January 2023 **Franciscan Voice Canada** blog

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*I acknowledge and thank the Lkwungen People*

*for allowing me to live, pray, work, and play on their lands. I am deeply sorry for the injustices inflicted upon the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Turtle Island by the complicity of Governments & settlers, including the Catholic Church, in the colonialism inherent in the Indian Act and Residential Schools including racism, neglect, many forms of abuse & cultural genocide. I commit to work for truth, healing and reconciliation.*





I said I would take a break in January but important things happened. Four things moved me to write - one good, and one both good and bad and two bad. First the good.

**1. The Incarnation**



Source: Britannica. The first to adore the Christ child were the humble shepherds not the Magi.

As Franciscans the Incarnation is of special importance to us and the first nativity crèche was staged by St Francis of Asissi in 1223.

[Pope Francis Christmas Homily](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2022/documents/20221224-omelia-natale.html) :

“In order to rediscover the meaning of Christmas, we need to look to the manger. Yet why is the manger so important? Because it is the sign, and not by chance, of Christ’s coming into this world. It is how he announces his coming. It is the way God is born in history, so that history itself can be reborn. What then does the manger tell us? It tells us three things, at least: *closeness, poverty* and *concreteness*. [and I, Andrew, would add simplicity, humility and being part of nature!] … I think above all of the children devoured by war, poverty and injustice. Yet those are the very places to which Jesus comes, a child in the manger of rejection and refusal. In him, the Child of Bethlehem, every child is present. And we ourselves are invited to view life, politics and history through the eyes of children. … In the manger of rejection and discomfort, God makes himself present. He comes there because there we see the problem of our humanity: the indifference produced by the greedy rush to possess and consume. … The poverty of the manger thus shows us where the true riches in life are to be found: not in money and power, but in relationships and persons. …

As a saintly bishop once said: “The Church supports and blesses efforts to change the structures of injustice, and sets down but one condition: that social, economic and political change truly benefit the poor” (O.A. ROMERO, *Pastoral Message for the New Year*, 1 January 1980). …

Consequently, Jesus is not satisfied with appearances. He who took on our flesh wants more than simply good intentions. … God does not want appearances but concreteness. Brothers and sisters, may we not let this Christmas pass without doing something good.”

And here is another, very different, reflection from: [**Miguel Cristales**](https://www.facebook.com/albacristales?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZVBfwc9xEmNPHwckinPkQeFJHr0Ct4G9JU4zktP1oLuvND6G64rzRP08KgDaIHNOcYc6tx6Gm762nldl98knEr4iNhf3oDaOCMqal8x6Yo6_dDU35H7JoIoUAxiW3ZCOfTmSwYZaRETDepTJOl-dLDr45U96LfkKojrn6qv8TOg08THFcrSqrW07ClbfWaa_rw&__tn__=-UC%2CP-y-R)**:**

“What a strange day today. We celebrate the birth of a revolutionary who confronted an empire and stood by the poor, sex workers and outcasts. A son of displaced people who rebelled against ambitious religious leaders, a rebel killed by the state.

It's a date to commemorate the birth of a struggle. Not that figure that the church imposed on us, but that of someone who represents revolution, change and hope.

May transformations be born today, may the sun shine within you, may you have all the strength to challenge your fears.”

Baby Jesus, bring us power, joy and rebellion.”

**2. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, RIP**



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, aged 95. Vatican Media (Vatican Media)

Opinions vary on all Popes. None are perfect.

For me his good points were that he was the first green pope and wrote two great encyclicals. His bad point for me was he allowed his partial criticism of liberation theology to become seen as total opposition to it.

I will consider Benedict XVI in three ways (1) asthe first green pope; (2) on theologians and liberation theology and (3) his encyclicals [*Deus Caritas est*](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html)/God is love (2005) and [*Caritas in Veritate*](Caritas%20in%20Veritate)/Charity in truth (2009) which inspired me.

[Benedict Eco Pope](https://www.ncronline.org/earthbeat/faith/first-green-pope-how-benedicts-eco-theology-paved-way-francis) **How his eco-theology led the way for Francis**

[Tomás Insua](https://www.ncronline.org/authors/tom-s-insua" \t "_blank), executive director of the Laudato Si' Movement, said that both Benedict and Francis emphasize the moral act of caring for creation, limits of technology, and the responsibility the present world has to passing on a livable planet for future generations. Both also issued [ecumenical statements](https://www.ncronline.org/earthbeat/pope-orthodox-patriarch-issue-joint-plea-care-creation" \t "_blank) [with Patriarch Bartholomew](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070901_symposium-environment.html" \t "_blank)of the Orthodox Church, aka the "green patriarch."

Benedict made clear that the church had to respond to environmental threats, including climate change, that the world was witnessing at a time when global attention was ramping up.

“He saw that this was an unavoidable moral issue and he spoke about it, he taught about it and he acted on it. The connections between the ecology of nature and human ecology (a term first coined by his predecessor Pope John Paul II) would be a consistent theme for Benedict, including in his 2009 encyclical, *[Caritas in Veritate](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html" \t "_blank)*, where he wrote that "the deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture which shapes human coexistence.” said [Vincent Miller](https://www.ncronline.org/authors/vincent-miller" \t "_blank).

Both teachings were cited by Pope Francis in his encyclical "*[Laudato Si'](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html" \t "_blank)*[, on Care for Our Common Home](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html" \t "_blank)," issued in June 2015 as the first papal teaching document devoted entirely to ecology and faith.

In 2010 Benedict devoted his World Day of Peace message to the role of the environment in avoiding conflicts, titling it "[If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20091208_xliii-world-day-peace.html" \t "_blank)." [a phrase I have so often quoted!]

The solar array (2,400 panels atop the Paul VI Audience Hall) and a hybrid popemobile stand as lasting symbols at the Vatican of the focus that Benedict, placed on environmental issues during his eight-year papacy, which ended in 2013 that led him to being dubbed "the green pope" as early as 2008, the year the panels were installed.

Known as an excellent systematic theologian, Benedict turned to the church's tradition to speak to present-day environmental challenges, relying on his predecessor popes and heavily influenced by early church father St. Augustine and by St. Bonaventure, a 13th-century Franciscan and doctor of the church.

As I wrote in *Understanding JPIC*  (2013) “3.3.49. …“The metaphor of nature as a book for Christians to read was first proposed by Augustine.” (Warner, 2012, 1) It was passed on by Richard of St Victor, who wrote “that God has written two books: the Book of Scripture and the Book of Nature” (Ingham, 2009, 22). Bonaventure adopted and repeated the idea.”

As Ilia Deli, OSF wrote in 2003 in *A Franciscan View of Creation* pp 28-29

“Bonaventure used two images to describe creation: mirror and book. As a mirror, creation reflects the power, wisdom and goodness of the Trinity … Bonaventure views the world as sacramental – a symbolic world full of signs of God’s presence.”

Franciscan Sr. [Dawn Nothwehr](https://www.ncronline.org/authors/dawn-nothwehr" \t "_blank), said "[Benedict’s] very Bonaventurian in that whole deep integration of the Trinitarian structure of all of the world and our understanding of our relationship with God and how does that fit with the human person and the Incarnation."

During Benedict's papacy, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (now the Dicastery for Integral Human Development) in 2008 issued [10 commandments of the environment](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/5884" \t "_blank), which included the international right to a safe and clean environment; the commandments were later [published as a book](https://www.avemariapress.com/products/ten-commandments-for-the-environment" \t "_blank) under Benedict's name. That same year, Benedict included polluting the environment among seven new social sins. A second book, *The Environment*, was published in 2012.



SolarWorld workers install solar panels on the roof of the Paul VI audience hall at the Vatican in October 2008. The solar power system was inaugurated at the Vatican Nov. 26 that year. (CNS/Catholic Press Photo/Emanuela De Meo

Opinions vary on all Popes. None are perfect. I am aware of the criticism of Benedict XVI, an academic especially when he was Prefect of the Congregation for the Defence of the Faith. He silenced approx 100 theolgians including Leonardo Boff, OFM, except that did not work as Boff left the OFM and priesthood and continued writing as a theologian in a secular university with support from many including bishops, priests and laity.

The record is complicated. An example is liberation theology. In fact, Ratzinger’s CDF only criticized “certain aspects” of “some theologies of liberation” not the whole concept

again when he was Prefect of the Congregation for the Defence of the Faith. Read what he wrote carefully in the two *Instructions* and do not read into it what he did not write! I wrote in *Understanding JPIC*  (2013) “3.2.109.a. … What we would do well to remember is that although controversial, liberation theology has not been condemned by the church. In fact, Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975, nn. 25-39) wrote about the desire of the oppressed for liberation. What was condemned was any reliance on Marxism especially class warfare and its associated violence. These were the *certain aspects* of “some theologies of liberation” (n. 3) that were condemned in *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,1984). Marxist categories were used by some liberation theologians to help analyse and understand reality (I too was taught them in Comparative Economics at McGill University in 1965. I found them helpful but did not accept them as “gospel” and was not turned into a Communist!). In fact this document and its follow-up *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,1986) contain perhaps two of the greatest defences of the bases of the *preferential option for the poor* ever written. This is maybe why some, even some of thosetheologians who accompany the poor on foot as opposed to from a desk, and who are truly pastoral, practice liberation theology butprefer to refer to it in terms of the *preferential option for the poor* ratherthan *liberation theology.* … [and]

3.2.109.c. It might be helpful to bear in mind that Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez, who coined the term *liberation theology* (*Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas*, Lima: CEP, 1971) “once said that ninety percent of the movement is the preferential option for the poor.” (Allen, 2007) and Fr Joe Nangle, ofm (2011) who was in Peru when liberation theology was developing has said “Liberation theology is a process rather than a body of theology: a way of doing theology.” He went on to outline what is known under several different names i.e. the *see, judge, act* method,also known as *praxis* or *the pastoral cycle* asthe way it is done. As mentioned elsewhere in this document, *see, judge, act* pre-dates liberation theology and is well accepted by the church.”

Having said that, Benedict was certainly considered an opponent of liberation theology with good reason and definitively became anti Leonard Boff. I am happy that opinionschanged and a later Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Gerhard Ludwig Müller, paid tribute to the Liberation Theology Movement in 2013 and Pope Francis is in favour.

I choose to celebrate Benedict XVI for his encyclicals [*Deus Caritas est*](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html)/God is love (2005) and [*Caritas in Veritate*](Caritas%20in%20Veritate)/Charity in truth (2009). They inspired me and I have just finished re-reading both and I would like to pass on the following few (!) quotations. Not easy to choose which ones from 39 or 96 pages respectively! And interesting to notice how *caritas* is translated as either ‘love’ or ‘charity’.

In *Deus caritas est*, Benedict distinguishes the differences & the unity between *eros* (physical love), *agape* (oblative love, charity) and *philia* (friendship). My favourite quotations would be: “A eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented.” (no 14); “Anyone who needs me, and whom I can help, is my neighbour.” (no 15); “communion” (koinonia) … its essential core … within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life.” (no 20). [not only among believers also in one human family- see below Caritas in veritate no 53].

Here is a succinct summary of the development of Catholic Social Teaching: “27. It must be admitted that the Church's leadership was slow to realize that the issue of the just structuring of society needed to be approached in a new way. There were some pioneers, such as Bishop Ketteler of Mainz († 1877), and concrete needs were met by a growing number of groups, associations, leagues, federations and, in particular, by the new religious orders founded in the nineteenth century to combat poverty, disease and the need for better education. In 1891, the papal magisterium intervened with the Encyclical Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII. This was followed in 1931 by Pius XI's Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno. In 1961 Blessed John XXIII published the Encyclical Mater et Magistra, while Paul VI, in the Encyclical Populorum Progressio (1967) and in the Apostolic Letter Octogesima Adveniens (1971), insistently addressed the social problem, which had meanwhile become especially acute in Latin America. My great predecessor John Paul II left us a trilogy of social Encyclicals: Laborem Exercens (1981), Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987) and finally Centesimus Annus (1991). Faced with new situations and issues, Catholic social teaching thus gradually developed, and has now found a comprehensive presentation in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church published in 2004 by the Pontifical Council Iustitia et Pax.”

Not suprisingly Benedict XVI omits Justitia in Mundo (but then it was not an encyclical or papal Apostolic Letter but a Synod of Bishops, 1971 statement) whose very famous and oft quoted (no 6): “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel or, in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.” scared the curial traditonalists! But Benedict paraphrases it in *Caritas in veritate* - see below quotation of no 16.

Ok, so on to *Caritas in Veritate*:

“1. … Love — *caritas* — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace. It is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth.”

“2. … Charity is at the heart of the Church's social doctrine. [and] ... according to the teaching of Jesus, is the synthesis of the entire Law (cf. Mt 22:36- 40). It gives real substance to the personal relationship with God and with neighbour.”

“5. … Charity is love received and given. It is “grace” (*cháris*).”

“6. ... justice is inseparable from charity[[1]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn1), and intrinsic to it.

Justice is the primary way of charity or, in Paul VI's words, “the minimum measure” of it[[2]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn2), an integral part of the love “in deed and in truth” (1 Jn 3:18), to which Saint John exhorts us. … charity demands justice: .... charity transcends justice ....”

“7. … To desire the *common good* and strive towards it *is a requirement of justice and charity*. … The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbours, the more effectively we love them. Every Christian is called to practise this charity, in a manner corresponding to his vocation and according to the degree of influence he wields in the *pólis*. “This is the institutional path — we might also call it the political path — of charity, no less excellent and effective than the kind of charity which encounters the neighbour directly, ....”

“11. The publication of [*Populorum Progressio*](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum_en.html) occurred immediately after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and in its opening paragraphs it clearly indicates its close connection with the Council[[14]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn14). Twenty years later, in[*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html), John Paul II, in his turn, emphasized the earlier Encyclical's fruitful relationship with the Council, and especially with the Pastoral Constitution [*Gaudium et Spes*](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)[[15]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn15). I too wish to recall here the importance of the Second Vatican Council for Paul VI's Encyclical and for the whole of the subsequent social Magisterium of the Popes. … *authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension*[[16]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn16).”

“12. … It is not a case of two typologies of social doctrine, one pre-conciliar and one post-conciliar, differing from one another: on the contrary, there is *a single teaching, consistent and at the same time ever new*[[20]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn20). It is one thing to draw attention to the particular characteristics of one Encyclical or another, of the teaching of one Pope or another, but quite another to lose sight of the coherence of the overall doctrinal *corpus*[[21]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn21).” … Social doctrine is built on the foundation handed on by the Apostles to the Fathers of the Church, and then received and further explored by the great Christian doctors.”

“15. … *Testimony to Christ's charity, through works of justice, peace and development, is part and parcel of evangelization*, because Jesus Christ, who loves us, is concerned with the whole person.”

“28. “The Church ... cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice ... The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, ... is proper to the lay faithful.”

“30. … Indeed, “the individual who is animated by true charity labours skilfully to discover the causes of misery, to find the means to combat it, to overcome it resolutely”[[75]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn75).

“43. … is important to call for a renewed reflection on how *rights presuppose duties, if they are not to become mere licence*[[106]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn106)”

“45. …  *The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly* — not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics which is people-centred. … it is based on man's creation “in the image of God” (Gen 1:27), …”

“48. … Today the subject of development is also closely related to the duties arising from *our relationship to the natural environment*. The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole.”

“51. *The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa*. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its life-style, which, in many parts of the world, is prone to hedonism and consumerism, regardless of their harmful consequences[[122]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn122). What is needed is an effective shift in mentality which can lead to the adoption of *new life-styles* “in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments”[[123]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn123).”

“53. … *The development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that the human race is a single family* working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side[[127]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn127).”

“57. … For believers, the world derives neither from blind chance nor from strict necessity, but from God's plan. This is what gives rise to the duty of believers to unite their efforts with those of all men and women of good will, with the followers of other religions and with non-believers, so that this world of ours may effectively correspond to the divine plan: living as a family under the Creator's watchful eye.”

“66. … It is good for people to realize that purchasing is always a moral — and not simply economic — act. Hence *the consumer has a specific social responsibility*, which goes hand-in- hand with the social responsibility of the enterprise. Consumers should be continually educated[[145]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn145) regarding their daily role, …”

“76. **…** *Development must include not just material growth but also spiritual growth*, since the human person is a “unity of body and soul”[[156]](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn156), born of God's creative love and destined for eternal life. … *There cannot be holistic development and universal common good unless people's spiritual and moral welfare is taken into account*, considered in their totality as body and soul.”

“78.Without God man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is. … As we contemplate the vast amount of work to be done, we are sustained by our faith that God is present alongside those who come together in his name to work for justice.”

Thank you, Papa Benedict, RIP!

**3. Talking about truth (& reconciliation), did you know**

**how Canada swindled the Métis out of land?**

***"No reconciliation is possible if the history of Métis lands and scrip is not known." Nathalie Kermoal***

As a high school teacher in the 1970’s I taught about the Red River Rebellion 1869-70, the North West Rebellion 1885 and Riel’s execution and the effect on English-French relations in Canada. Some criticised me for my pro Métis approach

as I did not consider Riel a traitor.

I did not then know about the scrip issue. I recently learned about it from the CBC.

In 1870, the Canadian government devised a system of scrip — referred to as [Métis](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/metis) scrip — that issued documents redeemable for land or money. Scrip was given to Métis people living in the West in exchange for their land rights. The scrip process was legally complex and disorganized; this made it difficult for Métis people to acquire land, yet simultaneously created room for fraud.

It came in two forms: money scrip, issued in increments of $20, $80, $160 and $240; and land scrip, issued in land allotments of 80, 160 and 240 acres (or roughly 32, 65 and 97 hectares). Scrip was redeemable for land or its cash value, depending on the type of scrip received. For the [federal government](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/federal-government), scrip provided a convenient and inexpensive process to acquire [Métis](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/metis) [rights](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-rights) to land in the West, thereby clearing it for commercial development and white settlement.

Following Confederation in 1867, westward expansion became one of Canada's primary goals. Fearing their rights to the land would not be respected, Louis Riel and the Métis Provisional Government negotiated for rights to their homeland. As a result, when Canada was acquiring Rupert’s Land in 1870, it made promises to the Métis people. 1.4 million acres of land was to be set aside for the "Half-breed" children born prior to July 15, 1870 in the original province of Manitoba. Each child was to receive the equivalent of 240 acres of land and the head of household was to receive the equivalent of $160 in scrip.

Instead, Canada failed to implement this policy diligently and few Métis actually benefited from it. The scrip process was complex and disorganized, making it difficult for Métis people to acquire land and created room for fraud. For years, the Métis had nowhere to turn for restitution.

In March 2013, the [Supreme Court of Canada](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/supreme-court-of-canada) ruled that the [federal government](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/federal-government) failed to provide the Métis with the land grant they were promised in the [*Manitoba Act*](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/manitoba-act) of 1870. Negotiations between various levels of government and the Métis Nation concerning the reclamation of land rights continue. [50 years later & still no settlement!]

[Land swindle](https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/from-scrip-to-road-allowances-canada-s-complicated-history-with-the-m%C3%A9tis-1.5100375/what-s-m%C3%A9tis-scrip-north-america-s-largest-land-swindle-says-indigenous-lawyer-1.5100507Talking%20about%20truth,%20did%20you%20know?)

**What's Métis scrip? North America's 'largest** **land swindle,' says Indigenous lawyer**



The land that was surveyed for Métis people was located in the southern parts of what is known as the prairies today — hundreds of kilometres away from where the Métis lived.

They had to uproot their lives — leaving behind much of their tight-knit family and community — to begin a new life in an area they didn't know on land they'd never seen, often travelling days to do so. Meanwhile, speculators would be standing right outside the tents, asking to buy their scrip coupons for way less than they were worth, according to Madden.

Many Métis people, often impoverished, weighed their need for basic necessities and the risk of moving away from their families with scrip and decided to sell.

"It was a system that was designed for the speculator, not for the Métis," Madden said.

After buying the coupons, speculators would go down to the Dominion Lands Act offices, have someone impersonate the Métis person they bought the scrip from, and claim the land as theirs.

Most Métis were English-illiterate, couldn't write and would often sign papers with an "X." The people acting as a Métis person would sign documents as if they were literate.

Many Métis people decided this was grounds to sue — and were in the process of doing so.

However, in 1921, Senator James Lougheed amended the Canadian Criminal Code to create a three-year statute of limitations on Métis land claims, which meant Métis people couldn't sue after three years of a land claim being finalized.

The Supreme Court of Canada, in 2003, referred to scrip as "a sorry chapter in our nation's history".

Madden dubs Métis scrip as this country's "best-kept secret" and shouldn't be a secret any longer.

For the Métis today, scrip remains an incredibly important and lesser-known part of their history. Madden said it's time it's taught in schools, referenced in media and brought to the forefront.

"The same way that I think many Canadians are finally understanding the impacts of residential schools and those assimilationist policies on First Nations, they need to also understand those stories, the same strategies were applied to Métis," Madden said.

Following are some sources for those interested to know more.

[https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/from-scrip-to-road-allowances-canada-s-complicated-history-with-the-métis-1.5100375/what-s-métis-scrip-north-america-s-largest-land-swindle-says-indigenous-lawyer-1.5100507](https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/from-scrip-to-road-allowances-canada-s-complicated-history-with-the-m%C3%A9tis-1.5100375/what-s-m%C3%A9tis-scrip-north-america-s-largest-land-swindle-says-indigenous-lawyer-1.5100507)

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/metis-scrip-in-canada>

<https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/article/scrip/>

<https://landmarksjournal.geog.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/VanDerVelden-2019-Metis-Scrip-Certificates.pdf>

<https://www.ualberta.ca/native-studies/about-us/news/2019/february/metis-land-rights-scrip-conference.html>

**4. Rupnik! Clericalism in action? Will they ever learn?**

<https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2022/12/22/the-fr-rupnik-case-what-is-wrong-with-these-people/>

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2022-12/slovenia-bishops-statement-marko-rupnik-abuse-case.html>

**Slovenian Fr Mark Rupnik, SJ ,** a sought-after artist, preacher and retreat leader whose mosaics grace churches and basilicas around the world**, has been accused of** sexually, physically and emotionally abusing nine religious sisters when he was confessor and spiritual director to the Skupnost Loyola (Loyola Community) in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The allegations go back to the early 1990s when Father Rupnik was spiritual director of a convent which he had founded along with its mother superior Ivanka Hosta. [Speaking to the Italian newspaper *Domani*Dec. 18](https://www.editorialedomani.it/fatti/abusi-sessuali-rupnik-gesuiti-sesso-chiesa-vaticano-q3youohh)*,* a woman — pseudonymously called Anna — alleged how in the 1980s Father Rupnik began manipulating her, taking advantage of her youth and naivety, and making the young woman dependent on him.

The former nun now 58, claimed she made her first complaint to the Jesuits in 1994 but that they were ignored. She claimed that the Jesuits and her superior nuns repeatedly rebuffed her complaints in order to protect Fr Rupnik.

[Allegations against the Jesuit priest have become a point of scandal in the Church, after Rupnik was accused of serially abusing Slovenian consecrated women in the 1980s and 1990s](https://www.pillarcatholic.com/the-complex-case-of-fr-marko-rupnik-untangled/).

**One of Fr Rupnik’s alleged victims, called “Anna” (not her real name) a former religious sister of the Loyola community, has spoken out in an 18 Dec 2022**[**new interview**](https://www.pillarcatholic.com/descent-into-hell-an-alleged-rupnik-victim-speaks-out/)**with Italian media detailing the sexual, psychological and spiritual abuse she suffered. According to her allegations, the abuse began one year after Fr Rupnik was ordained.  Why is it only becoming public now after so long? Was this covered up? Who knew what and when and was the proper action taken?**

Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, the pope’s vicar for Rome called 23 December 2022 for the full truth to come out about Marko Rupnik, accused of sexual and spiritual abuses against adult women, and said he was evaluating what to do with the priest’s Rome-based community and diocesan positions. On one charge Rupnik was excommunicated, repented and immediately rehabilitated. On another charge the statute of limitations was invoked though it need not have been and so no action was taken. The victim(s) did not play a role in these processes. Was anything done to help the victims? The general public did not find out about this until the recent interview 18 Dec.

**An example of Marko Rupnik’s art. I must admit I like it.**



Maria Paola Daud-ALETEIA

**Happy New Year, Peace & joy, Andrew, ofs**