Photo: Marie-Josée Poiré

MISSION CHEZ NOUS

June 21, 2026 – The 30th Anniversary of National Indigenous Peoples Day!

All our relations!

Presentation and Meaning of the Day

"The old people say that we are all connected—not just to the people that live in our house—but to the plants, the animals, the air, the water, and land. […] But, sometimes, just sometimes, we get busy. We forget the small things, and, when we do, we learn that they are actually big, important things.[1]"

We chose to focus on relationships for this "Mission chez Nous" sheet for National Indigenous Peoples Day 2026, inspired by the words of Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, a renowned Anishinaabe *Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg* artist and intellectual. Perhaps the time has come to pay attention to these small yet immense relationships and to care for them. In these times of polarization and tension, centuries-old Indigenous wisdom can guide us in relearning how to look at others with an open mind and lend an attentive, compassionate ear to their words.

We invited Rose-Anne Gosselin, an Algonquin member of the Timiskaming First Nation with extensive experience working with First Nations, to share her vision on relationships with us. According to her, relationships permeate every aspect of life. Conversely, relational deficits create deep wounds, while the traumas inflicted throughout history damage relationships.

We are indebted to Rose-Anne for inspiring the content of this sheet, and we express our deepest gratitude for her generous testimony.

Five relational axes intertwine with one another and form the great circle of life.

- **Our relationship with creation**—teeming with life and diverse elements—sustains us through its strength, beauty, and healing power. It ultimately unveils the Creator to us.
- **Social relationships among First Nations**—grounded in harmony, trust, authenticity, solidarity, compassion, and tolerance—form the vital foundation of a sense of belonging.
- **Family relationships**—where one receives one's identity, develops self-esteem, cares for one another, and learns the art of giving. The tearing away from cultural traditions and community ties, rips apart the fabric of the family and leaves deep emotional scars that are passed down from one generation to the next.
- **Spiritual relationships**, where the invisible—whether called God or by another name—inhabits daily life. Regardless of one's tradition, these relationships are expressed through attitudes of respect, reverence, and gratitude for all that is given.
- **The relationship with oneself**, which, to be balanced and fruitful, must draw nourishment from all others and return to them.

1. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, « All our Relations » [https://elbowlakecentre.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/All-Our-Relations-By-Leanne-Simpson.pdf]. This text inspired the title of this entry.

The Indigenous medicine wheel illustrates this relational unity, where all dimensions of the world and of life are interconnected within a complex web of networks. The image illustrating this sheet is inspired by it.

Photo: Marie-Josée Poiré

The Medicine Wheel

This traditional symbol, present in many Indigenous communities, is inscribed in a circle, divided into four quadrants of four different colors. These quadrants represent various aspects of reality and the continuous process of human development, such as the four seasons, the four elements, the cardinal directions, and the cycles of life. For more information: *Approche holistique de la roue de la médecine* by Mathieu O'Bomsawin[2].

Another resource: *Native Medicine Wheel: Symbol of Healing and Balance* by Dave Verreault-Thisselmagan, an Ilnu artisan from Mashteuiatsh.

This artwork, inspired by the medicine wheel, is installed above the central interior door of Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples in Edmonton, Alberta, where Pope Francis met with members of First Nations and the parish community on July 25, 2022, during his penitential pilgrimage to Canada. The piece was created in 2022 by Kimberly Smith, an artist from Saint-Albert, Alberta.

A Variety of Materials to Use Creatively

Once again this year, we are offering a variety of materials that can be used on June 21 to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day, as well as on other occasions. For example,

- they can be used during the **Feast of St. Anne**, an important devotion to First Peoples,
- or for an activity on September 30, **National Day of Truth and Reconciliation**,
- or at any other time that suits you.

You could incorporate these materials

- into a church or outdoor celebration,
- an Indigenous awareness-raising activity,
- or a catechesis session with children and teenagers.

To honor the importance of elders and their wisdom, consider organizing an intergenerational gathering between children or youth from a Christian community and a group of older adults. If possible, the celebration or activity could be prepared and carried out in partnership with members of the First Peoples to foster connection and healing.

In the following pages, you will find materials for the **universal prayer** as well as **a long and short versions of the prayer**. A **toolkit** at the end offers resources and suggestions to inspire your teams' creativity.

2. This resource is available only in French.

These suggestions for liturgical arrangements and prayers were developed by Anne-Marie Chapleau, a biblical scholar from Jonquière, and Marie-Josée Poiré of the Support and Formation Office of the Diocese of Chicoutimi, with the collaboration of Rose-Anne Gosselin, an Algonquin member of the Timiskaming First Nation.

Suggested Universal Prayer Intentions for Sunday Celebrations on Saturday, June 20, and Sunday, June 21, 2026

One of the following universal prayer intentions could be included among those proposed by *Living with Christ* for the celebration to mark National Indigenous Peoples' Day on Saturday, June 20, or Sunday, June 21. These intentions can be adapted for use on other occasions.

For the First Nations who [will celebrate tomorrow *or* are celebrating today] National Indigenous Peoples' Day; let us pray that renewed relationships may be established among the peoples who share the same territory.

As we [will celebrate tomorrow *or* are celebrating today] National Indigenous Peoples' Day, let us keep the First Nations in our prayers. May the circle of relationships among us continue to grow. Let us pray.

Other Prayer Suggestions

- **An alternative universal prayer or one to be used in other circumstances**

[On this National Indigenous Peoples' Day], let us enter into prayer with the desire to widen the circle of our relationships: with creation, with others, with our families, with the Creator, and with ourselves. Guided by the wisdom of the First Peoples, let us turn to the Triune God, the God who is relationship, and offer our prayer to him.

R. God who is relationship, hear our prayer.

May we learn to live in a just and respectful relationship with the Earth, loving and protecting it. Let us pray: **R.**

May relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples deepen and heal through truth, listening, and justice. Let us pray: **R.**

May families become places where the circle of life expands, so every person can find their place, voice, and dignity. Let us pray: **R.**

That our Christian communities may walk the path of healing and reconciliation by continually openning wider the great circle of relationships. Let us pray: **R.**

That every person may find within themselves a space of peace and truth to live more fully within the circle of relationships. Let us pray: **R.**

God, who is relationship, you invite us to walk together on the path of truth and peace, of healing and reconciliation. Help us open our hearts and reach out so that the circle of relationships may bring together the members of all nations. We pray this through your Son and in the Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer of the Circles (Longer Version)

O Creator,
our hearts rise to heaven to praise you.
We contemplate creation, springing from the
overflow of your love;
its beauty reflects yours.
Its many elements form a free and joyful circle
that reminds us that in you,
from all time and for all time,
everything is a relationship
and a circulation of love,
as the First Nations medicine wheel teaches.
Help us, Creator God, to enter your circle of life.

We bring before you,
our many circles of relationships,
as an offering and a call.
Bless them all,
and especially the most fragile and wounded ones.
We entrust them to your kind and healing love.

O Creator,
look upon the innermost circle
of our relationship with ourselves,
which is sometimes uncertain and fragile.
Make it right and peaceful
and free it from any destructive selfishness.

Turn your gaze towards the vital circle of our
relationship with nature.
Captivated by consumer society,
we have sometimes forgotten its meaning.
May the Indigenous wisdom rooted in the land
reconnect us to Mother Earth
with loving respect for all your creatures.

O you, our Creator,
Father and Mother,
fill our family circles with your tenderness.
Nourish them with the wisdom, compassion,
and tolerance of the elders.
And come heal all wounded family relationships.

O you, our Creator,
now turn your kind gaze
toward the wider circles of our social relationships.
Ground them in truth, authenticity, and generosity.
May they flourish,
so that we may dare to experience
a true encounter between Indigenous
and non-Indigenous peoples.

O Holy Trinity,
we believe that within you
flows the same and tireless flow of love
between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
We entrust to you the circle
of all our relationships.
Hold them close to your heart
in the intimacy of your eternal love.
Amen.

Prayer of the Circles (Shorter Version)

This can be printed on the back of the provided image on the last page. See the supplementary materials available on our website.

O Creator,
you invite us to join
the joyful circle of your Creation.
The First Nations medicine wheel represents it.
May it help us enter your circle of life.

We bring before you,
our many circles of relationships,
as an offering and a call.
Bless them all,
and especially the most fragile ones.

O Creator,
look upon the innermost circle
of our relationship with ourselves,
which is sometimes uncertain and fragile.
Make it right and peaceful.
Turn also your gaze toward the vital circle
of our relationship with nature.
May the Indigenous wisdom rooted in the land
guide us toward a humble and loving respect for it.

Fill our family circles with your tenderness.
Nourish them with the wisdom, compassion,
and tolerance of the elders.
And come heal all wounded family relationships.

Ground the broad circles of our social relationships
in truth, authenticity, and generosity.
May they flourish,
so that we may dare to experience
a true encounter between Indigenous
and non-Indigenous peoples.

O you, our Creator,
hold our relationships close to your heart,
in the intimacy of your eternal love.
Amen.

Note that a JPG image featuring this prayer is available for your use. You can share it on social media and in your community newsletter. You can find it here:
https://missioncheznous.com/Ressources/#jour-nat-peuples-auto

Toolkit

- **Poster.** We invite you to print, enlarge, or project the poster found at the end of this sheet and place it at the front of the church or in another welcoming location. Please display it on June 20–21, or whenever you choose to honor First Nations in your community.

- **Prayer Image.** You may print the prayer provided above on the back of the same image in a smaller format (see the supplementary materials provided on our website) and distribute it to members of the congregation. The entire community could recite it. A JPG version of the prayer is also available on our website, which you can share on social media and in your community newsletter.

- **Group Reading.** You may want to organize a book club activity centered on the book *Medicine Wheel for the Planet. A Journey toward Personal and Ecological Healing*, by Dr. Jennifer Grenz (https://www.jennifergrenz.com/) or on this text about the Medicine Wheel: *Approche holistique de la roue de la médecine* by Mathieu O'Bomsawin[3].

- **Talk on the Medicine Wheel.** You may invite an Indigenous person to give a short talk or lead a Talking Circle on the theme of relationships or the Medicine Wheel.

- **Screening of a Documentary.** You can organize a screening of the documentary "Red Path" by Thérèse Ottawa: https://www.nfb.ca/film/red_path/ and follow it with a discussion. This short documentary tells the story of Tony Chachai, a young Indigenous man in search of his identity.

  Or the film "Our People Will Be Healed" by Alanis Obomsawin: https://www.nfb.ca/film/our-people-will-be-healed/ and follow it with a discussion. This long film reveals how a Cree community in Manitoba has been enriched through the power of education.

3. This resource is available only in French.

Founded in 1993 by the Archdiocese of Montreal at the request of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Quebec, the charity Mission Chez Nous seeks to promote Christian solidarity with Indigenous peoples. The organization raises awareness among the general public about Indigenous realities and fosters closer ties between cultures, by countering prejudice and encouraging dialogue. The charity offers material and moral support to Indigenous communities living in the territory now known as Quebec.

www.missioncheznous.com
Facebook : www.facebook.com/missioncheznous | **Instagram :** www.instagram.com/missioncheznous

Poster