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BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
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COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE

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At the end of the General Audience, the Holy Father met with Mr Phil Fontaine, the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Canada, and the Most Reverend James Weisgerber, President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, together with those accompanying them, and he listened to their stories and concerns.

His Holiness recalled that since the earliest days of her presence in Canada, the Church, particularly through her missionary personnel, has closely accompanied the indigenous peoples. Given the sufferings that some indigenous children experienced in the Canadian Residential School system, the Holy Father expressed his sorrow at the anguish caused by the deplorable conduct of some members of the Church and he offered his sympathy and prayerful solidarity. His Holiness emphasized that acts of abuse cannot be tolerated in society. He prayed that all those affected would experience healing, and he encouraged First Nations Peoples to continue to move forward with renewed hope.

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