

# A Prayer for the Uncovering of Graves in Kamloops



**Non-Indigenous Voice:** Creator acquainted with all our griefs,

It is a crime, a loss, a shock, an evil, and a tragedy all in one for 215 lives to be cut short, to have to grieve deaths that did not have to be, the disregard for life in clear violation of your good commandment.

O Christ, where is the justice that could ever make this right, when no one can restore what has been taken?

**Indigenous Voice:** We're ever mindful of the harm that can come to others that we love. I fear that harm might come to me. Creator how do we create safety when our loss is built on harmful systems? We surely cannot change what happened. Or make sense of it. Or find some lesson in it.

And so we are left feeling vulnerable with reopened wounds as we seek ways to bring healing to our community.

Be our shield and defender. Hold us in this hour; hold us through this long, dark night when death's shadow obstructs the light; cradle and carry us through this vale of sorrows; deliver us to higher ground. Let justice roll down, O Christ.

**Non-Indigenous Voice:** Help us to see where we have sinned individually and collectively. To identify the causes of injustice and to move towards change. We are too weak to walk this path alone, or to power through by force of our own will. So send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us now.

**Indigenous Voice:** We know, O God, that you would have us be completely honest in our words to you, voicing even these discouragements and volatile emotions. And you are more than able to bear their weight, never wavering in your constant love and care for us.

For you, O God, watched one you love die violently—your only son. You sympathize with us. So we will freely speak to you the depths of what we feel.

We would be honest in our pain - help us not to become the walking sum of all our pain. Now let us come to you, uncovering these wounds as often as we need, and learning how to offer them to you, that you might minister your grace to us.

**Non-Indigenous Voice:** Now shape us, Lord, through this ache, and sorrow and awareness into ones who does not let pain turn into apathy, but who instead are made more tender over time. Help us to work towards reconciliation and so let us grow in our love for others, O Christ.

**Indigenous Voice:** True justice is in your hands, especially when our human systems get it wrong, still your eternal judgements will be right. Help us to hold onto the light of your love even in the darkness of the legacy of residential schools.

**Non-Indigenous Voice:** Now make your redeeming mercies manifest, O Christ. Take away the evil of colonization and by the movements of your Spirit heal the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Make a grander narrative display of beauty, grace, and restoration.

**Indigenous Voice:** O Holy Spirit, hover now over the chaos of this broken world, this broken situation, and our broken hearts, and from them call forth new mercies and new hope:

From fields seeded with human sorrows,  
let us one day collect a harvest of everlasting joys.  
From this stony soil of human hatreds,  
let fountains of divine love burst forth,  
let streams of gladness run and pool,  
let shoots of abundant mercy root and bloom.  
Over all this dark and weary land,

**Non-Indigenous Voice:** let your eternal glories rise,  
radiant as a dawning sun dispelling a black and tragic night.  
From this very heart of death, O God,  
call forth shalom for everyone and everlasting life  
Amen.

*Note: Adapted from a liturgy for Grieving a Death Due to Violence From the Book Every Moment Holy Vol 2: Death, Grief and Hope. Copyright © 2020 Douglas McKelvey*

