



Way of the Cross of Development and Peace – Caritas Canada
A path of solidarity and humanity
A path of love and sharing

Development and Peace – Caritas Canada would like to express its gratitude to those who collaborated on the preparation of this Way of the Cross.

The Way of the Cross offers us the opportunity to enter into the mystery of God's Love as it is manifested in his Son Jesus. It allows us to accompany Jesus on his journey towards his death on the cross, the Paschal Mystery that brought the salvation of humanity. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to walk alongside our sisters and brothers near and far who carry heavy crosses on their shoulders. May this Way of the Cross make us signs of hope in the world and encourage us to walk on the path of solidarity, fraternity and social friendship, as Pope Francis invites us to do in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (All brothers and sisters).

1st Station

Jesus is condemned to Death

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Pilate [...] took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' (Matthew 27:24)

Meditation

Religious and civil leaders in Jesus' time had him sentenced to death in the name of special interests. Today, in the name of financial interests, some political and economic leaders put at risk the lives of the most vulnerable by refusing to forgive the foreign debt of the poorest countries. Creditor countries thus condemn the poorest to sink even further into extreme poverty. External debt relief would give impoverished countries the financial resources to put in place social safety nets, which currently can only be accessed by one person in five in low-income countries. Didn't God intend the Earth and its resources to be distributed equally between all peoples?

Quote

Nor should we forget that "inequity affects not only individuals but entire countries; it compels us to consider an ethics of international relations" [...] This means finding a way to ensure "the fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress", a right which is at times severely restricted by the pressure created by foreign debt. In many instances, debt repayment not only fails to promote development but gravely limits and conditions it. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 126)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, give us the courage to participate in actions in favour of alleviating the burden of the external debts of the poorest countries, a measure which represents a true necessity for these countries.

2nd Station

Jesus carries his Cross

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

And carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. (John 19:17)

Meditation

Jesus, who is Life itself, begins his walk, forced to carry his cross on the road that leads to the place of his crucifixion. Migrants who are forced to flee their country begin their journey by having to abandon their homes, communities and possessions. On their way, there will be no lack of obstacles, whether thirst, hunger, adverse weather conditions, or the risk of assault. They must often transit through a refugee camp, an obligatory stop filled with difficult conditions and challenges.

Quote

Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarized by four words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. For "it is not a case of implementing welfare programmes from the top down, but rather of undertaking a journey together, through these four actions, in order to build cities and countries that, while preserving their respective cultural and religious identity, are open to differences and know how to promote them in the spirit of human fraternity." (Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 129)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, grant us the generosity to accompany those migrants forced to flee their country on their journey into exile and grant our leaders the compassion to ensure their journey is safe. Teach us to welcome migrants warmly so that they may find in our communities a haven of peace in which they can integrate and flourish.

3rd Station

Jesus falls for the First Time

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4)

Meditation

Jesus falls for the first time on his way to Calvary. Out of love for humanity, he forces himself to rise and resume his walk. Many people today participate in the mission of Jesus by launching initiatives to build social bonds on a global scale that promote an inclusive and supportive way of living that benefits all. How can we be in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who contribute to the common good?

Quote

When the dignity of the human person is respected, and his or her rights recognized and guaranteed, creativity and interdependence thrive, and the creativity of the human personality is released through actions that further the common good (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 22).

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, sustain us in our thirst for solidarity and our efforts to build a just world. Give us the needed determination in our search for the common good.

4th Station

Jesus meets his Blessed Mother

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

'This child is destined [...] to be a sign that will be opposed ... and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' (Luke 2:34-35)

Meditation

Mary and Jesus understand each other when their eyes meet. In her heart, as a mother who shares in the sufferings of her son, Mary knows that Jesus will die on the cross to redeem humanity and that God the Father is watching over him. Around the world, women are at the forefront of creating change. They work tirelessly to prevent their children from suffering and to ensure a better future for them. During the current pandemic, women are at increased risk of

domestic violence and have been made more vulnerable because of their role as primary caregivers.

Quote

Similarly, the organization of societies worldwide is still far from reflecting clearly that women possess the same dignity and human rights as men. We say one thing with words, but our decisions and reality tell another story. Indeed, “doubly poor are those women who endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment and violence, since they are frequently less able to defend their rights”. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 33)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Mary, Mother of Jesus, teach us to recognize and value the work of women who care for their families and communities. Support us in our efforts to promote the dignity and rights of women, while recognizing their essential role in the development of societies.

5th Station

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his Cross

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. (Luke 23:26)

Meditation

With the help of Simon of Cyrene, Jesus was able to continue his journey to accomplish his mission. The gesture of the Cyrenean reminds us that people we call "Good Samaritans" have supported us at moments in our lives when the cross was too heavy to carry on our own. From this reminder, let us draw strength so that we may lighten the weight of the cross carried by our sisters and brothers. Do we know how to recognize the "Simons of Cyrene" and the "Good Samaritans" who mark our path?

Quote

Let us look to the example of the Good Samaritan. Jesus’ parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond. [...] By his actions, the Good Samaritan showed that “the existence of each and every individual is deeply tied to that of others: life is not simply time that passes; life is a time for interactions”. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 66)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, make us attentive to our sisters and brothers in need. When we support them, it is with You that we help them carry their cross.

6th Station

Veronica wipes Jesus' face

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. (Matthew 27:55)

Meditation

Faced with the suffering of Jesus, Veronica cannot remain indifferent. With compassion and courage, she comes forward out of the anonymity of the crowd and defies the soldiers, so she can wipe the face of Jesus. Confronted with the many sad and heart-rending scenes broadcast by the media, we risk becoming insensitive and indifferent to the suffering of others. Do we know how to recognize the suffering Christ in the faces of those who suffer?

Quote

It is essential to draw near to new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ [...] I think of the homeless, the addicted, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned, and many others [...] How beautiful are those cities which overcome paralyzing mistrust, integrate those who are different and make this very integration a new factor of development! (Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 210)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, grant that we will not be indifferent and that we will show compassion when we meet a person who is suffering. May our solidarity be a source of comfort and hope for those who suffer.

7th Station

Jesus falls for the Second Time

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:40)

Meditation

When Jesus falls a second time under the weight of the cross, he rises courageously, drawing strength from the mission that compels him forward. This is true today of the courage of the poor and marginalized whose resilience is revealed when they demand greater equity, justice and social security from our political and economic leaders.

Quote

None of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice: "Spiritual conversion, the intensity of the love of God and neighbour, zeal for justice and peace, the Gospel meaning of the poor and of poverty, are required of everyone." (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 201)

PRAYER**Celebrant**

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, grant us grace to support our impoverished sisters and brothers in their struggles to improve their living conditions. Inspire us to offer them gestures of encouragement and support when they are needed so they can persevere and increase their efforts.

8th Station**Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem**

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.' (Luke 23:28)

Meditation

In the crowd following him, Jesus notices women crying. These women, who had heard him speak of loving your neighbour and had seen the good he brought to the world, were saddened by his plight. At the height of his suffering, Jesus looks upon these women with a kindly gaze. He invites them to be concerned about themselves, their loved ones and their future rather than just having pity on him. Through this gesture, Jesus teaches us not to remain closed in on ourselves when we suffer, but rather to contemplate the suffering of our sisters and brothers.

Quote

Yet every now and then, miraculously, a kind person appears and is willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to

listen amid general indifference. If we make a daily effort to do exactly this, we can create a healthy social atmosphere in which misunderstandings can be overcome and conflict forestalled.
(Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 224)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, teach us to take the side of those who suffer marginalization and social exclusion. Help us to console those who during the Covid-19 pandemic are afraid of the uncertainties of tomorrow. Keep in us the hope that after this difficult time, there will be serenity ahead.

9th Station

Jesus Falls for the Third Time

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. (1 Peter 2:21)

Meditation

Stricken with intense physical and spiritual pain, an exhausted Jesus finds in God his Father the strength to rise up and complete his mission. In a world where profit often prevails over human dignity, many of our sisters and brothers carry heavy crosses that are imposed on them. In many countries, the environment and biodiversity are being sacrificed on the altar of unbridled development for the sake of economic growth and short-term profit. As followers of Jesus, are we not called to put life before profit?

Quote

To care for the world in which we live means to care for ourselves. Yet we need to think of ourselves more and more as a single family dwelling in a common home. Such care does not interest those economic powers that demand quick profits. Often the voices raised in defence of the environment are silenced or ridiculed, using apparently reasonable arguments that are merely a screen for special interests. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 17)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, make our efforts in favour of integral human development to include life as well as respect for the environment and biodiversity. Help us build a world in which human dignity prevails over profit. Open our eyes so that we may see the world the way you do.

10th Station

Jesus is stripped of His Clothes

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. (Mark 15:24)

Meditation

Stripped of his clothes and disgraced, Jesus watches as the soldiers draw lots for his clothes. In several countries, in the name of major development projects, Indigenous communities are being stripped of their ancestral territories and traditional ways of life. Often unable to have their right to self-determination recognized and respected, Indigenous Peoples are unable to draw on their own social, cultural, spiritual, economic and political traditions. Today, Indigenous Peoples are still too often subject to prejudice, inequality and racism.

Quote

*In this sense, it is essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, land is not a commodity but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain their identity and values. When they remain on their land, they themselves care for it best. (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 146)*

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, open our hearts so we may learn from you how to love and respect Indigenous Peoples, so that in Canada and elsewhere we may live in harmony with them and the Earth, our Common Home.

11th Station

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Jesus cried out with a loud voice 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Mark 15:34)

Meditation

After several hours of agony on the cross and at the height of his pain, Jesus cries out to his Father to express his sense of abandonment and solitude. In many countries, men and women who defend human rights and are protectors of the Earth are criminalized. They are often imprisoned, tortured and sometimes even killed without a fair trial. Abandoned by fellow human beings, they are nailed to the cross of injustice. But neither God nor the followers of Jesus abandon those who thirst for justice.

Quote

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” [...] Injustice wounds humanity. Human society urgently needs fairness, truth and social justice. Let us remember that the evil suffered by women and men throughout the world reaches the heart of God the Father. What Father would not suffer over the suffering of his children? (Pope Francis, General Audience, March 20, 2020)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, inspire us to raise the voices of those unjustly condemned so their rights are respected. Support us in our efforts to bring an end to the injustices they face.

12th Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.’ Having said this, he breathed his last. (Luke 23:46)

(After proclaiming this verse, let us all kneel for a few moments)

Meditation

The death of Jesus shook many of his disciples who had seen in him the announced Messiah. What they perceive as a failure, God the Father will transform into victory. So it is with our efforts to change the world. Beyond our apparent failures, we are called to persevere in our commitment to build a world of peace, love and justice. Our gestures of solidarity make a difference.

Quote

*An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it. We love this magnificent planet on which God has put us, and we love the human family which dwells here, with all its tragedies and struggles, its hopes and aspirations, its strengths and weaknesses. The earth is our common home and all of us are brothers and sisters. (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 183)*

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, do not let us be paralyzed by feelings of powerlessness. Let us see the work of God the Father even when we stumble in building your kingdom of peace and justice.

13th Station

Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Joseph of Arimathea, [...] asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so, he came and removed his body. (John 19:38)

Meditation

We can imagine how Mary must have felt when she was given the lifeless body of her Son Jesus, who had made Mary mother of us all before dying on the cross. Even today, some mothers must still hold in their arms the lifeless body of their children, their deaths a cruel injustice. The tears they shed express the infinite tenderness that a mother feels for her child: the most beautiful, the sweetest, the strongest of all human feelings. Like Mary at the foot of the cross, these mothers who love their child with unconditional love look with hope to the afterlife. And what of our gaze on life beyond death?

Quote

At the foot of the cross, at the supreme hour of the new creation, Christ led us to Mary. He brought us to her because he did not want us to journey without a mother, and our people read in this maternal image all the mysteries of the Gospel. (Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 285)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Mary our Mother, you, whom your Son made the mother of his followers, nourish in us the bonds that unite us to Jesus. Transform the tears of tenderness of parents who mourn the death of a child into tears of hope for a new life beyond.

14th Station

Jesus is placed in the Tomb

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

So, Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. (Matthew 27:59-60)

Meditation

After seeing Jesus disgraced, his loved ones were able to give him a dignified burial according to Jewish custom. Every year, thousands of civilians lose their lives as a result of war or die anonymously while fleeing their homelands. Can we feel the suffering and pain of their loved ones who are unable to give them a dignified burial according to the rite of their customs?

Quote

Every war leaves our world worse than it was before. War is a failure of politics and of humanity, a shameful capitulation, a stinging defeat before the forces of evil [...] Let us look once more at all those civilians whose killing was considered "collateral damage". Let us ask the victims themselves. Let us think of the refugees [...] Let us hear the true stories of these victims of violence, look at reality through their eyes, and listen with an open heart to the stories they tell. In this way, we will be able to grasp the abyss of evil at the heart of war. Nor will it trouble us to be deemed naive for choosing peace. (Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 261)

PRAYER**Celebrant**

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, fill those who die without a dignified burial with your blessings. May your Father's house be a place of peace and happiness for them! Blessed are the members of their families who could not give them a burial according to the rite of their customs. Give us the courage to call on political leaders to end war and militarism.

15th Station**The Resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.**

Celebrant

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' (John 20:21-22)

Meditation

Jesus conquered death. Risen, he is alive in our midst. He is always with us and amongst us. We feel and experience his presence through the countless people and organizations committed to life for all, and in all that liberates and promotes respect for the dignity of women, children and men. We encounter the power of his love when the impoverished and marginalized are lifted up through solidarity and in the fraternity between peoples.

Quote

*To believe that Jesus shed his blood for us removes any doubt about the boundless love which ennobles each human being. Our redemption has a social dimension because “God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual person, but also the social relations existing between men”. To believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in everyone means realizing that he seeks to penetrate every human situation and all social bonds [...] The very mystery of the Trinity reminds us that we have been created in the image of that divine communion, and so we cannot achieve fulfilment or salvation purely by our own efforts. (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 178)*

PRAYER**Celebrant**

Let us pray in silence for a moment.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, infuse us with the Holy Spirit. Accompany us on the path of solidarity so that we may be signs of hope and peace in the world. May we, like you, be signs of hope and peace in the world for our sisters and brothers.

CONCLUSION AND GOING FORTH

Through this Way of the Cross, we have entered into the mystery of God’s Love as manifested in his Son Jesus. It has brought us on a path of solidarity and humanity, a path of love and sharing. We have drawn from the source of our faith. Just as Jesus sent his disciples on a mission, we are all sent to go forth and live out the meaning of solidarity, fraternity, love and sharing with our sisters and brothers.

*Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 8)*