



Share Lent 2025 – *Turn Debt into Hope*
Message from the Most Reverend William T. McGrattan,
President, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. – Deuteronomy 15:1

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In this year of the Jubilee 2025, we are called to be *Pilgrims of Hope*. Inspired by our Catholic social teaching, the bishops of Canada, as part of our Jubilee journey in Canada, join the global Catholic campaign ***Turn Debt into Hope***. In the Bible, a Jubilee year was marked by three actions: the freeing of slaves, allowing the land to rest, and releasing people from debt. We encourage similar activities during this Jubilee year that will restore hope for people by alleviating the insurmountable and unjust debt that burden many countries of the world. For those members of our human family, this is not a matter of payment or non-payment, but a question of *life*.

A matter of justice

This year, Development and Peace – Caritas Canada will invite Canadians to join people around the world as they *Turn Debt into Hope* by focusing on the devastating effects of this cycle of debt on our sisters and brothers in the Global South. Their campaign also highlights the consequences of the *ecological debt* as the resources of these countries in the South are exploited by countries in the North, causing environmental degradation and the persecution of people who oppose these actions.

In *Spes non confudit*, the bull announcing the Jubilee Year 2025, Pope Francis invites us to address such injustices: “Another heartfelt appeal that I would make in light of the coming Jubilee is directed to the more affluent nations. I ask that they acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and determine to forgive the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them. More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice.” (§16)

Taking action together

In the name of all the bishops of Canada, I invite you to act alongside Development and Peace – Caritas Canada, the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, by:

- Encouraging your communities to **give generously to Share Lent**, (especially on Solidarity Sunday, the fifth Sunday of Lent, April 6, 2025), in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the Global South who face the injustice of insurmountable debt for which they are not responsible.
- Signing the global petition calling for **cancellation of unjust debts**, a **reform of the international financial system**, and the creation of a **comprehensive debt framework** within the United Nations.

Together, through this Campaign may we show forth the justice and compassion of Christ through our acts of generosity, engagement and solidarity. As Pope Francis reminds us, “If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry.” (*Spes non confudit*, §16). Let this be our witness in this Jubilee year.

Fraternally in our Lord,

+ William T. McGrattan
Bishop of Calgary
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops