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June 21, 2019—National Indigenous Peoples Day

Re: Response to the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Dear friends;

On June 3, 2019 the final report from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) was released. The 1,200-page document includes recommendations to government, police and the Canadian public to help address the rampant levels of violence directed at Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. For this diocese of islands and inlets, the question we must ask is: how will we respond?

It may be by divine hand that on June 16, 2019 our cathedral became a member of the Community of the Cross of Nails, an international network of churches and peacebuilding centres dedicated to reconciliation. The community is governed by three principles: to heal the wounds of history, to learn to live with difference and celebrate diversity, and to build a culture of peace. As we receive the MMIWG report, we can look to this new relationship for guidance.

To *heal the wounds of history*, we must recognize that violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA peoples does not stem from isolated events. These attacks are against the most vulnerable and we have a duty to take effective measures to prevent this violence and ensure safety for those targeted by perpetrators of these heinous acts. This also means speaking out against those who don't recognize misogyny as a crime against humanity. Is your parish involved in these types of social justice initiatives? Are you joining or hosting Pride events this summer or attending the Women's Memorial March next February?

In *learning to live with difference*, we must reclaim power and place by calling our government and all Canadians to significant cultural change. This means nothing less than a new and decolonized social order. In practice, this means embracing the decolonization of our parish communities and educating ourselves about why this is important for us. Has your parish participated in programs such as Dismantling Racism or cultural training from the Indigenous Perspectives Society?

While the report feels grim, we can *celebrate our diversity* and use its release as an opportunity to transform ourselves in genuine partnership with Indigenous Peoples. The month of June is National Indigenous History Month; we hope you're planning to attend local events such as the civic celebrations for National Indigenous Peoples Day and that your worship on June 23 will reflect National Indigenous Day of Prayer. Beyond participating in local events, can your parish host an



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event that celebrates diversity in your wider community? Perhaps an opportunity exists in the observation of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on August 9?

Participating or leading these types of events also helps us *build a culture of peace*. This report is a call to renew the culture of our nation. As Canadians on an intentional journey of reconciliation, it is critical for us to respond meaningfully to the report. For us as Anglicans, this begins with living Jesus' way of nonviolence, peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.

I am asking the diocesan council, on behalf of the diocese, to officially respond in three ways:

1. Continue to examine and fulfill our responsibility to the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#).
2. Ensure that the relevant actions outlined in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action](#) are clearly implemented in the life of our diocese.
3. To develop an action plan in relationship to the [MMIWG](#) report and how it applies to us.

The facts exposed in the report on MMIWG, combined with the ongoing challenges of intentional reconciliation, are hard to absorb, but we can organize ourselves as a diocese of islands and inlets, and transform our culture so that we are all safe, accepted and celebrated.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Logan", written over a white rectangular background.

The Right Reverend Dr. Logan McMenamie
Bishop