



## **Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

123 Nelson Rd  
Saskatoon SK S7S 1H1  
www.rcdos.ca

Phone: 306-242-1500  
Fax: 306-244-6010  
Toll free: 877-661-5005



February 27, 2024

### **SHARE LENT 2024**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

The theme of this year's Share Lent campaign is *Reaping our Rights*. This inspires and challenges us to reflect on God's call to us all to live the way of *righteousness* by how we care for one another, and especially the poorest and most marginalized in our human communities.

The First Reading for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent is from the Prophet Jeremiah, who is calling on the Hebrew people to move from merely the spirit of the written law, to faithfulness to all that "Covenant relationship" means. The memory of the message of the Jeremiah and the other prophets reminds Israel of the call to freedom through the way of *righteousness*.

God's people come to understand that this freedom and new life is not from the random abundance and seeming blessing of this world. Nor does freedom come through our separation or indifference to the plight of our brothers and sisters in greatest need – as though we are blessed because we have avoided such misfortune. Righteousness is ultimately an interior reality that affects everything! *We are to have the mind and heart ...of God!!* We are to live and act with the same charity, generosity, mercy and compassion, and sense of justice.

The way to this new mind and heart is only possible through God's mercy, forgiveness, and healing. We proclaim in Psalm 51: "Create in me a clean heart, ...put a new and right spirit within me." Pope Francis' speaks much about the need for all humanity to have a conversion about *love of neighbour*. He links the love of neighbour with a *humility* that affects our awareness that we are related to all people and all creation. As he states in *Laudato Deum*:

*If the universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely... there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The world sings of an infinite Love: how can we fail to care for it? (#65) Let us stop thinking, then, of human beings as autonomous, omnipotent and limitless, and begin to think of ourselves differently, in a humbler but more fruitful way. (#68)*

In the letter to the Hebrews, Jesus Christ is held up as 'the Son' who learned obedience by what He suffered. As St. John says in the Gospel for Share Lent Sunday, "...unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain – but if it

dies, it bears much fruit.” The realizing of righteousness – a focus of Share Lent Sunday - means having the same mind and heart as Christ Jesus- which features the way of losing our life, so that we may find it ... for eternal life.

This Lent we can support the Share Lent 2024 appeal by holding in our hearts and prayers those persons both locally and around the world who are on the peripheries of our communities because of poverty, injustice, conflict and war, separation from their homelands, ill-health, and many other circumstances even more magnified because of the current state of our world. We also pray for an increase of a ‘caring heart’ for the brother and sister who is beyond our gaze and immediate concern.

Let us support the *Reaping our Rights* appeal by a renewed commitment to *have the same mind and heart as Christ Jesus* – who holds in His Sacred Heart all peoples of our world. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops again designates the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent as Solidarity Sunday when our annual Share Lent collection will be taken up. On Sunday, March 17, I ask you to please be generous in donating to Development and Peace / Caritas Canada.

Sincerely in Christ,



✠ Most Reverend Mark A. Hagemoen  
Bishop of Saskatoon



In all things we are *rooted in Christ*,  
in His desire to bring God's love to all peoples.