



Le Métis



President's Message

Wherever I travel in this world, I stop in local churches to pray for our Métis Nation. This tradition always gives me the guidance I need to do the right thing, to help lead our Nation in the right way.

I just returned from a pilgrimage to Fatima in Portugal, where a shrine has been placed at the site where three shepherd children were visited by the Virgin Mary during the First World War. Returning home from this pilgrimage on the eve of Louis Riel Commemoration Day, it struck me that Riel, like those shepherd children, was dismissed by many as insane or deluded for having strong religious beliefs and experiences. In fact, many of us within the Métis Nation are firm believers, in the sense of seeking guidance and direction from our Creator and Higher Power. Some may dismiss us, yet we remain strong in our faith and on our journey.

More than 150 of you braved freezing temperatures and snow to pay homage to our Leader and Martyr Louis Riel at his gravesite on November 16, marking the 133rd anniversary of his death. I thank each of you who joined us in person or in spirit at the Saint Boniface Cathedral grounds. I am grateful to Elder Norman Meade for his opening prayer, to Ray St. Germain for serving as Master of Ceremonies,

and to Métis National Council President Clément Chartier for sharing his powerful words. I also thank the Honourable Jane Philpott, Canada's Minister of Indigenous Services; Member of Parliament Dan Vandal; RCMP Assistant Commissioner Scott Kolody; Manitoba Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont; Deputy Premier Heather Stefanson; and MLA Nahanni Fontaine for joining us to share their respects.

As I stood by Louis Riel's final resting place, swept by snow and wind, I reflected on the many hardships, storms and struggles he and our ancestors braved to defend our Nation. Riel was the Father and First Premier of Manitoba: the man who brought the West into Confederation. Today, Métis are still fighting to achieve Riel's vision for our Nation.

Riel envisioned that our people would rise in 100 years, and we are rising. We now have a seat at the table with the federal government, through a renewed, distinctions-based, nation-to-nation and government-to-government relationship. I recently participated, with other Manitoba Metis Federation and Métis National Council leaders, in a policy consultation on the federal government's development of an anti-racism strategy. At this consultation, I stressed the importance of our government-to-government relationship in advancing reconciliation and anti-racism.

While our relationship with the federal government is progressing in a positive direction, the Premier of Manitoba has turned his back on reconciliation, describing our Nation and Government as nothing more than a "special interest group," and calling our negotiated agreements with the Province and Manitoba Hydro "hush money." It is as though we have gone back 100 years, to the days when our

brave leader Riel was called a traitor who could be paid for his silence. If there is no demonstration of the principles of reconciliation and anti-racism at the highest levels of power in Manitoba - the province Métis brought into Confederation - how can we shift towards reconciliation and anti-racism in our cities and villages?

We are rising, although each victory seems to bring forward a new struggle for us to overcome. We thought we had won our rightful place in Confederation back in 1982, with the inclusion of the Métis as a rights-bearing Aboriginal people in Canada's *Constitution Act*. Yet, we had to return to the negotiating table and to the courts, again and again, to have those rights recognized, defended and upheld by federal and provincial governments. Even now, as we celebrate the life-changing progress we are making with the federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, we are facing another battle with the Premier and provincial government here in the very heart of our Homeland. It shows us that as far as we have come, we still have a long journey to make in Manitoba. Along this journey, we are strengthened by the determination to ensure that Riel did not sacrifice his life for nothing. He gave his life for the life of our Nation and its people.

To those who are facing ill health, grieving or shut in, I send my sympathies and prayers. As we honour Riel's life and legacy, let us find strength and guidance in his story. Remembering where we come from, we can be sure of where we are going: home to our rightful place in the Confederation that Riel helped to build.

Meeqwetch,

Infinity Women Secretariat Launches *Prosperity Through Innovation*

Infinity Women Secretariat has announced funding through Status of Women Canada for a three-year project that will improve access to employment for Métis mothers and caregivers across Manitoba. The announcement was made on November 14 at an event hosted by Infinity Women Secretariat in Winnipeg.

Following an opening prayer by Linda St. Cyr-Saric, Winnipeg Centre Member of Parliament Robert-Falcon Ouellette delivered opening comments. Terry Duguid, Winnipeg South Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women Canada, then announced the funding on behalf of Status of Women Canada, a federal government organization that promotes equality for women.

"We know barriers exist for Métis women in Manitoba, including a lack of accessible child care programs and early learning opportunities," said Duguid. "This 36-month project will address barriers faced by Métis women as they enter, re-enter or remain in the workforce."

Through the *Prosperity Through Innovation: Métis Women in Manitoba* project, Infinity Women Secretariat will receive \$283,800 over three years to deliver individualized, relevant programs and services including child care, job matching and skills coaching. These initiatives will support Métis women in Manitoba to achieve their goals. The



Left to right: Winnipeg Centre Member of Parliament Robert Falcon Ouellette, Infinity Women Secretariat Spokeswoman Anita Campbell, and Winnipeg South Member of Parliament Terry Duguid pictured during funding announcement on November 14.

project will build on partnerships with employment and service providers including Metis Employment and Training and the Louis Riel Institute.

"We are very excited about this announcement as our project will help Métis women with their life and career paths, and towards achieving their holistic life goals," said Infinity Women Secretariat Spokeswoman Anita Campbell. "We welcome and appreciate the Government of Canada's support

for this project, which will help address barriers to economic security faced by Métis mothers and caregivers across Manitoba."

Infinity Women Secretariat was incorporated in 2013 to promote, empower and enhance the social, cultural and economic well-being of Métis women in Manitoba.

MMF and MNC participate in federal engagement on Anti-Racism Strategy



On November 15, Manitoba Metis Federation and Métis National Council representatives participated in a day-long Canada-Métis Nation Engagement Session Towards an Anti-Racism Strategy. The event, hosted at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, was facilitated by MMF Minister Will Goodon.

After an opening prayer from Elder John Lee and opening comments from MNC President Clément Chartier and the Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, Canada's Minister of Canadian Heritage, MMF President David Chartrand gave a presentation on "The Métis Nation and its Rightful Place in



Confederation - Canada's history of denial and existing systemic discrimination." The afternoon featured speakers and discussion on unresolved matters of reconciliation with the Métis, such as Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop, and recommendations for moving forward.

Canada's 2018 budget announced funding for a cross-Canada engagement to develop a

new federal anti-racism strategy. As part of this engagement, Minister Rodriguez has been traveling from coast to coast to coast, meeting with individuals and groups who have lived experiences of racism and discrimination. The engagement also includes an online survey component. Visit Canada.ca/en/Canadian-heritage to share your feedback.

MMF holds commemoration ceremony marking the 133rd anniversary of Louis Riel's death

Manitoba Metis Federation leaders, government officials, and members of the community gathered at the gravesite of Louis Riel for a commemoration ceremony on November 16.

Riel was executed on November 16, 1885 in what is now the city of Regina. His body was returned to Manitoba and buried in the St. Boniface Cathedral cemetery on December 12, 1885. Each year on the anniversary of his death, the Manitoba Metis Federation holds a ceremony to honour Riel's life and legacy.

"I thank each and every one of you for coming here today to pay homage to the great leader Louis Riel, father of Manitoba, the first Premier of Manitoba," said MMF President David Chartrand. "The day will come in this province when he is recognized as the first Premier. We won't give up until that day has come."

Dignitaries in attendance included Federal Minister of Indigenous Services Jane Philpott, Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, Manitoba Liberal Party Leader Dougald Lamont, Liberal MP Dan Vandal, several MMF Ministers, and more. The ceremony was emceed by Ray St. Germain, with the opening prayer given by Elder Norman Meade.

"I am thrilled to be here, in the shadows of the St. Boniface Cathedral, Western Canada's oldest Catholic cemetery and right on the ground where Louis Riel is buried," said Minister of Indigenous Service Jane Philpott. "It is the 133rd anniversary of Louis Riel's untimely death, and it is an important day to stand together to commemorate Louis Riel, founder of Manitoba, great Métis leader, and tireless advocate who gave his life for Métis rights."

Riel was a visionary leader and serves as an inspiration for Métis people today, as we continue the fight for recognition of our rights. The Manitoba Metis Federation will continue holding this commemoration ceremony each year to honour and remember the sacrifices Riel made for the Métis Nation.



MMF spreads holiday cheer Métis-style at Winnipeg Santa Claus Parade



Fiddle tunes and the sounds of jigging filled the air as the Manitoba Metis Federation float rolled passed spectators at this year's Winnipeg Santa Claus Parade on Saturday, November 17.

The float was organized by MMF Culture and Heritage Minister Alfred Anderson with a hardworking group of volunteers. The float featured the Darren Lavallee Band, the Gifford Sanderson Memorial Dancers, and a Red River cart filled with gifts being pulled by a large, inflatable moose. More than 75 floats participated in this year's parade.

The MMF Central Registry Office's Mobile Citizenship Bus also followed along for the parade, decked out in white and blue lights to represent the colours of the Métis infinity flag.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's float a huge success!



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