The Ottawa Mission's Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

> The Ottawa Mission exists on the unceded, unsurrendered Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation, whose presence on this land reaches back to time immemorial.

> "There is no more important task for Canadians than to hear the voices of Indigenous Peoples. This is humanity's responsibility — to face uncomfortable, sometimes horrific truths, to educate ourselves, to listen, to reflect, to learn, and to act with newfound awareness and sensitivity."
>
> — LIEUTENANT GENERAL (RETIRED) **ROMEO DALLAIRE**

THE HISTORY OF COLONIALISM AND ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM IN CANADA IS CLEAR.

From the **time prior to Confederation** in 1867;

↳ to the **passage of the Indian Act in 1876**, effectively making First Nations wards of the state;

↳ to the **establishment of residential schools**, which sought to "kill the Indian in the child" through removing 150,000 children from their families and home communities;

↳ to the **"Sixties Scoop"**, which removed thousands of Indigenous children from their families by provincial and federal social workers and placed them in foster or adoption homes;

↳ to **many other forms of coercive control** over Indigenous Peoples and the natural world to exploit their lands and advance supremacy and materialism;

Canada's relationship with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples has sought to forcibly assimilate them into the dominant culture by undermining their family structures, cultures, spiritualities, languages, governments, rights, livelihoods and relationships to the land.

THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM AND ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM IN CANADA IS ALSO CLEAR.

From **far higher rates** of:

- unemployment
- poverty
- homelessness
- incarceration
- child seizure
- violence

↳ to **poorer health outcomes**, including:

- serious chronic disease
- infectious diseases
- mental health conditions
- addictions
- suicide

↳ as well as **poorer access to health services**;

this legacy has affected and continues to negatively impact almost every aspect of the lives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples across Canada today.

We express our sincere gratitude to the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation for their generosity as hosts for our continuing work to support vulnerable community members on their lands.

Indigenous Peoples have existed in the land called Canada from time immemorial. The Ottawa Mission affirms the inherent rights of all First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples as well as the Treaty Rights of all First Nations across this land.

As Ottawa's oldest and largest homeless shelter and part of the systems and structures that have perpetuated colonialism, **The Ottawa Mission sees the impact of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism, with hugely disproportionate numbers of First Nations, Métis and Inuit People requesting our services.**

The Ottawa Mission commits to Reconciliation that reflects the strength and resiliency of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, based on right relations between Indigenous and settler populations, founded on *truth, respect and an aligned understanding* **of our shared history as one family based on Namwayut*** *(we are all one).*

* "Namwayut" is a Kwak'wala word meaning "We are all one". It reflects the value of "right relations," living in the world with respect and reciprocity to other people, animals, nature, and the world at large. It is a recognition of the value in the worldviews and cultures of Indigenous peoples as well as the importance of mutual respect and enriched understandings between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples.

> "There are three core practices of true reconciliation: learn, understand, and act."
>
> — JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD

THE OTTAWA MISSION COMMITS PUBLICLY TO WALKING THE PATH OF RECONCILIATION WITH OUR FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT PARTNERS TO:

Examine and monitor our own practices to ensure that all non-Indigenous staff, volunteers and partners **receive anti-racism, reconciliation, and Indigenous cultural safety training** so that all Indigenous clients, staff, volunteers and partners feel welcome, safe and unconditionally accepted.

Tell the truth about Canada's history with First Peoples.

Evaluate and report on our efforts annually to judge progress and adjust as required.

Call out conditions in society that contribute to the disproportionate burden of homelessness and housing precarity for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples to advocate for change.

Support increased safe, appropriate and affordable housing for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples through advocacy and partnerships.