

TRUDEAU ASKED TO APOLOGIZE TO VICTIMS

Below is a copy of Bill Donohue's letter to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, countering Trudeau's call for an apology from Pope Francis by calling on the prime minister to apologize to all victims of Canadian oppression.

May 30, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON KIA 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

Your interest in having Pope Francis apologize for the Catholic Church's mistreatment of indigenous peoples is commendable, but it would take on greater meaning if you were to offer a sincere apology for the Canadian government's oppression of Indians, Africans, Asians, Jews, Protestants, and Catholics. The victimization of Catholics continues to this day in Canada, making my plea all the more urgent.

In 2008, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered a formal apology for the damage done to former students of residential schools, many of them run by the Canadian government. If he could do that, without asking the pope to apologize, surely a man of your compassion could do the same. You might begin by addressing the findings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. It released 440 recommendations in 1996. Have they all been implemented? Now is the time to act.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Asians were excluded from public schools, and many were beaten up in riots across

Canada. Alberta, Québec, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan passed laws barring white women from working in restaurants, laundries, and all other businesses owned by Chinese or Japanese Canadians. You need to apologize for these racist laws immediately.

Black Canadians were victimized by the Canadian government in every facet of life. Schools, hotels, restaurants, theaters, and swimming pools were segregated from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. You cannot allow this oppression to go unanswered. Please apologize now.

While Hitler was busy getting Jews ready for the ovens in the 1930s, your government, sir, employed quotas in the universities, elite social clubs, beaches, and resorts in Montréal, Toronto, and Winnipeg. And when Jews sought to emigrate to Canada, your government slammed the door in their face. A big time apology is needed without delay.

The Ku Klux Klan, with the backing of the Canadian government, targeted Catholics in the first half of the 20th century, working overtime to stop them from coming to Canada. The Klan organized in Montréal, Ontario, BC, and Manitoba in the early 1920s. It was most successful in Saskatchewan, drawing 20,000 members. Catholics were denied jobs and new parochial schools could not be built. You cannot allow Catholics to go without an apology. Please act now.

Catholics need more than an apology: They need you to intervene now by ordering all government officials to stop harassing priests for exercising fidelity to Catholic teachings on marriage and the family; Protestant ministers have similarly been affected. Moreover, Catholics are being denied government jobs simply because they profess a belief in Catholic sexual ethics. This oppression is unconscionable and must end.

Please issue the requested apologies, and please support the

conscience rights of Catholics and Protestants in Canada. To do less would be to invite skepticism—if not cynicism—about your concern for the victims of oppression.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President