Louis Riel Day commemorates the anniversary of the execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1885. Riel made the ultimate sacrifice for defending Métis rights and although these events took place in the West, his resistance is celebrated and remembered as Métis citizens and communities here in Ontario remember our history and struggles at home.

In Ontario, the Métis struggled to protect our rights, our communities and our families. Our Ontario history is very similar to the western Métis experience. We were labelled traitors and for generations our culture was forced underground. We became the “forgotten people.”

Today, we are no longer the “forgotten people” because we assert our Métis rights, and by doing so, take up the mantle of Louis Riel. It is for this reason that Louis Riel Day is a cause for celebration in our communities across the homeland. It is a day to remember our past, live our culture and reaffirm our determination that our children will inherit all the rights Louis Riel and so many others fought so bravely to protect.

On November 16, 2016, I encourage you to join with your community and your Nation in Louis Riel Day events. It is a day to proclaim proudly as Louis Riel did, “We are Métis” and we join together as We Aspire to be the best.

Margaret Froh
President, Métis Nation of Ontario