



Message to Community – Vatican Delegation

March 29, 2022

As you may or may not have seen in the news, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has sent a delegation to meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican as a part of their efforts to seek justice for the harm caused by Catholic run residential schools. The AFN's delegation of survivors and leadership will gather with the Pope on April 1, and a series of meetings will take place, along with a cultural presentation from the delegates.

The Squamish Nation has been asked to join the main AFN delegation to the Vatican. From Council, Chairperson Khelsilem and Councillor and residential school survivor Sempulyan will be representing the Nation as secondary delegates, to share the Squamish experience with Vatican officials. Both will have an opportunity to be a part of the general audience with Pope Francis.

It is our sincere hope that meaningful dialogue will result in a path forward towards lasting reconciliation for all Indigenous People. We welcome a Papal apology in our territories for the trauma inflicted on generations of our People through Catholic residential schools. Our delegates will be carrying the Squamish message forward and will be at the Vatican to support the Indigenous experience, as needed.

Here at home, we are focusing our own efforts through the Yúusnewas project. We strongly believe this Squamish led approach will promote outcomes that intend to stop the cycle of trauma within our generations and to honour the victims and survivors. We are committed to this work to support health and wellness of all our People. We choose to achieve this through Squamish protocols, guided by our teachings, relationships, and influence in our own homeland.

We remain committed to communicating to you as we move forward. In the meantime, our delegates will bring the Squamish experience to the Vatican, as all Indigenous people work towards a meaningful way forward.

Chet wanáxwstúmi (respectfully),

Council Spokespersons

Syexwáliya, Ann Whonnock and Sxwíxwtn, Wilson Williams