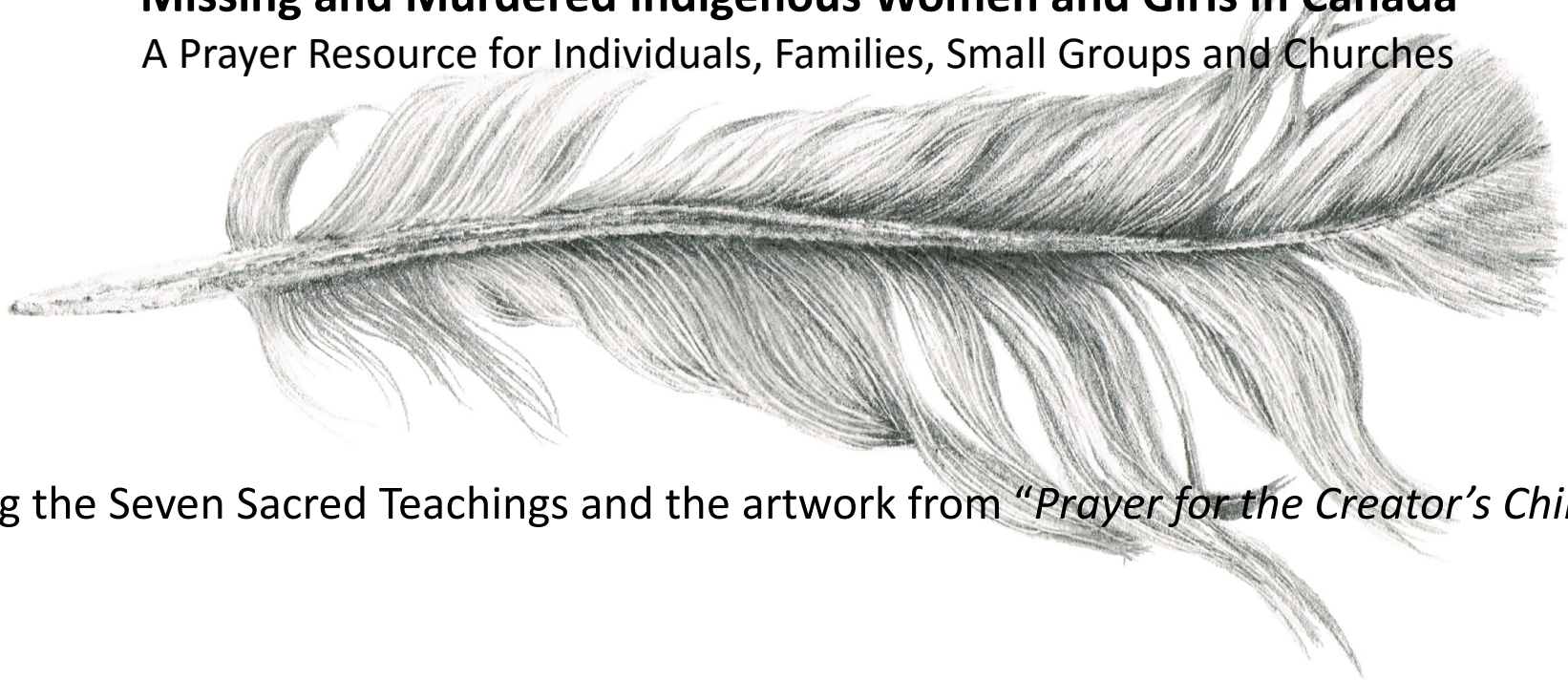


**Month of Prayers Surrounding the Stories of
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada**
A Prayer Resource for Individuals, Families, Small Groups and Churches



Using the Seven Sacred Teachings and the artwork from *"Prayer for the Creator's Children"*

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

In recent years, more media attention has been given to the stories of the many missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. As these stories are told, society and individuals cannot stand by, idly allowing injustice to continue. We invite you to enter into a month of prayer that focuses on the injustices that surround the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. It is our prayer that we can join together, in prayer, to pray for these women, their families, their offenders and their families, the justice system, and their communities. Let us pray too for healing, justice and reconciliation for all those involved in each story.

As we approach this month of prayer, we frame each week around the 7 Sacred Teachings (also referred to as the 7 Grandfather Teachings) found in Indigenous cultures. The 7 Sacred Teachings come from Indigenous communities across Canada and although the specific stories associated with these teachings differ between Indigenous groups, the basic teachings remain the same. These teachings were given to many of the Indigenous communities in Canada by Creator as a guide for life. They explained how human beings were to interact and live with the land, the animals, and their fellow human beings. These 7 Sacred Teachings are passed down by the Elders from generation to generation and are honoured and recognized as the right way to live on the Earth. The 7 Sacred Teachings are Love, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom, Respect, Courage and Truth.

The outline for the month is as follows:

Week 1: We read the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and reflect on how we find the 7 Sacred Teachings within the story.

Week 2: We read the story of one missing or murdered Indigenous woman or girl. As Aboriginal culture emphasizes whole webs of relationships rather than individuals, we pray not only for the victim, but also for the family of the victim, the offender, the family of the offender, the police and justice system as well as the community. We also are invited to pray for healing, restoration and reconciliation in the story. Restorative justice practices that aim to restore relationships, rather than focusing solely on punishing offenders, are common in Indigenous cultures, and for this reason we pray too for the offender and their family.

Week 3: We take an opportunity to read a different story of a missing or murdered Indigenous woman or girl. This opportunity to raise another woman/girl and her story up in prayer provides an opportunity to realize the commonalities as well as differences found between the stories we are reading and praying for. We again have an opportunity to pray for healing, restoration and reconciliation in the lives of all those involved.

Week 4: We take an opportunity to take a step back and reflect, again, on the 7 Sacred Teachings and to apply these teachings to the stories we have read about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. It is through this lens, that we are able to pray for Love, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom, Respect, Courage and Truth to be found in the complete stories and lives of these women and girls.

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Week 1

How are we called to be Good Samaritans in Society? Using the 7 Sacred Teachings as a guide, read Luke 10:25-37 each day and reflect how we see Love, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom, Respect, Courage and Truth shown in Jesus' parable.

Luke 10:25-37: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."



Love

Honesty

Humility

Wisdom

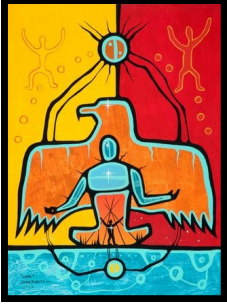






Respect

Courage

Truth

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Week 1 (continued)

How are we called to be Good Samaritans in Society? Using the 7 Sacred Teachings as a guide, read Luke 10:25-37 each day and reflect on and pray about how we see Love, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom, Respect, Courage and Truth shown in Jesus' parable.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
<p>Love – The Samaritan's love for the man was unconditional. The love the Samaritan had in his heart was shown through his actions. How can we show love and compassion as the Samaritan did to our Indigenous neighbours? How can we show our love and support for missing and murdered Indigenous women?</p>	<p>Honesty – The Samaritan paid the innkeeper and also told the innkeeper that any accrued costs would be paid upon his return. The Samaritan was sincere in his kindness and compassion. He never expected anything in return. How can we pay kindness forward? What might we be asked to do that we will not receive compensation for?</p>	<p>Humility – The Samaritan did not look to be recognized or to see who was watching him when he was helping the hurting man. The Samaritan man recognized he was simply asked to serve another. What opportunities can we pray for to serve Indigenous women during this time and lift them up in prayer?</p>	<p>Wisdom – The Samaritan man uses his wisdom to share his help with the man in need. God has given each person wisdom to use for good in the world and in our relationships with others. What ways do we need to pray for God's discernment and guidance when living in relationships with Indigenous women?</p>	<p>Respect – The Samaritan man shows complete respect for the man he finds on the road. He puts his schedule on hold, realizing the value of the man's life and his responsibility to care for this fellow human being. The Samaritan respects the man he helps and does not judge his situation. How might God be calling us to trust Him to use us in our situation to bring Him glory? What situation might God be calling us to enter that we may not know the outcome of?</p>	<p>Courage – The Samaritan man is courageous as he transgresses societal norms to help the Jewish man. The Samaritan man does not allow social norms to influence his actions. He takes courage and goes forward to help the man in need. How can we pray for courage to act and speak out against the norms and indifference that mainstream society has towards Indigenous women?</p>	<p>Truth – The truth spoken by Jesus is to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." How can we express the truth of the stories of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in our lives? Indigenous women need to feel the worth they have in God's love and people need to know that Indigenous women are image bearers of God Himself. How are we called to pray for the families of the missing and murdered women to find healing in the truth of what happened to them?</p>

Images from 'Prayers for the Creator's Children' commissioned by Indian Metis Christian Fellowship (IMCF) and painted by Ovide Bighetty, a First Nations artist (Mississippi Cree). All reproduction and exhibition rights belong fully and completely to Indian Metis Christian Fellowship. The specific prayers associated with each image can be found at <http://store.imcf.ca/t/prayers-for-the-creators-children>

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Week 2

As Aboriginal culture emphasizes whole webs of relationships rather than individuals, it is important for us to pray not only for the victim, but also for the family of the victim, the offender, the family of the offender, the police and justice system and the whole community. We also are invited to pray for healing, restoration, and reconciliation in the story. Restorative justice practices that aim to restore relationships, rather than focusing solely on punishing offenders, are common in Indigenous cultures, and for this reason we pray too for the offender and their family.

Visit <http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/> and choose one name. Read the story at the beginning of the week and pray throughout the week for the person (day 1), the family of the person (day 2), the person(s) who offended (day 3), the family of the offender(s) (day 4), the police/justice system who worked/are working on the case (day 5), the community (day 6) and for healing and reconciliation in the whole story (day 7). Each day, prayers will be raised for the story of one missing or murdered Indigenous women or girl. Each day, prayers will be lifted for a different voice in the story.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Prayer for the Person featured in the story	Prayer for the Family of the Victim	Prayer for the Offender or Group of Offenders	Prayer for the Family of the Offender(s)	Prayer for the Police, Investigators and Justice System	Prayer for the Community	Prayer for Justice, Healing and Reconciliation in Individual Lives as well as in Relationships

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Week 3

As Aboriginal culture emphasizes whole webs of relationships rather than individuals, we pray not only for the victim, but also for the family of the victim, the offender, the family of the offender, the police and justice system as well as the community. We are also invited to pray for healing, restoration, and reconciliation in the story. Restorative justice practices that aim to restore relationships, rather than focusing solely on punishing offenders, are common in Indigenous cultures, and for this reason we pray too for the offender and their family.

Visit <http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/> and choose another name. Read the story at the beginning of the week and pray throughout the week for the person (day 1), the family of the person (day 2), the person(s) who offended (day 3), the family of the offender(s) (day 4), the police/justice system who worked/are working on the case (day 5), the community (day 6) and healing and reconciliation in the story (day 7). Each day, prayers will be raised for the story of one missing or murdered Indigenous woman or girl. Each day, prayers will be lifted for a different voice in the story.

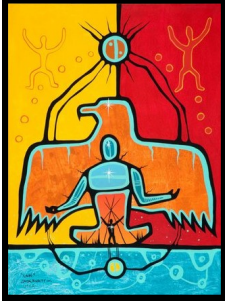




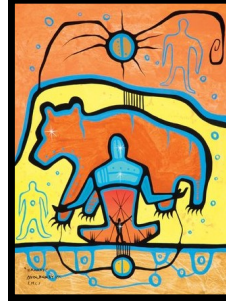
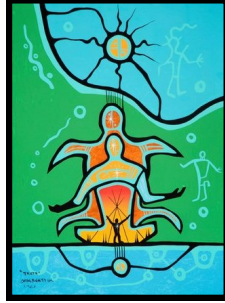
Take an opportunity to read another story of a missing or murdered Indigenous woman or girl. This opportunity to raise another woman/girl and her story up in prayer provides an opportunity to realize the commonalities as well as differences found between the stories you are reading and praying for. This week, again, pray for healing, restoration and reconciliation in the lives of all those involved in the story you have read.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Prayer for the Person featured in the story	Prayer for the Family of the Victim	Prayer for the Offender or Group of Offenders	Prayer for the Family of the Offender(s)	Prayer for the Police, Investigators and Justice System	Prayer for the Community	Prayer for Justice, Healing and Reconciliation in Individual Lives as well as in Relationships

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Week 4

Prayers for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Through the 7 Sacred Teachings

Reflecting on the lives of the two women/girls you have read about in the past two weeks and on the 7 Sacred Teachings, which are vital for living life in community and relationship with others, let us reflect on how each of these Teachings relate directly to those people and relationships we have been praying for over the past 2 weeks.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
Love As we have prayed for the specific women who have been directly influenced and harmed by acts of injustice, so we are called to love our neighbours and reflect love to everyone we meet. We are called to love those Indigenous women and girls around us in our communities. We love them regardless of their situation or circumstance. We love them as we are loved by God.	Honesty As we have prayed for the families of the women/girls who have been treated unjustly, we have prayed for that all those struggling with the effects of this crime would find the honesty to confront their pain. We have prayed for children left behind, partners/spouses left with questions, parents left with regrets and families that have been broken into pieces. We continue to pray that these families will be honest with their feelings and honest with themselves.	Humility As we have prayed for those who have acted unjustly toward the women in the stories we have read, we pray that they be filled with humility at the wrongs they have done so they would be willing to come forward and take responsibility for the pain they have caused. Fill them with humility as they face their own families as well as the families and communities of the victims of their actions.	Wisdom As we have prayed for the families of those who have acted unjustly toward Indigenous women and girls, we pray for wisdom in the ways they treat their loved ones. We pray that they would be able to provide wise counsel about how to treat those who have wronged innocent women and children. We pray that they find wisdom not to judge, but instead to provide support and love to those whose actions have caused much pain.	Respect As we have prayed for the police officers, investigators and the entire justice system that surrounds cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, we pray that each of the officials involved in these cases be filled with an overflowing amount of respect for the people involved. May each of these members of the justice system in our country be filled with a realization that every man, woman, and child in society has a special place and role. No one person is more important than any other.	Courage As we have prayed for the communities that each of these women/girls come from, we pray for renewed courage and bravery as community members continue to live and work in places where bad things have happened to their women and girls. We pray for courage for other women and girls in the community who often walk through their communities in fear that they may be the next victim of injustice. We pray for courage for elders in these communities that they continue to speak boldly for justice in their communities.	Truth As we have prayed for healing, justice, and reconciliation in the lives of the individuals as well as the relationships affected by injustice towards Indigenous women and girls, we pray that the truth of each story may continue to be uncovered and brought to light. May the truth of respect for all of life – our fellow human beings and all of creation – continue to be emphasized in our communities and relationships with everyone we meet and interact with.

Month of Prayers Surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Resources

Throughout this prayer campaign for the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, you may want to do some more research and learn more about the work that has been done and is continuing to be done to support the women, families and communities affected by these injustices. For more information please see the following websites:

<http://www.crcna.org/Canada/aboriginal-ministry> - The Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee (CAMC) website provides a variety of resources to begin, continue and strengthen your understanding of Aboriginal people, histories, and cultures as well as the journey of reconciliation being taken by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada.

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/mmaw-faapd-eng.htm> - The RCMP site that relates to the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operation Overview

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/abo-aut/mmaw-fada-eng.htm> - The RCMP report about Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women in Canada

<http://www.nwac.ca/2015/06/national-aboriginal-day-rcmp/> - The Native Women's Association of Canada

<http://www.amnesty.ca/our-work/campaigns/no-more-stolen-sisters> - This reputable not-for-profit organization advocates about missing and murdered Aboriginal women and organizes campaigns to fight injustice.

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/02/14/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-remembered-across-canada-us-159198> – Provides links to the walks and vigils organized to mark and remember the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada and the US.

The issues and challenges surrounding violence against Indigenous women and girls affect Indigenous men and boys too. To gain more information regarding the research around injustice against Indigenous men and boys, please check out the following websites:

<http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/adam-jones-aboriginal-men-are-murdered-and-missing-far-more-than-aboriginal-women-a-proper-inquiry-would-explore-both>

http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2014/08/22/aboriginal_men_murdered_at_higher_rate_than_aboriginal_women.html

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/opp-to-issue-report-on-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-men-women/article26324355/>

<http://www.ammsa.com/publications/alberta-sweetgrass/rally-brings-attention-missing-murdered-aboriginal-men-boys>

<https://www.facebook.com/Missing-and-Murdered-Men-of-Canada-162732693878793/timeline/?ref=stream>