



Office of the President
#417 – 645 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1G2

Tel 250-592-3133

Fax 250-592-0234

Email: administration@ssabc.ca

**Statement of The Sisters of Saint Ann
In light of the Discovery of Unmarked Graves
And the Signing of MOU with RBCM
June 23, 2021**

The discovery of 215 unmarked graves near the former Kamloops Indian Residential School was a stark reminder that there remain many unanswered questions regarding the schools and those who attended them. The Sisters of Saint Ann are painfully aware of the anguish that so many people are experiencing; we are heart-broken as we think of what the survivors, family members and descendants must be feeling at this time. More than ever, the search for answers must be thorough and transparent.

Thank you for your patience as we have redoubled our efforts to collaborate in this search. It is also important that we clarify information regarding The Sisters of Saint Ann and public access to our archives and records.

I am pleased to share the news that on Monday we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Royal BC Museum regarding the Archives of the Sisters of Saint Ann which are held at the museum. The MOU will ensure that our records and the processes around access are transparent.

During the course of the last few weeks, misinformation regarding the Archives of The Sisters of St. Ann, as well as how we have provided records with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) have come into question. I would like to take this opportunity to clarify some of this information.

1. The Sisters of Saint Ann provided all our records related to Indian Residential Schools to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in November 2012. Prior to sending the records, TRC staff visited our archives on several occasions and worked with us to determine the proper format for sending. We have numerous documents that show our continuing communication and collaboration with both the TRC and the NCTR.
2. At the request of the TRC, we did a thorough search of all our documents to identify the names of any children who became ill, died or were missing. We provided that list to the document gatherers of the TRC, as requested.
3. As teachers in the Indian Residential Schools, no official school records, including class registers, were our property and are therefore not in our archives. These were all turned over to the administrators of the schools and are the property of the Department of Indian Affairs, the federal government department that ran Indian Residential schools.
4. From the time we first heard of abuse in the schools it was of utmost importance to us to learn the truth and to do whatever we could to contribute to making the truth known, to bring about a just resolution and to participate in activities that could lead to healing and reconciliation.

Continuing the Legacy

5. To that end, we committed ourselves to fully participate in the Truth and Reconciliation Process, to make our documents available, and to continue to educate the public, through speaking and writing, on both this tragic history as well as the continuing history of the Canada's unjust relationship with First Nations and other Indigenous people.

6. We affirm our commitment to collaborate in finding the truth and will assist in the process in whatever way we can. The SSA Archivist is in communication with the archivist for the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation and is available to work with her on our records.

The Sisters of Saint Ann acknowledge that they are on the unceded territory of the Lekwungen speaking peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.