



An invitation to *Create Hope*
Message from Bishop Raymond Poisson, CCCB President

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In October 2022, [Development and Peace – Caritas Canada](#), the official international solidarity organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, celebrated 55 years of solidarity. It has therefore been 55 years since we, the Catholic Bishops of Canada, founded this visionary organization that aspires to build a better world. For fifty-five years, human dignity and social justice have been at the heart of its projects and programs. For 55 years, this social movement, supported by the Catholic community in Canada, has been working for justice and peace, inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, especially the preferential option for the poor.

We are proud of the struggles for social change that the organization has supported over the years and look forward to continuing our commitment in the years to come.

Development and Peace transforms lives by appealing to consciences here in Canada about the root causes of poverty and ensuring that its partners and the communities they serve in the Global South can take charge of their own development.

At the heart of Development and Peace's transformative work are the education, action and fundraising campaigns that bring thousands of Canadian Catholics together every year. This year, Development and Peace is launching a five-year theme: ***Create Hope***. Inspired by the message of Pope Francis, we are called to be "social poets" and, side by side with our brothers and sisters in the Global South, to create hope.

"You are social poets, because you have the ability and the courage to create hope where there appears to be only waste and exclusion. (...) With your hands you know how to shape the dignity of each person, of families and of society as a whole, with land, housing, work, care, and community." — Pope Francis, 4th World Meeting of Popular Movements, October 16, 2021

In this first year, to ***Create Hope***, we are called upon to *Stand for the Land*. Why? Because around the world, many communities desperately want to protect their land, a source of life and hope. Let's show our solidarity with those who defend the lands, waters and forests that sustain them, as well as the culture, history and identity that define them. Let's *Stand for the Land* with them to secure their future in the face of threats such as agribusiness, mining, climate change and conflict.

How can we stand in solidarity with them?

1. **By giving generously to Share Lent** (on Solidarity Sunday, March 26, 2023, the 5th Sunday of Lent), in solidarity with communities in the Global South who are defending life and their land to ensure a future of justice, rights, dignity, respect, peace and harmony for their families.
2. **By learning about why it is important to *Stand for the Land* and joining the action in the fall**, to ensure that the voices of the poorest and most marginalized people in the Global South are heard and steps are taken to create change.

Therefore, I invite you to ***Create Hope*** by supporting Development and Peace's *Stand for the Land* campaign. Give generously, get involved in your community, be the hands and feet of Christ in the world: "[...] let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth (1 John 3:18)."

Fraternally in our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Raymond Poisson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+ Raymond Poisson
Bishop of Saint-Jérôme-Mont-Laurier
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops