

Share the Journey

MINI-MAGAZINE

Share Lent 2019

Development and Peace

CARITAS CANADA

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

It is in solidarity with the 68.5 million displaced children, women, and men throughout the world that we invite you to embark on a journey of faith, love, and hope. "Hope is the force that drives us to 'share the journey,' because the journey is made jointly: by those who come to our land, and by us, who go towards their heart, to understand them, to understand their culture, their language," stated Pope Francis during a general audience on September 27, 2017. He added that, "It is a joint journey by two parties; but without hope, that journey cannot be made. Hope is the drive to share the journey of life [...]."

Through this journey, rooted in the inherent dignity of each human person, Pope Francis invites us to meet the other and to see the humanity of each migrant. In following the teachings of the Beatitudes, we should recall the message given to us in the Letter to the Hebrews (13:1-3): "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves are being tortured."

On May 3rd, during a panel at the United Nations, Cardinal Tagle, the president of Caritas Internationalis, also reminded us that we are challenging our own faith, and this gives us the opportunity to prove, through the support we offer to those who come to us, that we recognize Jesus in each of them. The meeting with the other is a great journey that starts inside of us and enables us to connect with our profound humanity, to undo stereotypes, and to combat prejudice, fear of the other, racism and xenophobia.



It is therefore in the name of Jesus Christ that I ask you to accept this invitation from the Church and to share the journey with Development and Peace – Caritas Canada, the official international solidarity organization of the Church in Canada. Do not hesitate to take part in the *Share the Journey* campaign by spreading the word in your community, actively participating in the actions proposed to you, raising funds for Development and Peace and supporting efforts made by your community to welcome migrants and refugees.

May the Lord bless your generosity and faithfulness.

Fraternally in Our Lord,

† **Lionel Gendron, P.S.S.**

Bishop of Saint-Jean-Longueuil
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops



This Lent, let's share the culture of encounter

Lent is a sacred period, a time of preparation, introspection, and transformation that offers us the opportunity to deepen and enrich our faith. It is also a privileged moment of encounter: with ourselves, our loved ones, our neighbours, our community, and with God.

At a time when division seems to be at the forefront, when fear blinds minds and the culture of indifference stifles hearts, let's take advantage of this moment of encounter to share the journey with the 68.5 million children, women, and men who are displaced around the world.

It can sometimes be difficult to grasp the extent of the impact that forced migration has on the lives of those who face it. However, the simple fact of being interested in what our sisters and brothers are experiencing is already a step toward the other, a first step on the way to a true encounter.

"Faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others."

– Pope Francis, May 18, 2013.

In the following pages, we invite you to meet women and men like Qawthar who had to flee the war in Syria, Kelly who was forcibly displaced due to the armed conflict in Colombia, and many others whom we support through our partners. Each, in their own way, inspires us to be proud ambassadors of a culture of encounter. A culture that requires from each and every one of us a deep and true commitment to reach out to others, to stop and behold them, to listen to them, and to give a little of ourselves. Here we share their stories, struggles, and dreams. Listen to what they have to say and open your heart to them.

This Lent, we are all called to be fellow travellers with our sisters and brothers who have had to flee their homes. Let's be united in the hope of a better world, one where all can live in peace and security. Let's be the force that transforms words of hatred and fear into messages of love and compassion. Let's be the voice that rallies hearts onto the path of solidarity and hope.



Building resilience against climate change



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The documentary *After the Storm* is the inspiring journey of poor coastal communities in the Philippines who transformed a piece of land into new homes, a new community, and new lives.

Climate change is one of the main drivers of forced migration in the world today. According to some estimates, water scarcity, crop failure and rising sea levels could cause up to 143 million people to be displaced by 2050.

Poor coastal communities in the city of Tacloban in the Philippines already know this oncoming reality all too well. In 2013, they experienced the wrath of Super Typhoon Haiyan, whose 300 km/hr winds created a storm surge that swept away entire communities. In total, 4 million people were displaced by the storm.

While some migrated to different regions, others were forced into tents or put together makeshift shelters with scrap materials. Communities were also confronted with new government regulations forbidding them to rebuild along the coast, where they make their living fishing. Stripped of their homes and their livelihoods, survivors of the typhoon held bleak hopes for the future.

Development and Peace and its local partners, Urban Poor Associates (UPA), NASSA-Caritas Philippines, the Archdiocese of Palo and the Congregation of the Holy Redeemer, were determined to break the cycle of poverty that made communities vulnerable in the first place. They formed a consortium and purchased a piece of land for the construction of a permanent resettlement site that would involve the full participation of communities in transforming the land into a new village.

The film *After the Storm: Building the Pope Francis Village* follows the inspirational journey of these communities as they are empowered to build a future where they no longer must live under the threat of having to flee their homes.

Never again! Massacre victims take a stand against impunity

In 1990, a peaceful community in Nigeria was the victim of the first recognized crime committed by a company in the oil industry. Development and Peace partner Social Action is working with members of this community in their struggle to hold the company legally accountable and for their story to never be forgotten.

On October 30, 1990, members of the community of Umuechem, located in the Niger Delta, organized a peaceful march in an effort to claim their share of profits generated by more than 30 years of oil exploitation on their lands. Community members were disillusioned with the unfulfilled promises of Shell Nigeria. Faced with poverty and the pollution of their territory, young people, women and men decided to call for justice. They had already tried, unsuccessfully, to establish a dialogue with the oil company.


Amechi Raymond

In response to the community's march, Shell Nigeria contacted police authorities and falsely reported that their oil facilities were being attacked. Members of an elite police combat unit were quickly sent to the site. More than 300 people were killed and 495 homes burnt down. The survivors faced unparalleled devastation.

"It's rather unfortunate that the police got involved. We weren't asking for much, just roads, electricity, and water," says Amechi Raymond, president of the Umuechem Council of Elders. "We elders had the opportunity to go to school, but our children are not educated due to a lack of resources because we've been impoverished."

Traumatized by the massacre, almost all the survivors fled to neighbouring communities and have never returned home. A judicial commission of inquiry was set up in response to the outcry that followed the Umuechem massacre, but to no avail. To date, no compensation has been offered to survivors; none of the perpetrators of the murders have been brought to justice; and Shell Nigeria continues its extractive activities on community lands.

Social Action: standing shoulder to shoulder with marginalized communities

In 2014, members of the community of Umuechem contacted Development and Peace's partner Social Action, which is known for its work with Nigerian communities affected by oil exploitation. More than 20 years after the massacre, the community was ready to take the oil company in question to court to demand compensation.

To end the impunity that Shell Nigeria has been enjoying, the community is taking the company to court in the Netherlands, where their headquarters is located. Social Action is working with human rights lawyers to assemble the necessary evidence to file the petition in court in 2019. The community is hoping that their story will never be forgotten.

Traumatized, almost all the survivors fled to neighbouring communities and have never returned home.

Social Action at a glance

Established in:
2007

Development and Peace partner since:
2014

Mission:
To build solidarity with community groups and other segments of civil society towards promoting social change through education, advocacy and direct participation.

People directly impacted in 2018-2019 with the support of Development and Peace:
1,500


Some of the survivors of the Umuechem massacre.

After persecution comes protection

Faced with persecution and violence, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have had no choice but to flee Burma, also known as Myanmar. Across the border, in neighbouring Bangladesh, our partner Caritas Bangladesh is working to preserve the dignity of these people who just want to live in peace.

Since August 25, 2017, more than 863,561 children, women, and men belonging to the Rohingya Muslim minority have fled Burma to escape violence and persecution perpetrated by the Burmese army. Most have found refuge in camps located in the region of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

"It took us four to five days to get here from Burma," says Shominara, an 11-year-old Rohingya refugee. "We brought some snacks with us for the road, and that's what we ate for several days. At night, we hid in the forest. We drank a bit of water when we were thirsty if we found some in the forest. We suffered a lot to get here."

This massive influx of refugees has resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The urgency of their flight and the sheer scale of their displacement have increased the vulnerability of thousands of Rohingya who must now cope with the difficult living conditions and daily stresses of refugee life.

To date, the situation in Burma remains alarming. The conditions which would allow a safe and dignified return of Rohingya refugees to Burma are still far from being met. In this context, ensuring their needs over the long term is a priority.



Shominara, 11, has been living for more than a year in the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh.



The Kutupalong camp is the largest refugee camp in the world.

Caritas Bangladesh: going beyond the emergency

As soon as the refugee crisis began, our partner Caritas Bangladesh responded immediately by building emergency shelters, clean water stations, safe latrines and showers for women and girls, as well as distributing hygiene kits and educating refugees on remaining safe in the camps.

The conviction that refugees are more than just victims is at the heart of the humanitarian work accomplished by Caritas Bangladesh. Refugees are full participants in the organization's activities and programs. This approach ensures that emergency relief provided on the ground meets the most pressing needs, while also addressing long-term challenges, such as the poverty and inequality that make refugees vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Caritas Bangladesh at a glance

Established in:
1967

Development and Peace partner since:
2000 (in support of the Rohingya since 2017)

Mission:
Caritas Bangladesh works in partnership with the poorest and most marginalized populations to achieve integral development and human dignity for all.

People impacted in 2017-2018 with the support of Development and Peace and Global Affairs Canada:
100,000

Building a culture of peace after 50 years of armed conflict

Colombia is still recovering from half a century of armed conflict that claimed more than 260,000 lives. With the support of Development and Peace partner the National Agrarian Coordination (NAC), women are reclaiming their rights, their land and their dignity.

After more than 50 years of armed conflict involving government forces, guerrillas, paramilitary groups and organized crime networks, Colombia signed a peace agreement in 2016. It looked like better days were ahead. But decades of instability and violence have left deep scars on this nation. Colombia today has more than 7.7 million internally displaced persons, one of the highest numbers in the world, and the implementation of the peace agreement is on shaky ground as the new government of Yvan Duque plans to review it.

Peasant, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have been especially affected by the years of conflict. Violence, assassinations, disappearances, forced displacements and land grabbing have had an impact on these groups.

"On the day I was born, my family had to flee because of clashes between the [guerilla group] FARC and the army," says Kelly Bolano Soto, an internally displaced person. "Three years later, the conflict calmed down and we were able to return to our land. When I was five years old, we had to flee again. Believing that we were hiding guerrillas, the army gave us 12 hours to leave our homes, after which it would set the village on fire. Five hours later, they started to burn down our houses."

Women have suffered many kinds of violence at the hands of armed groups and from members of their own communities. This violence has long been hidden or ignored. The lack of women's economic, social and political rights is reflected in the marginalization of women when it comes to participating in the political and economic life of the country.



Kelly Bolano Soto and her daughter

NAC: standing with peasant, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women

Convinced that women's participation is key to building lasting peace in Colombia, Development and Peace partner NAC has developed training programs as well as discussion and learning spaces for rural women.

In 2014, the Inter-ethnic Political Training School for peasant, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women was established. There, women can learn the necessary skills to engage in credible dialogue with government authorities. By introducing women to the methods they need to reclaim their rights, their territory and their dignity, NAC is fostering an inclusive, participatory and democratic society.

Peasant, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have been especially affected by years of conflict.





NAC at a glance

Established in:
1997

Development and Peace partner since:
2014

Mission:
NAC aims for integral human development — building a world where every human being can live fully and freely. NAC projects promote a life of dignity, citizen involvement and natural resource conservation.

People directly impacted in 2018-2019 with the support of Development and Peace:
600 women

Striving for peace after fleeing war

Since the start of the civil war in Syria in 2011, 12.5 million Syrians have been forced to flee. Our partner House of Peace (HOPe) works with refugees and host communities in neighbouring Lebanon, building bridges of peace between them.

"When I fled Syria, it was very difficult. I arrived in Lebanon as a refugee, and it was even harder to be perceived as an immigrant asking for aid," says Qawthar, a Syrian refugee in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Qawthar's experience is like that of many refugees who after having endured war, hunger and poverty in their homeland, find the courage to leave, but then face new struggles in their host country. In fact, 85% of the world's refugees are being hosted by the poorest countries on the planet, and the arrival of refugees can create tensions over the sharing of already scarce resources.

This is particularly true in Lebanon, which is currently hosting 1.5 million Syrian refugees, almost one third of the Lebanese population. The country, which is still healing from a divisive civil war that ended in 1990, faces its own challenges, such as a fragile democracy, a high unemployment rate amongst youth and strained public services.



Qawthar (right) and her mother.

HOPe: building bridges between communities

Thankfully, Qawthar discovered HOPe, a Development and Peace partner that is fostering social peace between diverse communities. HOPe organizes 3-day workshops that bring participants on a journey, where by the end they are equipped with tools to manage conflict and have gained new perspectives on peace.

"When I first arrived, I was just a refugee, I felt weak. But then I took part in workshops and I gained knowledge and skills. My perception changed, and I discovered that nothing is impossible," says Qawthar, who adds, "I want to have a positive impact on society and not just be labelled as a Syrian refugee."

Once individuals have gone through the social peace workshop with HOPe, they are invited to develop an initiative that will promote peace and social cohesion. This can range from building a community space in a refugee camp to baking bread and distributing it to neighbours to give thanks for their hospitality.

Of course, HOPe wishes that participants will continue to spread peace wherever they may go so that in the future, no one is forced to flee their home due to conflict.



In some parts of the Middle East, the tradition of serving bread and salt is a way to create an alliance between two people. One group of Syrian refugees decided to share this tradition with their Lebanese neighbours after participating in a House of Peace workshop. The women rose at 5 a.m. to bake bread and then went door-to-door to give this gift of gratitude to their host community. "This is a truly beautiful initiative. It brings people closer together," says Hamda. "Is there anything more beautiful than peace? Peace brings people together, it erases differences, it's love between people."



HOPe at a glance

Established in:
2015

Development and Peace partner since:
2015

Mission:
inspiring local communities and humanitarian workers to take action towards positive change that fosters social peace.

People directly impacted in 2018-2019 with the support of Development and Peace:
1,300

Your donation's journey

Our work would not be possible without the invaluable support of donors like you to vulnerable communities in the Global South. Each year, more than 30,000 donors contribute towards building a world of peace and justice. Thank you!

In the Global South

In 2017-2018, Development and Peace invested $28.7 million in projects in the Global South. This represents:

162
active community development and humanitarian projects

37
countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East

19 million
people directly impacted by our projects.

In Canada

Development and Peace has over 10,000 members across the country who take part in our education, action and fundraising campaigns. This year, thousands are sharing the journey with forced migrants by signing action cards, taking part in solidarity walks and raising funds.

Since the launch of *Share the Journey* in September 2018, more than 1,000 people have participated in walks all over Canada and there are more to come. Our goal: walk 40,075 km, the equivalent of the Earth's circumference!

Thank you for your commitment and solidarity!

The journey of your dollar



79%
- International programs

11%
- In-Canada programs

6%
- Governance and operations

4%
- Fixed costs and new initiatives

Your impact

The donations you make during Share Lent are not only used to fund Development and Peace's community development projects and programs, but also to leverage financing from other funders, such as Global Affairs Canada. Thanks to you, we support partners in the Global South who promote alternatives to unfair social, political and economic structures.

For example, a donation of:

$25
allows Social Action in Nigeria to train one person, providing them with skills to actively engage in managing local natural resources, protecting the environment, defending human rights and other advocacy activities.

Your donation promotes citizen participation.

$40
allows the NAC in Colombia to give a peasant, Afro-Colombian or Indigenous woman the tools needed to practice traditional agricultural techniques, such as the cultivation of heritage seeds, and gain a source of income.

Your donation allows women to reclaim their rights and dignity.

$100
allows one person to attend two House of Peace workshops on peacebuilding in Lebanon.

Your gift helps to build peace.

$400
allows Caritas Bangladesh to build a shelter for a Rohingya family living in the Kutupalong refugee camp.

Your donation allows refugees to live in dignity.

$1,300
allows Urban Poor Associates in the Philippines to train one of the 44 leaders of the Pope Francis Village Homeowners' Association. These leaders are elected by the 550 families of the village to coordinate the life of the village and ensure its sustainability.

Your donation reinforces the participation and resilience of vulnerable communities.




Your donation transforms lives.
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