



Williams Lake
FIRST NATION

**PRESS
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/27/2022

CHIEF WILLIE SELLARS ISSUES STATEMENT ON POPE FRANCIS' APOLOGY

Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) understands that the content of this press release could be triggering for some people. WLFN would like our members and the wider community to know that it is ok to ask for help.

Indian Residential School Survivors Society: 1-866-925-4419
Hope for Wellness helpline: 1-855-242-3310

On Monday, July 25th, Pope Francis apologized for the Catholic Church's role in the catastrophic legacy of residential schools during a visit to Maskwacis, Alberta. Pope Francis apologized for members of the Catholic Church who cooperated with Canada's devastating policy of the Indigenous residential school, saying the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples into Christian society destroyed their cultures, severed their families, and marginalized generations in ways still being felt now.

"In our community, it is a mix of emotions and there is going to be a lot of healing that needs to happen for our members. The Pope visiting our country and issuing again another empty apology leads to a lot of anger within our community. An apology is great but let us take it another step further with what the Catholic Churches have done to our communities and get them to acknowledge the attempted genocide of First Nations people, of our culture, our history and our language" states Chief Willie Sellars.