



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

February 28, 2023

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We remind ourselves through the liturgical season of Lent that this is a season of conversion. It is a time when we attend to the call of the Holy Spirit to dive inward to a deeper understanding of God's love for us struggling human beings and which summons us to the same love for others. Through fasting, prayer and almsgiving we seek an inner transformation to deepen our relationship with God and all creation.

Isaiah (58 1-12) said, "Is not this the fast I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house, when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin. Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard."

Grounded in Catholic social teachings, for over 55 years, Development and Peace-Caritas Canada has engaged deeply in the work of justice, solidarity and humanitarianism while advocating strongly for the poor and the oppressed. Both its members and its work are inspired by and deeply rooted in Sacred Scripture, which calls us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable before our own- a responsibility the Church calls the preferential option for the poor. The prophetic call of God's Word also challenges us to consider our own role in social, economic, and environmental inequities that can harm those beyond our borders.

Inspired by Pope Francis's 2021 address to the World Meeting of Popular Movements, in which he stated, "you have the ability and the courage to create hope where there appears to be only waste and exclusion," Development and Peace-Caritas Canada begins a new campaign cycle this year. Create Hope will be the guiding theme for the next five years.

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In this first year, the campaign is Create Hope: Stand for the Land. We are invited to join in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the Global South, who bravely defend their homelands by protecting the land, waters and environment that sustain not only themselves, but also the planet as a whole. We are also invited to learn from and be inspired by those same sisters and brothers, who persist in the face of despair to embrace the blessed virtue of hope. Their own example is one of a confident expectation and desire, springing from trust in the fidelity of God, for something good in the future.

In Lent 2022, Development and Peace-Caritas Canada returned to running its Share Lent collection in our parishes after eight years as a partner in the Together We Serve Annual Appeal. Since 1967, the CCCB has set aside the fifth Sunday of Lent as Solidarity Sunday. At that time, we will have a collection in parishes and I urge you to stand in solidarity and make a life-changing impact by giving generously. Contributions can be made online at [www.devp.org/donate](http://www.devp.org/donate), by mailing a cheque, by phone at 1-888-234-8533 or by using the donation envelopes available in your parish. I also encourage you to consider becoming a monthly donor through Share Year Round at [www.devp.org/shareyearround](http://www.devp.org/shareyearround).

Together, let us open our hearts and hear the call to renewal that the Holy Spirit desires to bring to our struggling world, and let us ask for the grace to be instruments of that same Spirit.

“When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth” (Psalm 104:30).

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Richard W. Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

✠Richard W. Smith  
Archbishop of Edmonton