

# Canadian Artist Launches Apology Accepted Following Historic Gathering of Faith, Civic and Community Leaders

*Initiative transforms Papal and Church apologies into permanent acts of remembrance through commemorative plaques for churches, schools, and institutions.*

TORONTO, ON, CANADA, June 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- TORONTO, June 29, 2026 – Award-winning Canadian commemorative artist Nadine Williams officially launched Apology Accepted, an international commemorative initiative that transforms historic Papal and Church apologies for their roles in slavery into permanent public acts of remembrance through bilingual commemorative plaques.



The Apology Dignitaries attending 1

The launch, held at Precious Blood Parish in Toronto, brought together faith leaders, elected officials, and community leaders in a shared commitment to ensuring that these historic apologies become more than words, becoming enduring symbols of remembrance, education, and reconciliation.

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*Nadine Williams*

The initiative responds to the 2026 Papal apology for the Catholic Church’s role in slavery, as well as apologies issued by various Christian denominations over the years. Through original artwork and poetry created by Nadine Williams, Apology Accepted offers churches, schools, chapels, and institutions a permanent way to preserve these moments in history while creating opportunities for reflection and dialogue for generations to come.

Timed in advance of Emancipation Day on August 1, the initiative provides churches and institutions with an opportunity to dedicate the plaques as part of this year's commemorations while extending the conversation beyond a single day into a lasting commitment to truth and remembrance.

“An apology lives only when a community embraces and keeps it. History should not be tucked away in books, confined to dusty shelves, or remembered only on special occasions. It should live among us—in our cities and towns, in the monuments we protect, in the traditions we pass on, and in the conversations we have every day. I created this artwork so the words would not simply pass with the news cycle, but would live through art on a wall where children, families, congregants, and parishioners can stand before them and remember. That is how we honour the scars we carry from this wound with dignity, and how healing truly begins.”

Nadine Williams, Artist and Founder, The Nadine Williams Pen Foundation and The Nadine Williams Collective

Among those participating in the launch were MP Michael Coteau, The Honourable Alvin Curling, former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Bishop Lennox Walker, O.D., Father John Mark, Pastor of Precious Blood Parish, Councillors Michael Thompson, Geza Wordofo Educators Thando Hyman, Gary Thompson and Nadine Spencer, CEO of BrandEQ Group.

Reflecting on the significance of the initiative, MP Michael Coteau remarked: “When we have reminders like this through poetry and art, in our churches, schools, and



The Apology Community Leaders attending



Nadine Williams Reveals the Apology

communities, they become something people can carry forward. This is something that can translate not only in the Black community, but in communities as a whole."

The Honourable Alvin Curling reflected on the meaning of apology by recalling advice from his mother during his childhood. He shared that when apologizing to someone, you must look them in the eye because a genuine apology requires honesty, humility, and human connection.

"An apology is only meaningful when it is sincere. You have to be able to look someone in the eye because only then can they know your apology is genuine. That connection is where healing begins."

-The Honourable Alvin Curling

"I remember walking toward the "Door of No Return." I remember touching those walls. I remember weeping. I wept because I realized that history still breathes. History still speaks. History still leaves wounds. This is why commemorating apologies matters. Some ask, "Why revisit the past? Why remember old wounds?" The answer is simple. Because what is not remembered can be repeated. Because silence often protects the oppressor while memory restores the humanity of the oppressed. Because apologies are not merely statements about what happened; they are moral acts that publicly affirm what should never have happened. An apology cannot resurrect those who died in the Middle Passage. An apology cannot restore stolen years, stolen languages, stolen names, stolen lands, or stolen opportunities but an apology does something profoundly important. It tells the descendants of the enslaved: "We see your pain." "We acknowledge that your suffering was real." "We reject the lies that justified your ancestors' degradation." "We are willing to tell the truth." And truth-telling is the first requirement of justice." Bishop Lennox Walker O.D

Speakers throughout the event emphasized that an apology is not the end of a conversation but the beginning of responsibility. Together, they described Apology Accepted as a meaningful public expression of remembrance that invites communities to preserve history while inspiring future generations through education, dialogue, and action.

Beginning immediately, parishes, churches, schools, dioceses, institutions, and families may request commemorative plaques for permanent installation. The first installations are expected across Ontario, with additional dedications planned throughout Canada and internationally over the coming year.

About the Artist

Nadine Williams is an award-winning Canadian commemorative artist whose work advances



belonging, intercultural and interfaith understanding, and the public commemoration of shared history through visual art and poetry. For nearly two decades, her work has created spaces for reflection, dialogue, and healing in Canada and internationally.

Nadine Spencer

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