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Statement For Media Release, May 30, 2021 - Regarding news from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Nation (Kamloops Indian Band) of the discovery of the remains of 215 children at the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

On behalf of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, I wish to express my heartfelt sadness and sincere regret for the deep pain and distress the discovery of the remains of children buried on the grounds of Kamloops Indian Residential School brings to the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, and other affected indigenous communities, especially family members of the deceased. I appreciate the sensitive and respectful way in which this difficult work is being carried out. This heart-breaking discovery brings the tragedy of the residential school system into the light once again and demands that we continue to confront its legacy.

The Missionary Oblates were administrators and teachers at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Through our own ongoing reflection, and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, we are growing into a deepening awareness of the damage caused to indigenous peoples, the enduring harm caused by colonization and the part our religious order played in it through the residential school system.

This growing awareness leads us to an increased desire to listen deeply and learn from indigenous communities where Oblates continue to live and minister. The Oblates remain committed to humbly participating in ongoing efforts towards reconciliation and healing for our role in this painful part of our shared history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Thorson', written in a cursive style.

Fr. Ken Thorson, OMI
Provincial
OMI Lacombe Canada