
Together for
PEACE
Mini-mag | Lent 2018
Share
Lent 2018
Development
and Peace
CARITAS CANADA



Share Lent 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Once again it is Lent, that sacred time of year when Development and Peace – Caritas Canada invites us to live out a new Share Lent campaign, *Together for Peace*. Indeed, we are called to reflect on the profound meaning of peace by discovering the importance of dialogue within the context of reconciliation and peacebuilding.

In these troubled times, often characterized by fear of others, hatred and violence, it is our duty find the path to unity. But where to start? Which path to follow? How do we build a better world? A short time ago, Pope Francis reminded us that:

If there is one word that we should never tire of repeating, it is this: dialogue. […]The culture of dialogue entails a true apprenticeship and a discipline that enables us to view others as valid dialogue partners, to respect the foreigner, the immigrant and people from different cultures as worthy of being listened to. […] Peace will be lasting in the measure that we arm our children with the weapons of dialogue, that we teach them to fight the good fight of encounter and negotiation. In this way, we will bequeath to them a culture capable of devising strategies of life, not death, and of inclusion, not exclusion. — Pope Francis, Address during the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize, May 6, 2016.

We see that dialogue, be it interreligious, interdenominational, or intercommunal, is a path towards peace and a necessary condition for peace to prevail in the world. Together, let us take this path by focusing on what unites us rather than what divides us. Together, let us answer the call of our Lord Jesus Christ who prayed to the Father "that all of them may be one" (John 17:21), and in the power of the Spirit, let us seek out others, reach out to them, and recognize that they are our sisters and brothers.

For Lent this year, let us join Development and Peace, the international solidarity organization of our Church here in Canada, and commit to being *Together for Peace*. Let us support this campaign that touches each and every one of us, as well as our global community, at the very core of our being. Let us learn about the impact of actions for peace being carried out by courageous groups in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Let us pray, taking inspiration from the liturgical resources available in the Campaign Guide and using the campaign prayer. Let us reflect together on how this campaign enables us to spread the Good News of Christ and be peacemakers.

Peace is being built today and every day, in every community, village, and country, all together and inside each and every one of us. And thanks to your solidarity and generosity, we have been building peace together for more than 50 years.

Together, peace is possible!

Fraternally,

Most Rev. Lionel Gendron, P.S.S.
Bishop of Saint-Jean-Longueuil
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops



Knocking down walls to build bridges

Faced with a world disfigured by violence, hatred, and fear we sometimes see peace as an inaccessible ideal. Yet peace is omnipresent, huddled deep in the heart of each and every one of us. Even when it seems forever lost, trampled, ignored, or destroyed, peace resists. Peace is a fighter, a survivor, a force that propels the whole of humanity towards its light. Let us release the light of peace so that it may shine in all its glory.

First of all, peace requires introspection. We must first venture to the deepest parts of ourselves in order to pacify our hearts, open our minds, measure the scope of our words, and establish a sincere and genuine dialogue with "the other." In this Lenten season, Development and Peace – Caritas Canada offers you the opportunity to become an ambassador for dialogue in order to promote and create a culture of peace, tolerance, respect, and dignity.

Peace and dialogue are firmly rooted in the very foundations of our organization, which is committed to carrying out inclusive and non-violent strategies to promote peace. For 50 years, whether as part of our community development or humanitarian aid projects, Development and Peace has supported and continues to support local initiatives that promote dialogue, openness, and knowledge of the other.

In the Global South, alongside our partners, we endeavour to promote opportunities for dialogue that provide divided communities with a safe space where they can meet, listen to each other, express themselves, and find equitable and lasting solutions to the challenges and conflicts that affect them. Together, we value diversity and make it a priority to promote peaceful coexistence between individuals and communities. We take action to change social, economic, and political structures that are based on an ideology of exclusion and a rejection of diversity. We are motivated by a desire to knock down walls and build bridges in their place. It is with pride that we invite you to discover, over the following pages, the extraordinary work that communities in the Global South are able to accomplish, thanks to your solidarity and support.

Let us continue to work together so that peace, human dignity, and social justice can triumph.

Thanks to you, Development and Peace partners are building a world of peace and justice.

This Lent, please give generously.

Dialogue

The word dialogue comes from the Greek word dialogos, which is composed of two elements, "dia" which means "through" and "logos" which means "words" or "speech." We could therefore translate it literally as "through words." Fadi Daou, president of the Adyan Foundation, a Development and Peace partner in Lebanon, explains that:

"Dialogue is first and foremost a way of liberating ourselves from fear of the other and mistrust, of purifying memories and overcoming prejudices, of fraternal solidarity, and – why not – of spiritual communion."

When a dialogue is established between two persons or groups of individuals, the primary goal is to communicate and not to debate, argue, or hold forth. Engaging in dialogue means being ready to accept the coexistence of two valid opposing truths. It means having the courage to meet the other halfway and to put yourself in their shoes. It means recognizing that the other is similar to us and is our sister or brother, and not an instrument to serve our purposes. It also means having the humility to recognize our ignorance in the face of the reality of the other, being ready to venture outside of our comfort zone, having our most deeply held convictions and beliefs confronted, and questioning ourselves.

Dialogue means fostering, through words, a relationship based on respect, tolerance, and openness while recognizing that we are all interdependent, that we need each other, and that through dialogue, we work for the common good. It means entering into communion with the other, reaching out, and forging a new path, a path of justice and peace, together.

Is it easy? Absolutely not. Dialogue may resurrect wounds, prejudices and fears. Yet, each person who engages in sincere dialogue grows from the experience. Strengthened by this rewarding experience, each person can then use her/his voice to be an artisan of peace.

In Colombia, women participate in a peacebuilding workshop given by our partner the National Agrarian Coordination.





LEBANON

Building cultural and religious tolerance in the Middle East

"At Adyan, we promote spiritual solidarity, which is not only being in political or social solidarity with another, but also means integrating the other into my thoughts and my prayers. I must integrate the suffering of others, and understand it. I must integrate the other into my religious thoughts and into the way I explain my faith."

— **Dr. Nayla Tabbara,** Director, Institute of Citizenship and Diversity Management at Adyan.



The word "adyan" means religions in Arabic, so it is a fitting name for this Lebanese foundation that is contributing to peace in the Middle East by building cultural and religious tolerance, particularly amongst youth and students.

"We need to unlearn negative approaches to diversity such as stereotypes and prejudice so that we can fully appreciate one another and build a country where diversity is valued. Adyan offers a safe space where youth can express their religious and philosophical beliefs without the fear of being labeled or criticized," says Dr. Tabbara.

In a region rife with religious, ethnic and political tensions, and wounded from past and current wars, the work of Adyan is primordial. With support from Development and Peace, Adyan runs a wide range of programs that include conferences, trainings for educators, building networks of interfaith leaders and workshops on peace, reconciliation and coexistence. They also launch clubs in secondary schools that encourage inclusive and active citizenship.

For Adyan, Lent presents a perfect moment to experience spiritual solidarity and to encounter the other.

"Our volunteers have a day of fasting together, Christians and Muslims. They do the same thing during Ramadan. It's a moment that brings us closer together as a human family. What is beautiful, is that in our religious texts, whether Christian or Muslim, it is God who wants us as 'one' yet diverse. All acts that allow us to move in that direction are part of the spiritual experience of Lent," says Dr. Tabbara.



Rasha Elkhateeb

Rasha Elkhateeb is a counselor from Cairo, Egypt, who recently did a training on diversity with Adyan. "We learned how to use communication to build trust between individuals and communities," she explains, adding that in a pluralistic society like Egypt, mistrust between groups can become entrenched if there are no efforts for mutual understanding.

"Dialogue is a way to build ties and trust between myself and another, and to better understand and accept one another. I am responsible for sharing my ideas and receiving the ideas of others. The link between dialogue and peace is essential," she says.

Adyan in numbers

13
senior trainers responsible for developing and providing "train the trainer" peacebuilding workshops.

65
community educators trained in interfaith networking, peacebuilding, reconciliation and coexistence.

587
people from six different countries have participated in local trainings.



Defending the rights of communities shattered by forced evictions

NIGERIA

"Dialogue is the best way to achieve understanding, which paves the way to peace. There can be no peace without understanding. There can be no understanding without dialogue. Problems arise when you are told what to do without your opinion being taken into account. This is how the government treats us. But SERAC has taught us how to resist this kind of situation. In my community, dialogue helps us solve problems and keep the peace."

— **Benjamin Ayooluwa Ogunyemi,** 70, President of the Lagos Marginalized Communities Forum (LAMCOFOR), which is supported by SERAC.



Each year in Nigeria, which is the most populated country in Africa with 186 million inhabitants, the government expropriates thousands of poor and marginalized people from their homes. The Social and Economic Rights Action Centre (SERAC), a long-time Development and Peace partner, works with the victims of these forced evictions to help them peacefully resist this violation of their rights through dialogue.

In Lagos State, forced evictions are commonplace. SERAC is currently implementing a civic education and citizen engagement project where community leaders are trained in popular education methods so they can provide threatened communities with the knowledge and tools they need to engage in effective dialogue with the government.

In Lagos, violent forced evictions are carried out without consulting communities and without sufficient notice, compensation or relocation, to clear the way for real estate development, infrastructure projects, or city beautification plans.

Peacebuilders stand up against forced evictions

Benjamin's family was forcibly evicted in 2008. Despite holding the title deed, his house was demolished without notice to make way for an upscale residential project called Eko Atlantic City sanctioned by the government. Following the demolition and thanks to the training he received from SERAC, Benjamin became a community leader who can educate other families so that they can defend themselves in cases of forced eviction.



Benjamin Ayooluwa Ogunyemi

"Training provides us with the language of law and democratic principles that allow us to engage with the government and challenge decisions that are contrary to our interests. But most importantly, when we organize and speak with one voice, the government recognizes the power of our communities," says Benjamin Ayooluwa Ogunyemi.

In 2017, in Lagos State

30,000
people were forcibly evicted.

11
people were killed in violent evictions.

17
people went missing due to evictions.

300,000
people live daily under the threat of forced eviction.

Source: Amnesty International



A school for community leaders

"In Peru, many social conflicts stem from a lack of dialogue between citizens and the state. This has often caused deaths, which in turn reinforces mistrust of the country's representatives. Through dialogue, citizens formulate their demands and opinions on the use of the resources and services provided by the state. The Hugo Echegaray School teaches us to value and promote spaces for dialogue and listening."

— **Lidia Rojas,** IBC Project Coordinator

PERU



Created in 1974 by the philosopher, theologian, and father of liberation theology, Gustavo Gutiérrez, the Bartolomé de Las Casas Institute (IBC) is renowned for its training of Christian activists and for placing poor people at the centre of all human liberation and development projects. Its Hugo Echegaray Leadership School seeks to increase the participation of leaders in social and religious spaces and to promote initiatives that contribute to the common good.

It offers a two-year course aimed at community leaders in order to strengthen their capacity to create dialogue, consensus, participation, and consultation. It focuses on popular education, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue, as well as the exchange of knowledge and the sharing of local experiences. Graduates can then practice thoughtful, ethical, and responsible civic leadership in their communities.

True community leader who are peacemakers

A number of graduates of the Hugo Echegaray School have become elected officials, putting into practice the leadership skills they acquired and helping to build a more just and democratic environment in their regions.

"I see dialogue as a process for strengthening organizations. Dialogue generates consensus and trust. Sincere and transparent dialogue is necessary to achieve true reconciliation. It brings us together and fosters community life," says Edy Ramos Ludeña, a graduate of the Hugo Echegaray School, as well as a social communicator and graphic journalist for the newspaper *El Peruano*.

Other benefits of the leadership school:

- Inclusion and empowerment of marginalized communities, including women and Indigenous peoples.
- Defense of human rights and the environment in the face of extractive industries.
- Revitalization of social organizations and church networks through the efforts of activist leaders in various regions.

The Hugo Echegaray School in numbers

80
leaders trained each year.

15,000
people indirectly benefit from the school by learning from its graduates.

"I want the voiceless to have a voice. They will not change history on their own, but watching them changes everything."

— **Gustavo Gutiérrez**



Supporting Indigenous Communities

CAMBODIA

"I wish to see Indigenous communities have land and forest security, the conservation of their identities, as well as inclusive development, poverty reduction and access to education for the younger generations. I would like to deeply thank Development and Peace for supporting our communities in achieving this.

— **Thuong Kusal**, ICSO Project Field Officer and member of the Tumpuon Indigenous community.



In Cambodia, Development and Peace supports the Indigenous Community Support Organization (ICSO), which works with the country's minority Indigenous communities.

Discrimination against Indigenous communities is prevalent, and often there is no legal recognition of their collective land rights. This has led to widespread land grabbing and forced displacements caused by plantations, large-scale mining, dams, and other projects that are implemented without proper social and environmental impact assessments. This systematic violation of the rights of Indigenous peoples is affecting their economic, social, and cultural rights.

Through ICSO's land title program for communal land, which is supported by Development and Peace, Indigenous communities learn how to have their rights recognized by the government, defend their land from corporate interests, and develop economic activities that allow them to live in dignity.

Sao Vansey, Executive Director of ICSO, shares with us how Canadian solidarity is making a difference in the lives of Cambodia's Indigenous communities.

What is the impact of ICSO's work?

"ICSO's work of empowerment is enabling Indigenous peoples to influence change through their own voices and growing power.

I have seen how Indigenous communities continue to not only survive but to create a better life for themselves through willpower, hard work and dedication. They are becoming more aware of the world, its systems, how to negotiate and tackle political setbacks, and how to assert their rights in a peaceful way. They remain determined to better their societies according to what is right for their culture."



Sao Vansey

What role does dialogue play in peacebuilding?

"I have witnessed how effective open dialogue can truly be. It provides Indigenous peoples with the voice they need to express their concerns and to defend their rights when corporations occupy their land. It provides a platform for negotiation and most importantly it allows for cooperation and discussion of the issues in a peaceful manner."

About Cambodia's Indigenous Peoples

17
the number of identified Indigenous peoples in Cambodia.

2/3
live in the northeast provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri.

2001
the year the Cambodian Land Act granted collective land ownership rights to Indigenous communities.

Committed to peace in Canada

The work of Development and Peace's partners for greater justice and peace would be impossible without the support of our members from across the country. We're delighted to introduce you to some of our highly committed community peacemakers.

Elizabeth Garcia Carrillo

Lawyer, Colombian refugee
Resident of Quebec City, Quebec
Member since 2013



When you're a refugee, you've had to flee to save all you have left: your life and the lives of those you love.

I arrived in Canada in 2009 with my whole family. As the days went by, I felt more and more like the living dead. I could not sleep peacefully, thinking that I had acted in a cowardly manner by abandoning all those I cared about most in Colombia: women's organizations, Afro-descendants, peasants and, of course, my people, the residents of Arhuaco of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

I learned of Development and Peace while in Colombia through its support to social movements. I felt the organization's guiding hand in many of our struggles, but I never wondered where the money that allowed for this support came from. Why did these people decide to walk with us?

When I joined the Development and Peace group in Quebec City, my life changed. My future was clearer. I told myself that by the will of God, I was called upon to be a bridge that connects hearts in the North and South.

I'm also a lawyer. For me, the law is a way of making people and communities with divergent points of view on the same reality and who cannot understand each other come together. In my community, I act as a mediator, helping newcomers become familiar with the Canadian system. We want to integrate into Quebec society, to promote coexistence and prevent prejudices from gaining ground in our lives.

Now as President of the Diocesan Council of Quebec City, I have an opportunity to speak about my reality and that of my people, and I can say to members of Development and Peace that while sharing money is important, sharing solidarity saves lives. In fact, I feel that Development and Peace saved my life!

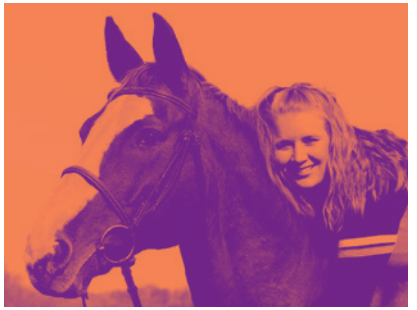
Michel Lacroix

Priest, episcopal vicar and pastoral facilitator
Resident of Gatineau, Quebec
Member since 1967

In 1967, the connection between Christianity and the struggle against poverty being put forward by Development and Peace motivated me to get involved. My commitment led me to serve as animator for Western Quebec for 21 years. Since then, I have been involved in the Outaouais collective for Islamo-Christian dialogue. With the imam of the region, we have developed a program helping Catholic and Sunni communities to get to know each other better.

At the outset, only a few people gathered, but then we organized thematic evening meetings, prayer sessions, and marches against intolerance. Faced with the Syrian tragedy, the collective decided to sponsor two Syrian families, one Christian and the other Muslim. These 50 years of involvement have taught me that any social struggle for justice is incomplete if we do not plant the seeds of love within it.





Desiree Nelson

Master's student and employee of St. Philip Neri Parish
Lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Member since 2006

I was introduced to Development and Peace at St. Thomas More College. I was interested in helping others, especially those on the margins, and through the STM Just Youth group I learned that there were others with the same heart, a heart for social justice.

I loved that Development and Peace was working for long-term and sustainable practices, while not neglecting immediate needs or emergency relief. It was vital to me that Development and Peace work at a grassroots level, and it convinced me to become a monthly donor. I started by giving $5 a month, and each year since then, I have increased my donation by $1 per year. I am now donating $13 per month. The money is taken directly from my bank account and I don't even notice it, but they do! It makes a big difference for Development and Peace's partners in the Global South.

Are there peacemakers in your community? Send a photo and a short text to devp.org/insp-members explaining why a given peacemaker inspires you. We'll post it on our website.

THIS LENT, LET'S ACT TOGETHER FOR PEACE.

- → Donate online at devp.org/give and receive your tax receipt immediately.
- → Give to your Share Lent parish collection.
- → Give by phone: 1 888 234-8533.
- → Text the word PEACE to 45678 to donate $10.

Thank you for your generosity and your solidarity!



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Development and Peace – Caritas Canada
1425, René Lévesque Blvd. West, 3rd floor
Montreal (Quebec) H3G 1T7 CANADA
1 888 234-8533 | devp.org

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