



Remarks by
His Eminence
Gérald Cyprien Cardinal Lacroix
Archbishop of Québec
Primate of Canada

AT THE END OF THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION
FOR THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVANGELIZATION
OF WESTERN AND NORTHERN CANADA
St. Boniface Cathedral Manitoba, July 15, 2018

During my brief stay in Rome, a week ago, I had the joy of meeting and having a fraternal conversation with Pope Francis. It was an opportunity to share with him on the life of the Church in Canada, and especially on the proclamation of the Gospel to the many Indigenous and Metis communities and other groups of various origins living in the vast territories of our country.

To the Indigenous peoples and to all the Canadian population, the Holy Father wishes to express—through my voice and my presence among you—his closeness and concern during the ongoing process of healing, reconciliation and search for harmony. He calls on us to pursue

this important but demanding endeavor in mutual understanding, respect and justice. As he mentions in the letter in which he delegated me to this celebration, the Holy Father invites Indigenous peoples to take *“time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence must not be contrived but found, uncovered”*¹.

Contrary to what has been said in recent months in the public arena, the Pope is not disinterested in the steps currently being taken to reach—as effectively and as rapidly as possible—consensual social solutions and a harmonization of relationships between Indigenous peoples and the Catholic Church. Quite the contrary, let me assure you! The Holy Father exhorts us to persevere wisely and generously, all together, on that delicate and necessary road to the healing of hearts and lives, so that peace and joy may reign in communities.

He encourages both pastors and the faithful in the Catholic Church in Canada to pray for this intention and to become resolutely involved in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ promised to those working for peace in *“all places, on all occasions, without hesitation, reluctance or fear”*².

Pope Francis assures us of his constant prayer, his great interest in being regularly informed on the work in progress, and his deep affection. Finally, he asks us, as he always does, to pray for him.

¹ Pope Francis, Encyclical *Laudato sí*, No. 225.

² Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, N° 23.