



February 25, 2020

Dear friends in Christ,

Peace be with you! During this time of Lent, a Holy Season dedicated to the conversion of our hearts, to the deepening of our relationship with God and with others through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, Canadian Catholics are invited to participate in Development and Peace – Caritas Canada's Share Lent campaign. Development and Peace is the official international solidarity organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, and the Canadian member of *Caritas Internationalis*.

In these last few years, substantial efforts have been made to reinforce the lines of communication and collaboration between the administration of the CCCB (and therefore with all bishops in Canada) and the National Council of Development and Peace and their Executive Director (and therefore all members of Development and Peace). These efforts continue and have progressed over the last year. The goal is to work together ever more fully for the poor and downtrodden of the world. Together, the bishops and Development and Peace wish to live out the teachings of the social doctrine of the Church faithfully, as set forward in the directives of *Caritas Internationalis*, the Vatican-based association of Catholic charity organizations and of social justice around the world.

I have full confidence that Development and Peace will remain the official international solidarity organization of the Catholic Church in Canada and a strong leading member of this *Caritas Internationalis* body.

This year's Share Lent campaign, ***For Our Common Home***, invites Canadian Catholics to contemplate and improve our relationship with God's Creation, *Our Common Home*, by connecting us to one of the Earth's most important ecosystems – the Amazon. This campaign, inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, invites us to begin our journey of ecological conversion towards an *integral ecology*: a symbiosis of relationships with God, nature and our brothers and sisters. Integral ecology calls us to be in a right relationship with all three, because if there is no harmony within any of these, the other relationships will suffer.

The campaign highlights the importance of the Amazon and introduces us to the incredibly brave witnesses of Christ who struggle every day to protect it. The partners whom Development & Peace features are a collection of Catholic networks and social justice organizations who have heard and responded to the cries of the Earth and of the poor in their communities – as we are all called to do.



For Our Common Home is especially timely considering this past October's Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazonian Region. In fact, the Development & Peace partners that are featured in the campaign were active participants in the Synod meetings at the Vatican. Now the work begins for each diocese across the world to implement the message and spirit of the Synod. We are called to answer the voices of vulnerable communities, such as the Seringueiros, the Mura and the Harakbut, who cry out from the Amazon. We are called to answer the cry of the earth itself.

Development and Peace has provided an excellent opportunity for us to do this in our diocese, by providing us with this campaign during this Lent season and encouraging us all to be in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the Amazon and other parts of the world who are protecting Creation, *our common home*, for all of humanity, now and for future generations.

Since 1967, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) designates the Fifth Sunday as Solidarity Sunday when our annual Share Lent collection will be taken up. On that Sunday, March 29th, along with my brother Bishops from across Canada, I ask you to please be generous in donating to Development and Peace so that the courage of those who defend *Our Common Home* is strengthened by our solidarity with them. By giving from the heart, we are joining with our sisters and brothers in the Amazon and around the world in the defense of our common home. You are invited to donate through your Share Lent envelope or online at devp.org/give.

During this Lenten season, let us join our brothers and sisters in the Global South in solidarity and in prayer for a better world. Together, let us experience the ecological conversion that inspires all of us to care ***For Our Common Home***. Let us turn towards God's will in prayer and in action.

With the assurance of my prayers for you and with you, I remain,

Sincerely in Christ,



+Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface