



Presenting the symbols of solidarity is an optional activity that will help illustrate the 2023 Share Lent campaign theme **Create Hope – Stand for the Land**. These symbols can be presented in Christian communities during an activity or during the entrance procession of Solidarity Sunday—the fifth Sunday of Lent—which will be celebrated this year on March 26. It is important that leaders of the pastoral team in your Christian community be informed beforehand about the arrangements needed for presenting the symbols. In schools, the symbols of solidarity can be presented at a meeting in a gymnasium, an auditorium or some other appropriate place. Below are some suggestions to help you facilitate this activity.

Organization

- Adapt the presentation of the symbols of solidarity to the time you have available.
- Choose the people who will present and show the symbols to the assembly.
- In conjunction with the assembly's chairperson, determine where the symbols of solidarity will be placed after they have been presented.

Procedure

One person can present the symbols of solidarity while another shows them to the assembly. The activity can also be performed by four groups of two people each (one group per symbol). While one person presents a symbol, the other holds it up and shows it to the assembly. Once a symbol has been presented, the person holding it can place it in the designated place and stand aside to make room for the next symbol to be presented. When all the symbols have been presented, the presenters return to their seats.

Suggested Symbols of Solidarity



A bowl filled with earth to represent the wealth of Mother Earth and the soil upon which depend the territories that give us shelter, life and hope.



A seed or a plant to create hope that a world of justice will take root. As a symbolic act, you can embed the seed or plant in the bowl of soil, water it and watch it grow through Lent and beyond. Using a transparent glass container will allow you to see the roots forming and growing.



A microphone, a headset, a camera or a radio to illustrate the work of communicating with marginalized populations to inform them of their rights and to document their experiences.



A box and a ballot to symbolize the importance for peace and democracy of making one's voice heard and respecting communities.

Introduction

Lent is a time of conversion and preparation for Easter. It is a time to draw closer to God, to Jesus, and to our sisters and brothers, both here and in the Global South. This Lenten season, Development and Peace – Caritas Canada, the official international solidarity organization of the Canadian Catholic Church, is inviting us to **Create Hope** and to **Stand for the Land**.

How can we do that? By acting to ensure that a world of justice and peace takes root and by showing solidarity with the people who protect the Earth and the territories that support them. These communities strive to safeguard the soil, water and air from the threats of polluting industries and to preserve their livelihoods, their culture and their ways of life, for present and future generations.

The symbols of solidarity that we are presenting to you celebrate their bravery. They reflect the determination of peoples in the Global South who ask only to live with dignity and to decide their own future. These symbols also remind us of our responsibility towards these communities.



1st SYMBOL

A bowl filled with earth

This earth is the source of all life. It bears the fruits and vegetables that feed us. It is upon it that our homes and nations are built. For many peoples, it is part of the territory that supports and shelters them. The notion of territory goes beyond a geographical area to include the traditions, knowledge and history of the people who inhabit it. By protecting their territories, communities defend not only their livelihoods, lives and cultures but also biodiversity and the environment!

Antioquia, a richly biodiverse and well-watered region of Colombia, is threatened by the voracity of reckless “development” that entails the damming of rivers and the wanton granting of mining licenses that imperil vulnerable communities and fragile ecosystems. Development and Peace’s partner in the region is ACA, the *Asociación Campesina de Antioquia*, the Peasant Association of Antioquia, in English. ACA helps communities voice their dissent through meetings, assemblies, water festivals and seminars. It empowers them to claim their lands and demand that their voices be heard and taken into account.



2nd SYMBOL

A seed or a plant

This seed [OR plant] symbolizes hope. Sowing it triggers the miracle of life. The seed takes root, sends up a shoot from the earth and a plant grows, providing nourishment. It represents our collective efforts to make a more just world to take root, so that every woman, man and child has a dignified future.

The courage to nurture hope is rooted in actions small and large. In the face of inequality, conflict or climate change, only action can drive away anguish and despair! Every hopeful action counts and has a positive impact on us, our neighbours, our extended human family, our children and their descendants. To nurture hope for a better world, let us act for the betterment of the planet and humanity. For it is through our actions that we give account of the hope that is within us.

One concrete action you can take toward living your faith by helping build a world of justice is becoming a member of Development and Peace!



3rd SYMBOL

A microphone, a headset, a camera or a radio

This microphone [OR headset OR camera OR radio] represents the importance of the media in informing people about their rights and how to claim them.

One of Development and Peace’s partners in Honduras is ERIC, the *Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación*, the Reflection, Research and Communication Team in English. This Jesuit organization investigates violations of the human rights of the poor and the dispossessed. It helps communities defend territories that are being threatened by large-scale profit-driven economic projects. It supports and accompanies those who are unjustly criminalized for defending their rights. ERIC also produces radio programs that promote freedom of expression and the right to information and provide reliable information on the problems that local communities face.



4th SYMBOL

A box and a ballot

This box and ballot illustrate the importance of democracy and peoples’ rights to define their own development. For all people to have the chance to live in dignity, we must dismantle the systems and structures of colonialism, exploitation and inequality that perpetuate injustice.

In Cambodia, Development and Peace’s partner, YRDP, the Youth Resource Development Program, works with young people to help them become aware, engaged and responsible citizens and to give them the tools to work for a sustainable, peaceful, just and a democratic society. YDRP’s workshops help young people develop critical thinking skills and empower them to exercise their civil and political rights and to become positive social actors in their communities and country.

Concluding remarks

Development and Peace’s Share Lent campaign invites us to nurture hope and to walk with communities in the Global South who are facing many challenges. May the Lord give us the strength and wisdom to *Stand for the Land* and the people who protect it.

Share
Lent 2023



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