



Share Lent 2021
Message from CCCB President, Archbishop Richard Gagnon

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The theme of this year's Share Lent campaign is *Share Love, Share Lent*. The campaign is inspired by the message of the Holy Father's recent Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, which is a call "for a love that transcends the barriers of geography and distance," and "allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person." (FT1)

This is the love that led the Bishops of Canada to found the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace – *Caritas Canada*. Its mission of humanitarian and development assistance, education, and solidarity help Canadian Catholics to transcend the barriers of geography, distance, discrimination and poverty to come closer to our brothers and sisters in the Global South. Every Lent this can be done in a special way through the Share Lent campaign.

This closeness in solidarity can be described as "social love," which "makes it possible to advance towards a civilization of love, to which all of us are called. Charity, with its impulse to universality, is capable of building a new world. No mere sentiment, it is the best means of discovering effective paths of development for everyone." (FT183)

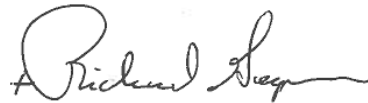
The past year has been one of organizational renewal for Development & Peace – *Caritas Canada*, in order to bring it closer to the Bishops, other clergy, persons in consecrated life and laity, and thus more effective in its service to the poor and oppressed in the Global South. The renewal process is still underway and much progress has been accomplished to date; much more is still to come. As the Holy Father has written, "Isolation and withdrawal into one's own interests are never the way to restore hope and bring about renewal. Rather, it is closeness; it is the culture of encounter. Isolation, no; closeness, yes. Culture clash, no; culture of encounter, yes." (FT30)

All are invited to join with Development & Peace – *Caritas Canada* in its renewal, and at the same time for you to renew your own commitment to solidarity, service, and caring for others, particularly those most vulnerable in society (see FT115). *Share Love, Share Lent* is an opportunity for you to be a part of a Lenten journey that can bring you closer to Christ and to those who suffer throughout the world and so contribute to the culture of encounter. Although the pandemic prevents parishes and members of Development & Peace – *Caritas Canada* from gathering as we normally would, *Share Love, Share Lent* has produced a series of online activities for you to participate in throughout the season of Lent (devp.org/lent). Each week focuses on a different aspect of mission, beginning in the first week with those Catholic values at the very heart of our transformative action in the world.

Your support for the *Share Love, Share Lent campaign* is needed to ensure that this Lenten journey allows for a positive impact on each person and each community, spiritually and through education, as well as in concrete expressions of charity and generosity.

In the words of the Holy Father, “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.” (FT79) For “all of us are able to give without expecting anything in return, to do good to others without demanding that they treat us well in return. As Jesus told his disciples: ‘Without cost you have received, without cost you are to give’ (Mt 10:8).” (FT140)

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Gagnon".

+Richard Gagnon
Archbishop of Winnipeg and
President of the Canadian Conference
of Catholic Bishops