



Good morning/evening,

My name is _____. I'm speaking to you as one of over 11,000 members of Development and Peace – Caritas Canada. Development and Peace is the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. Today, I would like to invite you to participate in our Share Lent campaign. Our theme for 2023 is **Create Hope: Stand for the Land.**

What would you do if people showed up heavily armed at your front door, and demanded you leave your home? What if they represented a powerful corporation or had the police with them? You might feel shocked, scared or angry. You might react with violence. Or you might comply, afraid for your family's life and future. This is not a choice anyone should have to make.

Every other day, a land or human rights defender is killed for defending his or her community's land and rights. Many more are forced from their homes by corporations and governments seeking to profit from oil, gas, mining and energy. Their way of life has become threatened: their waters are polluted, their forests are destroyed, and their land is seized or made uninhabitable.

In the face of this, you might ask: what can we do? Well, at Development and Peace we choose to support grassroots organizations that defend the dignity and the rights of the poor. These are our partners. Every day, thousands of faithful women and men heed the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, as Pope Francis exhorts us to do. Every day, they mobilize to speak out against injustices inflicted upon the poorest of the poor. Every day, they call on us for support, for solidarity and for commitment. They **Stand for the Land**, and we must stand with them.

I invite you to learn more about our campaign in the coming weeks. There are resources available at the back of the Church and on Development and Peace's website, at devp.org. Together, we will learn about the lifesaving and life-changing work of our partners in places like Colombia, Honduras and Cambodia. I ask that you consider financially supporting our Share Lent campaign or becoming a monthly donor. Your donations can be the difference for many between life and death, dignity and social inequality, hope and despair. Our partners are strong, but they cannot do this work alone. No one can. **Together** we can take a stand for human dignity, **create hope** and **protect the land**.

Thank you for listening and for your generous support.