



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 18, 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Every year in the holy season of Lent, *Development and Peace-Caritas Canada* reminds us of our common call to deepen our relationship with God and others through prayer, fasting, reflection and charitable actions such as almsgiving.

The past year has been marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has shaken social, economic and political structures globally. In his catechesis on the pandemic, Pope Francis implores us to work together as one human family to overcome the global challenges we are facing. Already, we have witnessed many beautiful acts of kindness and love. The ***Share Love Share Lent*** campaign invites us to continue with our deeds of mercy as we follow our merciful and just Lord Jesus.

The campaign theme of ***Share Love, Share Lent*** is inspired by the message of global fraternity conveyed by our Pope in his latest encyclical, ***Fratelli Tutti***. It invites us to draw inspiration from the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is at the centre of his encyclical, and to do our part to ensure that, in the words of the Pope, “every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development.”

Share Lent has been a tradition in Canadian parishes since 1968. It was established to embody the two pillars of social action—charity and justice—that Pope Benedict XVI described as “not only social, but also spiritual actions, accomplished in the light of the Holy Spirit”. During the past year, the *Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops* and *Development and Peace* have taken significant steps to renew D&P’s governance structure in order to strengthen its relationship with Canada’s Bishops, and to ensure that the mission and projects of its global partners align with the moral and social doctrine of the Church. In light of these positive developments, I endorse the Share Lent campaign, which you can support through your financial donations to *Together We Serve*.

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Each year, the campaign reaches schools, parishes, and the members of our communities across Canada. It tells the stories of our sisters and brothers in the Global South; not stories of poverty and misery, but of strength, resourcefulness and courage. These are stories of people working together to change the unjust social, economic and political situations that hinder their integral human development. *Development and Peace* and its partners can accompany and support them in their quest for justice because of thousands of Canadians like you.

In this time of Covid-19, it is another virtual Lent in our parishes. I encourage you to use *Development and Peace's* many resources and weekly webinars to accompany you through Lent, and to discover how the work of *Development and Peace* is anchored in Catholic Social Teaching. One way to heed Pope Francis's call for solidarity and love for our neighbor is by engaging the Interactive Solidarity Calendar. These and other resources are found on their website at <https://www.devp.org/en/region-events/sharelent2021> . I further encourage you to join in upcoming events such as the Virtual Way of the Cross on Good Friday.

The Covid-19 global pandemic has created much upheaval in many of our lives. The situation has been worse for our sisters and brothers in the Global South, who are often excluded and marginalized by inequities, which now include increased vulnerabilities to and limited protection from the virus.

In the words of Pope Francis: "All of us have a responsibility for the wounded, those of our own people and all the peoples of the earth. Let us care for the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan". (*Fratelli Tutti*,79).

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

✠Richard W. Smith

Archbishop of Edmonton