

Lent 2020

Way of the Cross



According to the account in the Book of Genesis, in the beginning God placed humanity in the Garden of Eden, a place where an order of things reigns. The garden had everything necessary for humanity to live a blessed existence in harmony with God and nature. God entrusted humankind with the stewardship of this garden. He asked them to care for it, cultivate it and bequeath it to their descendants. But humans shattered this original harmony. To restore this harmony, God sent his Son, Jesus Christ who gave his life out of love for broken humanity.

Solidarity, by enabling the human family to fully share the treasure of material and spiritual goods, requires us to care unconditionally for the Earth, nature and all members of the human family. It is difficult to live this form of love when the structures of society put the accumulation of goods, revenues and profit before the well-being of the Earth and its inhabitants. Today, the Earth, our common home, is suffering from a climate emergency that has been precipitated by human activity. The indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources has created an ecological crisis that threatens the future of our world.

The Amazon rainforest is a region where the quest for domination of the Earth and of defenceless people is most evident. In response to Pope Francis' concern for the Amazon and its peoples, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada invites us in this Way of the Cross to reflect on the crisis in the Amazon in the light of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection.

May our prayer help us all in learning to respect and protect all environmentally endangered areas of the world and the people who live there, including in particular the Amazon rainforest and its Indigenous communities.



**Development
and Peace**
CARITAS CANADA

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 said to the chief priests and the crowds.... "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. (...) and he handed Jesus over as they wished. (Luke 23:4,22-25)

Meditation

In Jesus' time, religious and civil leaders chose to let him be sentenced to death in the name of their personal interests. Today, political leaders are handing over the Amazon rainforest to those who destroy it for short-term profits. They condemn Indigenous communities to lose their traditional way of life. Remaining indifferent and silent in the face of the excessive deforestation of the Amazon rainforest is to consent to it.

Quote

"The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenceless before the interests of a deified market, which has become the only rule." (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 56)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask Jesus for the strength to speak out against all forms of injustice and selfishness in the exploitation of natural resources.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, give us the courage to denounce actions in the world that plunder the gifts of God.

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

Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac. (Genesis 22:6)

Meditation

Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice foreshadows Jesus bearing the burden of carrying the wooden cross that will bring salvation to the world. The responsibility of the Amazonian Indigenous peoples to protect the forest is of vital importance for their own future and that of humanity. At the heart of the ecological challenge of our time is to bear our common responsibility to safeguard the Earth, our home - as do all our Indigenous sisters and brothers.

Quotation

"If the Amazon disappears, it is very likely that all humanity will disappear, because it is here that the forests that give life are preserved, where there is the largest reserve of freshwater, numerous species of flora and fauna, and ourselves, the Indigenous peoples." (Yesica Patiachi Tayori of Peru's Indigenous Harakbut community)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for the strength to stand with those who bear the cross of the ecological challenge of our time.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, we rejoice in the diversity of creation. May our gratitude lead us to be united in seeking solutions to the threats to the ecosystems and biodiversity of the Amazon forest and all the habitats of God's creation.

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

On the road to Calvary Jesus falls, crushed under the weight of the cross. Strengthened by the love of God his Father, he gets up and goes back on his way. Today in the Amazon, Indigenous and traditional communities are being crushed under the weight of a model of economic development to which they did not consent. With courage, these communities are rising up to denounce this exploitation that violates their rights and threatens their existence. How will we be able to support them?

Quote

"How many times do those who are prominent (...) raise up walls to increase distances, making other people feel even more rejected. Or by considering them backward and of little worth, they despise their traditions, erase their history, occupy their lands, and usurp their goods."

(Pope Francis, Homily of the Holy Mass concluding the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon region, October 27, 2019)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that governments and corporations respect the lifestyles and livelihoods of Indigenous and traditional communities.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, give us the opportunity to build a better future for humanity in solidarity with the Indigenous and traditional peoples of the Earth. Grant us the wisdom to consider their vision by seeing creation not as a commodity to be exploited, but as a home that we are called upon to protect.

4th station

Jesus meets his mother.

Celebrant

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

All

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

Scripture

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. (Luke 1:52-53, The Magnificat of Mary)

Meditation

In joy and pain, Mary was with Jesus throughout his public ministry, living a faith that elevates the humble and brings down the mighty from their thrones. Following Mary's example, we are called to stand with the "lowly" and "hungry" whose lives are threatened by the powerful. The opportunity is offered to us by being in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the Amazon whose community environment is threatened by unbridled deforestation in the name of profit.



Yesica Patiachi Tayori

Quote

"The Amazon is my house, as an Indigenous person. It's the large home where I live, the home where I don't lack for anything. (Hector Sueyo Yumbuyo of Peru's Indigenous Harakbut community)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that we may gain the faith of Mary, mother of Jesus, to see in the lowly a sign of hope and of the love of God.

Let us pray together

Mother Mary, please intercede on behalf of the meek whose homes are being destroyed. Help us restore and renew God's beautiful garden in which humanity can thrive in peace, love and serenity.

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

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it.... (1 Corinthians 12:26)

Meditation

Simon of Cyrene's gesture is a symbol of solidarity towards those who suffer. Every person's lifestyle affects the future of the planet and the future of all of humanity. Our economy of perpetual growth requires a lifestyle of consumerism. Pope Francis invites us to move away from our throwaway culture towards an ecological conversion that can inspire us to greater solidarity in resolving the social, economic and environmental crisis facing humanity. Aware that we are all interconnected, as peoples and with nature, how can we be an ally to the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon?

Quote

"We know that it is not enough to open our hearts to the suffering of others. (...) Welcoming others requires concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention." (Pope Francis, for the Celebration of the 51st World Day of Peace, January 1, 2018)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for awareness of how our consumer habits affect the future of humanity.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, send your Spirit to help us avoid the sin of overconsumption by reflecting on which purchases are necessary and which are frivolous. Help us to decrease our consumption and to live simply.

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

... the only thing that counts is faith working through love. (Galatians 5:6)

Meditation

Aware of Jesus' suffering, Veronica cannot remain indifferent. Out of compassion and charity, she leaves the anonymity of the crowd and confronts the soldiers to wipe the bloodied face of the suffering Christ. May we also see Jesus' face in those who suffer social injustice and, like Veronica, give them concrete hope by choosing mercy over indifference.

Quote

"All it takes is one good person to restore hope!" (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 71)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that we be a source of hope for our suffering sisters and brothers.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, send your Spirit to inspire us with charity, compassion, mercy and the courage to reach out to the dispossessed in our world.

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

My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.... (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Meditation

When Jesus falls for a second time, he rises again to continue his journey on the way to Calvary. He has embraced God's plan to redeem humanity. In the Amazon, *seringueiros* carry a heavy cross in their struggle to preserve the forest and their artisanal work as rubber tappers. Powerful logging companies, in order to drive them off their land, intimidate them and try to weaken their resistance through fires, kidnappings and murders. Determined to preserve the forest and their work, the *seringueiros* find the strength to continue their struggle. Our solidarity helps them to maintain confidence in preserving their homeland.

Quote

"What we want is social justice, economic justice and environmental justice. We have an ecological reserve that is destroyed by fires and invaders. (A member of the *seringueiro* community of Machadinho d'Oeste, Brazil)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask to keep faith in our commitment to social, economic and environmental justice.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, give political leaders the courage to pass laws that prevent the appropriation of the ancestral lands of traditional communities that live there.

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

The women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus' suffering as if it were suffering without hope. Jesus invites the women to look to the future and to their descendants rather than cry over him. Earth is the home of humanity, as well as plants and animals. Home is a place of communion. A place where we wish for our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to flourish. For that to happen, humans must remember that they are creatures to whom God has entrusted the stewardship of the Earth, to pass it on to future generations.

Quote

"We are the heirs of earlier generations, and we reap benefits from the efforts of our contemporaries; we are under obligation to all people. Therefore, we cannot disregard the welfare of those who will come after us to increase the human family." (Pope Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 17)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for the courage to respond to God's call to take care of the Earth, our common home.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, make us wise stewards of creation, who only take from the Earth what is necessary. Grant us the joy of seeing the Earth as a haven of peace, friendship and harmony for future generations.

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

May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord.... (Galatians 6:14)

Meditation

Jesus falls for the third time. He seems to be completely defeated. With this fall, Jesus the Son of God enters more deeply into the suffering of humanity. In a world where profit prevails over human dignity, many of our sisters and brothers carry crosses imposed on them. They need the courage of hope to face their suffering. Imagine a world where all respect and have the humility to listen to one another. A world where the humble man from Galilee is the example for all.

Quote

"I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us.... In their difficulties they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelized by them." (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 198)

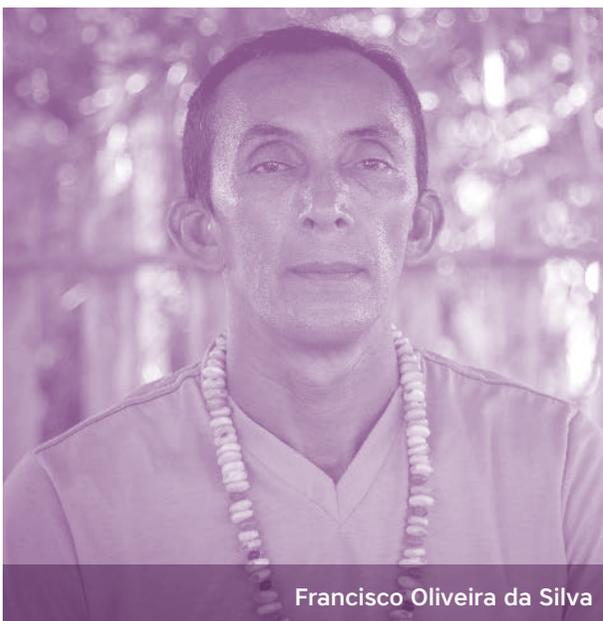
PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask to be evangelized by the poor in order to live by the truth and wisdom of Jesus' message.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, teach us to act with justice and to contribute to signs of the coming world where every tear will be wiped away and no one will be forced to unjustly carry heavy burdens.



Francisco Oliveira da Silva

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

They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. (Psalm 22:17-18)

Meditation

Jesus is stripped and humiliated by those who wield power. The soldiers split his clothes amongst them and cast lots for his seamless robe. His nakedness reminds us that his dignity and divinity are invisible to them. Today, because of savage development by powerful economic interests, so many of the Earth's people and those in the Amazon region are stripped of their material goods, livelihoods, cultures, spiritual wellbeing and hopes for the future. Deprived of their ancestral living environment, they too often find themselves in urban centres that leave them dispossessed and isolated.

Quotation

"The planet I want is a free planet, where the poor have opportunities, children go to school and young people have the right to live well." (Rosalina Olivera, *seringueiro* community elder, Brazil)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that the dignity of people driven from their ancestral lands be respected.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, protect communities here at home and around the world who are treated as an obstacle to an economic development that benefits few. Help us all to respect the wisdom that they offer to humanity.

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

... with him, they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. (Mark 15:27)

Meditation

Jesus was crucified between two men who were presumably sentenced to death like him. In our world, human rights and environmental defenders are criminalized, imprisoned, convicted without a fair trial and even murdered.

They are thus nailed to the cross of injustice. Members of Indigenous communities in the Amazon rainforest are threatened by illegal loggers and cattle ranchers who are destroying their environment and contributing to the worst form of harm to human ecology, the crucifixion of their fellow human beings on the cross of injustice.

Quote

“We must challenge the concept of who is considered a savage today. Is not the ‘savage’ the person who destroys the planet? Are not ‘savages’ the ones who contaminate the environment?” (Yesica Patiachi Tayori of Peru’s Indigenous Harakbut community)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that human rights and environmental defenders be heard and respected.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, urge us to give a voice to those who are unjustly convicted. Help us turn away from words and actions that crucify others. Let not violence be our way.

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

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us — and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. (1 John 3:16)

Meditation

Jesus made God’s love for humanity his own and died on the cross because of his love for humankind and all creation. To follow Jesus is to commit oneself to live with the same love for humanity and to be a source of hope for our sisters, our brothers and the Earth, our common home. The Indigenous concept of *Buen Vivir*, which is based on the principle of a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, is an inspiring example. It is an invitation to walk on a path towards community life, where the sharing of the Earth’s wealth is based on the needs of all its members.

Quotation

“There is also a need to create a new culture of international solidarity and cooperation, where all — particularly the wealthy nations and the private sector — accept responsibility for an economic model which serves everyone.” (Saint John Paul II, *Incarnationis Mysterium*, 12)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for the generosity to put our life and love at the service of humanity.



Dona Rosenita de Jesus

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, accompany us in our commitment to transform the world so that each person may enjoy the fullness of life.

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

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

A sword of pain pierces Mary’s heart when she holds the lifeless body of her Son Jesus against her. In the Amazon, women mourn the death of a family member murdered for defending their peoples’ land, forest and waterways. They also cry for the devastated land, the destroyed forest and polluted rivers, because these elements of nature are part of their family. Illegal activities in the Amazon rainforest are also wreaking havoc on women and adolescent girls, who are subjected to violence, prostitution, and human trafficking... But they are standing up and raising their voices. Will their cries be heard?

Quote

“Just as her [Mary’s] pierced heart mourned the death of Jesus, so now she grieves for the sufferings of the crucified poor and for the creatures of this world laid waste by human power.” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, 241)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for ways to sympathize with the grief and pain of women and adolescent girls whose dignity is denied.



Ilair Pereira dos Santos

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, even in death you are the light of the world. Mindful of those killed for the protection of their lands, forests and waterways, help us recognize in them your invitation for us also to be a light for others.

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

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. (John 19:41)

Meditation

God created a garden for humanity. And in a garden, Jesus suffered the agony of crucifixion and was laid to rest in a tomb. The Amazon rainforest is the Earth’s largest garden. It holds a fifth of our planet’s fresh water, a third of its forests, and half of the world’s plants and animals. But this garden, like so many areas of the world today, is also one of agony, because it has become a wounded place of deformed beauty. The choices we make can be signs of either life or death for the Earth and its people. What will we choose?

Quote

“We take from the forest only what is necessary for our survival. In my opinion, there is no one who can take care of the forest better than Indigenous people can.” (Jeremias Oliveira, representative of the Mura Indigenous people)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask that we treat the Earth as a garden to be protected, nurtured, maintained, cared for and bequeathed to our descendants.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, make us gardeners enthralled by Your creation. May we drink of the wisdom of its guardians and strive to walk more gently on the Earth.

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

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

Meditation

Jesus conquered death and God raised him from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ brings the promise of new and eternal life for humanity. It opens the way for hope and the certainty that evil, sin and death can be overcome. It is in the name of this hope and certainty that we commit ourselves to care for the Earth, our common home, and to safeguard the Amazon rainforest, the lung of the Earth for the common good of all.

Quote

“This is the culmination of the Gospel, it is the Good News par excellence: Jesus, who was crucified, is risen! This event is the basis of our faith and our hope. If Christ were not raised, Christianity would lose its very meaning.... In Jesus, love has triumphed over hatred, mercy over sinfulness, goodness over evil, truth over falsehood, life over death.” (Pope Francis, *Urbi et orbi* message for Easter 2014)

PRAYER

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence to ask for the grace of being like Jesus Christ, servant of the Father’s love for our humanity.

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, your resurrection is the glory and future of all who belong to you, and the hope of all creation. We thank God our Father for giving humanity and its home the promise of new and eternal life through your resurrection.



Mura residents of Taquara village in the Brazilian Amazon with Edina Margarida Pitarelli of the Indigenous Missionary Council (CIMI), a Development and Peace partner that supports Indigenous territorial rights and social justice.

**It has now been revealed through
the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus,
who abolished death and brought life and
immortality to light through the gospel.
(2 Tm 1:10)**