christian Response

Matthew 5:24

First go and be reconciled to them;
then come and offer your gift.

- Jesus of Nazareth





TRC Call to Action #59

A Catholic and Vincentian Response

First Nations do not need others to advocate for them
...but WITH them

Agency to advocate for themselves

- Demeaning
- Paternalistic
- Patronising

Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

- Replace the Indian Act

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

- 94 Calls to Action

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Chief Murray Sinclair

Chief Wilton Littlechild

Dr. Marie Wilson (Non-Indigenous)





TRC Call to Action #59

A Catholic and Vincentian Response

Charges against us as Catholics:

- ❖ Role in Residential Schools
- ❖ Doctrine of Discovery
- ❖ Ignoring the treaties

Self-educate and get informed:

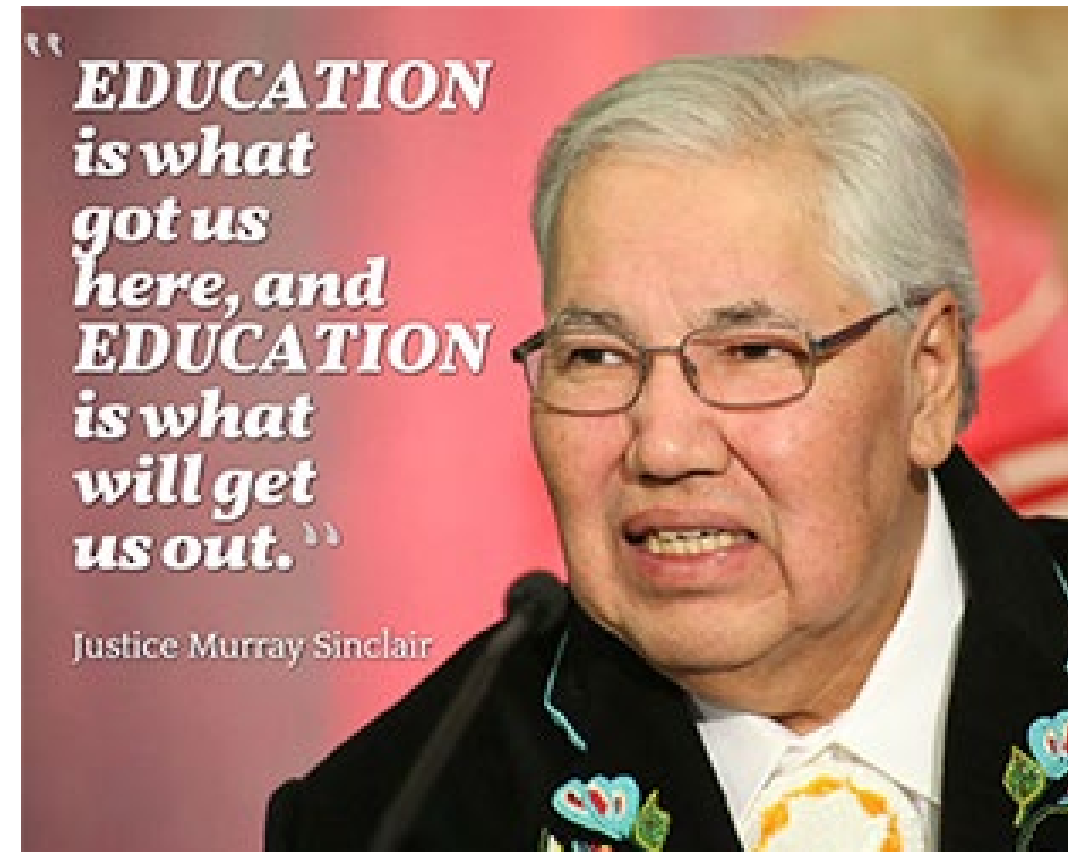
Watch YouTube

- ❖ Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts.
- ❖ TRC Report (5 Videos, They Came for the Children)

Read

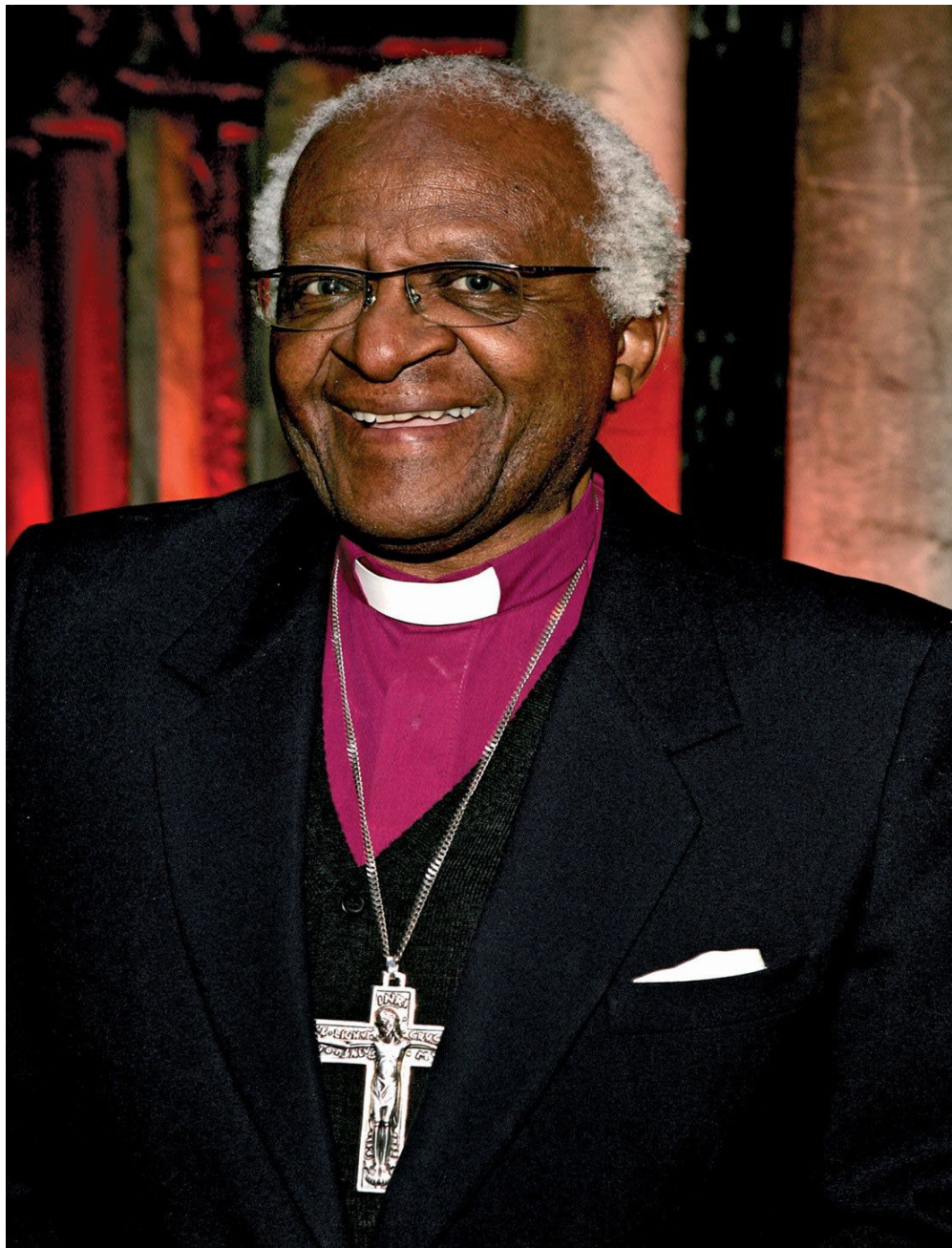
- ❖ "21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act" by Bob Joseph
- ❖ CCCB Pastoral letters

Advocate for Indigenous Land Acknowledgements



"Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."
- Jesus





I've never doubted that apartheid,
because it was of itself
fundamentally, intrinsically evil,
was going to bite the dust
eventually.

- South African Archbishop
Desmond Tutu (1931-2021)



The
Cry
Of
The
Earth

WARNING

POLLUTED WATER



**ENGLISH RIVER WABIGOON SYSTEM
IS KNOWN TO HAVE
HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY**

The
Cry
Of
The
Poor



July 25, 2022, in Maskwacis, Alta., Pope Francis:

AP Photo/Eric Gay

"I am sorry. I ask forgiveness, in particular, for the ways in which many members of the church and of religious communities co-operated, **not least through their indifference**, in projects of cultural destruction and forced assimilation promoted by the governments of that time, which culminated in the system of residential schools."





TRC Call to Action #59

A Catholic and Vincentian Response

Recommended Links:

- ❖ [CCCB Resources](#)

YouTube

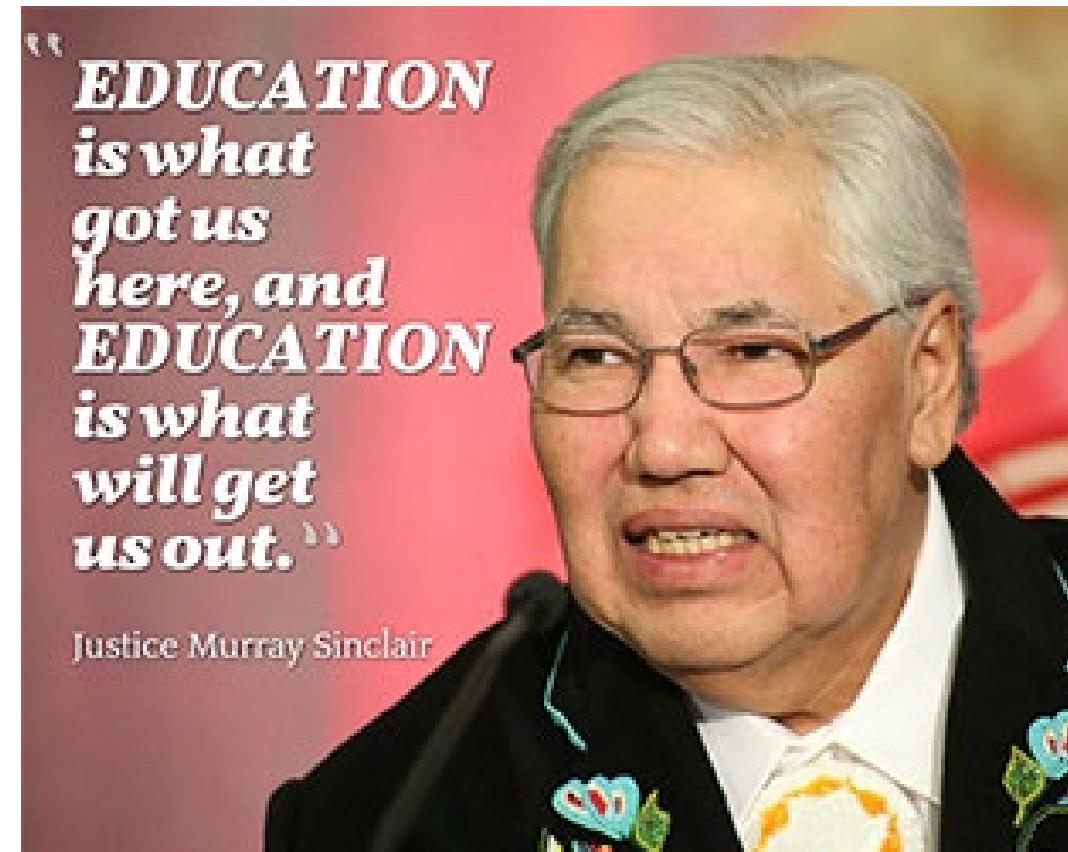
- ❖ [Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts.](#)
- ❖ [TRC Report \(5 Videos, They Came For the Children\)](#)

Read

- ❖ ["21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act"](#)
by Bob Joseph

CBC

- ❖ ["The Story of Mr Freddy Taylor"](#)



"Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."
- Jesus





TRC Call to Action #59

A Catholic and Vincentian Response

Leave your gift at the altar...



Image credit <https://socialglobalstudies.com/>

Go and be reconciled!



Image credit <https://www.sheridancollege.ca/>



Image credit <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada>

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Thank you, **merci**, *Wela'lioq*

**Voice your
opinion, rate
this
workshop**



**Exprimez
votre opinion,
évaluez cet
atelier**



Compassion in Action





Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul

www.ssvp.ca