

# INQUIRY RESPECTING THE TREATMENT, EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF INNU IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

English Transcript | Volume 15

*Commissioners: Retired Judge James Igloliorte, Dr. Mike Devine and Anastasia Qupee*

Friday | Sheshatshiu | 9 June 2023

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

**Recess**

**COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:** Thank you all very much, again, for your patience. Thank you for thinking about Anne's health and allowing her to have a break.

Penote Antuan, our – one of our Elders, wanted me to pass on to all of you that he had to leave early but that for each community member, for each person from the government, for each lawyer who is here, for all of the workers he's very grateful, wants to say thank you for your attendance and – respectful attendance for the proceedings.

Our next speaker is Emma Milley, and she will be assisted by her daughter, as support, and Anne will be doing the translation.

Whenever you're ready Emma, you're – feel free to speak to us.

**E. MILLEY:** [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

**INTERPRETER NUNA (providing English translation):** My name – my name is Emma Milley. I'm scared. I have this fear for today.

I was 17 years old when the priest sexually abused me. He pushed me in front of the – in the church. I thought: This is the person that my father worshipped. He locked the door. I couldn't get out. Then I thought, this must have happened to other girls at that time, at my age.

When he finished what he was doing, I went down by the river, full of blood. When I went home I told my parent – asked – my parents asked me where I came from. I told them I went swimming. I remember I wore a dress and I remember the colour of my dress; it was yellow.

I want to tell my story because I feel sorry about other young people that happened to them. I wanna be here to – to help them.

After what had happened, he tried to send me out – out of the community. I told him no. I ran away. I hope no one goes through what I have been through.

So the first person I told was my sister. I asked – I asked her: What happens when a girl loses a lot of blood?

I wanted to be alone. I went alone. I met an – I remember meeting an Elder and I sat – I sat on a rock, feeling ashamed of what the priest had done to me.

To this day it has been with me. I did not want to tell, I did not want to share my story for a long time because I feared to be ridiculed – ridiculed by others. That's what I feel like: People will make fun of me.

Today I look at my children – my grandchildren – and today my grandkids look after me. I haven't been outside my house since I lost my husband. It has been hard – a hard life. And yes, I am a Roman Catholic and I still accept that, but I don't trust no one except me.

After the priest sexually assaulted me, I did not have my period and it was the priest who pregnated [read: impregnated] me, whose child was in with me. I felt ashamed. I did not want to have it, so when I was alone sitting in on that rock, I hit myself very

hard on my stomach, my face, my body until I saw a lot of blood and I lost the baby. I couldn't tell my parents. I did not want to tell my parents.

After this happened, not wanting to tell my parents, I kept this to myself and I tried to seek help for myself. Yes, I went to treatment, but yet I felt treatment did not help me. So I attempted suicide. I went – when I left I told those who were around me not to follow me. I went to the beach. I was alone, and I was thinking of the water.

Then I met an Elder. He stopped me. I think it was my grandfather. So, he said: Don't do it. And I did not attempt it.

Today as I sit here to share in my story, I'll still don't know how to heal myself. I tried so hard to forget, but I can't. I always tell my grandkids to look after themselves, but they're the ones who are looking after me.

At nighttimes I pray. I don't want to go to that church, to that building, because I like praying in my own way in my home, and that's how I pray.

One time, bishop came, visit our community. He tried to pray for me. He tried to touch my forehead, and I told him: Don't touch me.

I didn't want him to touch me. And then when I heard about the Pope coming to Canada, especially to where my people go every summer in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré in Quebec. I was hoping to meet with the Pope and telling– and tell him myself of what had happened.

This summer I'm thinking of going to Sainte-Anne, Quebec. I already asked my brother. My brother recently lost his wife, too. It is hard when you lose – a loved one, like my husband, and for my brother, his wife.

I also like talking to young people when I can.

Also, want to let you know my mother is still alive. Sometimes I go visit her. I visit her sometimes four days. I will sleep with her, beside her, and yes, the priest comes to see her.

As soon as I know, as soon as I see a priest come through her door, I run to the room, because I don't want to face the priest.

Yes, I am lost; and yes, I do talk to my children.

And so, I end my sharing my story with you, and thank you for listening.

**COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:** And, can I just say something first?

No, no. I want to say thank you so much, to you and to your daughter. We're very grateful.

All of us at the Inquiry and the Commissioners are sincere when we say if you want to add more as we continue to come to your community, don't be afraid to come back.

We see for ourselves that the Innu people have a great deal of faith; and despite all that you have been through, you are showing us that your faith is strong. As we have said before, what you say to us allows other people to have the strength to be able to speak, themselves, as well.

Thank you, again.

**COMMISSIONER QUPEE:** [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

I just said to Emma – thank her for coming. It takes a lot of work to come forward, within yourself, to believe in yourself, that you can come and speak about your experience. And I know that the Inquiry is now picking up, with people wanting to come forward and speak and – and that is good. That is good that people want to – to come and speak about their experiences.

And I wish Emma well – mm-hmm – in her journey.

Thank you. Tshenashkumitin.

**COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:** Prayer.

**COMMISSIONER QUPEE:** [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

**COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:** Tshaukuesh, please.

**COMMISSIONER QUPEE:** Tshaukuesh.

**ELDER PENASHUE:** [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

**COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:** Thank you. (Inaudible.)

**Recess**