

## **President's Message**

*September 6, 2017*

The Métis Nation is a strong and proud Nation. We were born here in the Red River Valley. Our Fathers spoke the languages of Europe, our Mothers the languages of the Plains. We are a multilingual nation. The Métis speak many different languages with some speaking two and three different languages. My own first language is *Saulteaux*.

As Métis, our official language is Michif. It is a language our Ancestors created. However, not every Métis Citizen speaks it. It is challenging to reach across our diverse linguistic landscape. We have done a good job at it. However, your Métis Government is going further to cover more languages and reach more Citizens in the language of their preference.

The Manitoba Metis Federation, the democratically elected government representative of the Métis Nation in Manitoba, is committing itself to developing a language services component to its communications efforts that will better enable us to reach our Citizens in their primary language. Currently our services are all available in English. We also have many Francophone elected representatives and employees; we now have a translator on staff. We are now beginning a more comprehensive approach with the French language. As you may recall, it was both the English and French languages which our Métis Ancestors constitutionally protected in the Manitoba Act, 1870.

We will eventually offer services in the official Métis language – Michif. Our efforts in these areas will be guided by our Métis Citizens. The Métis Government is preparing to undertake community consultations over the next year to map the linguistic landscape of the Métis Nation in Manitoba. We will use what we learn to shape how the Métis Government will direct its communications in order to best connect with our Métis Citizens.

With the support and guidance of the Métis Community, we will develop strong communications in a variety of languages. In that spirit, the Manitoba Metis Federation has commissioned an advertorial in this week's issue of *La Liberté* – the French newspaper in Saint Boniface. This is but one of the many steps we will take in broadening our abilities to reach all Métis Citizens in their preferred language.

Other initiatives we are undertaking are translating important documents into French. This includes the informational brochure on Self-Government and our Framework Agreement signed with Canada, which, among other negotiating topics, provides for creating a constitutionally protected and recognized self-government. Both of these documents can be found online on our website at [www.mmf.mb.ca](http://www.mmf.mb.ca).

We are also undertaking the translation of our website into French. This initiative began earlier in the spring of this year. We anticipate having this completed by the new fiscal year. As a matter of fact, we are revamping our entire existing website to make it more user friendly, easier to locate important information, and adding a regional component so the Métis Government can share Local and Regional news in a timelier fashion.

The Métis Government would be pleased to hear from you about this initiative. I encourage you to reach out the Manitoba Metis Federation with your comments and thoughts. You may reach our Communications Department via email at [communications@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:communications@mmf.mb.ca) or by calling (204) 586-8474 extension 324.

In closing, I send my thoughts and prayers to those who are shut-in, ill or have cause to grieve. May you be comforted by the closeness and support of your family and friends. I also send my wishes for a safe return to school for our Children and Youth. I look forward to seeing you all at the upcoming Annual General Assembly taking place this month at the Assiniboia Downs in Winnipeg on September 22 – 24.

Believe in Yourself – Believe in Métis

Meeqwetch,

President David Chartrand