

## Solidarity Way of the Cross Lent 2016

# CREATE A CLIMATE OF CHANGE

This Way of the Cross considers the concept of pilgrimage. The Way of the Cross itself is a pilgrimage; a journey that follows Christ's path of suffering and death. In this Year of Mercy, Pope Francis encourages us to set out on a pilgrimage of conversion to become kinder, more generous people. "The practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life. Life itself is a pilgrimage, and the human being is ... a pilgrim travelling along the road, making his way to the desired destination." (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 14)

This Way of the Cross focuses on the suffering caused by climate change. Humanity, along with all of creation, is on a critical journey as we are challenged by climate change. Will we set out on a path of mercy; adjusting our patterns of consumption to lessen our carbon footprint and give Mother Earth a chance to heal? Will this journey become a pilgrimage towards sustainability and, ultimately, resurrection?



Development  
and Peace  
CARITAS CANADA

1 888 234-8533    [devp.org](http://devp.org)



## 1st Station: Jesus is condemned to death.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

Scripture: “So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, ‘Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?’” (Matthew 27)

**Reflection:** Jesus was an innocent person condemned to death. He was abandoned and faced his death sentence alone. Earth, our common home is also being condemned to death. Because of our patterns of overconsumption, global temperatures are rising and plant and animal species are dying off. Whole populations of humanity feel abandoned and left to face the perils of climate change, even death, on their own.

**Laudato Si’:** “This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her... This is why the Earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is the most abandoned and mistreated among the poor.” (2)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Heavenly Creator, open our eyes to our complicity in loss of life. Once acknowledging our failures to care for creation, renew our spirits to live mindfully and to work diligently for a better world.

## 2nd Station: Jesus takes up his cross.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “And carrying the cross by himself, Jesus went out to what is called The Place of the Skull.” (John 19:17)

**Reflection:** Jesus was forced to carry his cross, the very instrument of his death, to his crucifixion. There are portions of humanity who, like Jesus, are innocent and must carry the burdens of others’ sins. Ethiopia has one of the lowest carbon footprints of any country in the world, yet suffers severe drought caused by a warming climate.

**Laudato Si’:** “The warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world, especially Africa, where a rise in temperature, together with drought, has proved devastating for farming.” (51)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Jesus, may we make real sacrifices to lessen our carbon footprint so that others can live. Bring to mind those who suffer the most from climate change so that our resolve is strengthened and we find joy and purpose in what we give up.

## 3rd Station: Jesus falls for the first time.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases.” (Isaiah 53:4)

**Reflection:** Jesus falls three times in the Way of the Cross. With each successive fall, he is weaker and struggles more to get back on his feet. People who suffer most from climate change disasters are those who are poor already and have little recourse to defend themselves or to get back on their feet. Often their home is the first to fall. Humble housing can’t withstand powerful winds and waters.

**Laudato Si’:** “The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world.” (161)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Gracious Spirit, when we fall into the temptation of overconsumption, remind us of those who suffer for it. When we learn of a catastrophe, help us contemplate the loss of people’s homes and so be moved to lessen our consumption and to share our resources.

## 4th Station: Jesus meets his mother

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “A sword will pierce your own soul too.” (Luke 2:35)

**Reflection:** What utter pain Mary must have felt for her Son. She had no recourse to soothe, heal and save her child. Mothers around the world grieve in helplessness as they see their children suffer and die. Over 3 million children die every year from malnourishment, while others die due to sudden disasters, to long and perilous journeys and disease.

**Laudato Si’:** “Mary, the Mother who cared for Jesus, now cares with maternal affection and pain for this wounded world. Just as her 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.” (241)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Help us to “turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering.” (*Laudato Si’* 19) “May the sweetness of (Mary’s) countenance watch over us in this Holy Year, so that all of us may rediscover the joy of God’s tenderness.” (*Misericordiae Vultus* 24)

## 5th Station: Simon helps carry his cross

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.” (Matthew 27:32)

**Reflection:** Simon had come into the city on the day of Jesus’ death. He found himself in the crowds along Jesus’ pathway to Golgotha, and was picked out by the soldiers to carry Jesus’ cross. Who carries the cross in times of climate crisis? The poor are always the first responders in times of disaster. While help from wealthy countries can take days and weeks, it is immediate neighbours who rush in to save, shelter, and support as much as possible.

**Misericordiae Vultus:** “Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help! May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship and our fraternity! May their cry become our own, and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that too often reign supreme and mask our hypocrisy and egoism!” (15)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)





**All:** In humility we give thanks to you, Oh God, for the generous poor in the world. Like them and like Simon, may we shoulder the cross that Christ carries in the world today.

## 6th Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him.” (Matthew 27:55)

**Reflection:** Veronica’s compassion for Jesus overcame any fear that she might have had in stepping out from the anonymity of the crowds to wipe Jesus’ face in front of the soldiers. She didn’t count the possible cost, but stepped forward and responded in love. Lebanon has taken in 1.4 million Syrian refugees – the equivalent of one quarter of its population – no matter the cost. What compassion and generosity!

**Misericordiae Vultus:** “Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked,



welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill and pray for the living and the dead.” (15)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Holy Spirit, like Veronica, help us to forget ourselves and to step forward in a merciful and loving response to the pain that we see around us. Wipe away our fear to act, so that the suffering face of Christ that is present today can find consolation in our touch.

## 7th Station: Jesus falls for the second time.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5)

**Reflection:** A second fall and Jesus’ struggle to rise up again is that much harder. Climate disasters not only destroy homes, but also sources of livelihood. Fisherfolk lose their boats; farmers lose their crops, small enterprises are washed away. How to rise up again? In the Philippines, typhoons are becoming more powerful and fierce. They destroy the coconut groves and coastal reefs from which the people make their living.

**Laudato Si’:** “We were created with a vocation to work. ... Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this Earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment. Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work.” (128)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Enkindle within us a sense of shared responsibility in times of climate disaster. Move us, dear Jesus, to share the wealth from our employment so that others can regain their livelihoods, their “path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment.”

## 8th Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “But Jesus turned to them and said: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children.” (Luke 23:28)

**Reflection:** There is mutual empathy in this encounter between the women of Jerusalem and Jesus. There is shared pain. Women and children are disproportionately affected by climate change. While women themselves suffer, they share the pain of their children’s suffering as well. It is future generations who will bear the brunt of climate change, especially those from the most vulnerable countries such as Honduras, the Philippines, and Ethiopia.

**Laudato Si’:** “Our goal is... to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.” (19)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Creator God, deepen our sense of suffering within our global family and move us into action. Help us “to discover what each of us can do about it.” May we step out of our relatively comfortable lifestyle and have the courage to change our way of living to one of simplicity and contemplation.

## 9th Station: Jesus falls for the third time.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.” (Isaiah 53: 5)

**Reflection:** How can Jesus recover from a third fall? How can farmers suffering a prolonged drought rise up year after year and carry on? In the Sahel region of West Africa, small family farmers must face drought every 2-3 years rather than every 10 years, as they did before. They never have a chance to replenish their granaries. As such, families are torn apart as men migrate to find work to send money home to support their families.

**Laudato Si’:** “Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. ... There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation.” (25)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Loving God, “renew the face of the earth.” (Psalms 104:30) May this ecological crisis be a “summons to profound interior conversion” so that we live “our vocation to be protectors of (Your) handiwork.” (*Laudato Si’* 217)

## 10th Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “They divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.” (Psalms 22:18)

**Reflection:** Jesus suffered the added indignity of being stripped of his garments before the world. The ongoing war in Syria has created 3 million refugees – a war whose root causes are tied to prolonged drought. After losing home, livelihood and land, they are forced to pick up and leave everything. They sometimes suffer the added indignity of being met with hostility and mistrust when they try to find a new country of refuge.

**Laudato Si’:** “Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.” (25)

### Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Divine Mercy, may those who have lost everything find shelter in our welcome. May our own life’s pilgrimage intertwine with those whose journey has taken them far from their homes and familiar customs.

## 11th Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus.” (Luke 23:33)

**Reflection:** So utterly wasted through whipping and bearing the heavy cross, Jesus must still endure the searing pain of being nailed to the cross. What are the physical pains that people endure today that are due to climate change? Around the world there have been many deaths due to extreme heat. The elderly, very young and the sick are those who suffer most. It is estimated that climate





change will contribute to 250,000 additional deaths per year.

**Misericordiae Vultus:** “His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished and the exiled... to be acknowledged, touched and cared for by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: ‘as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love.’” (15)

Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Infinite Love, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future. May we yearn for the coming of your Reign of justice, peace, love, and beauty.

12th Station: Jesus dies on the cross.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.” (Mark 15:37)

**Reflection:** We contemplate the starkness of Jesus’ death. He was condemned to death; he was tortured and hung on the cross. He breathed his last and died. Unless the human family changes course, can we expect anything less than death for those condemned to the impacts of climate change? Untimely death is inevitable if we choose not to change.

**Laudato Si’:** “What (does) the commandment ‘Thou shalt not kill’ mean when “twenty percent of the world’s population consumes resources at a rate that robs the poor nations and future generations of what they need to survive.” (95)

Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Jesus, we commit to examining our lives and changing course onto a healthier path. “You dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good. Praise be to you!” (*Laudato Si’* - A Christian prayer in union with creation)

13th Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.” John 19: 38

**Reflection:** There is still not rest in death. The hour of Passover is approaching and Jesus’ body must be quickly removed. So too is there haste in the care of bodies when the number of deaths is overwhelming in disasters. There is haste when fleeing on boats where some die on the dangerous journey. There is no time for a proper burial or a proper goodbye.

**Laudato Si’:** “Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change... A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.” (202)

Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Hasten our spirits to a life of conversion, love and generosity. Quicken our steps along this path of renewal for the sake of the most vulnerable, for our own descendants, for the Earth, our common home.

14th Station: Jesus is placed in the tomb.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock.” (Matthew 27: 59-60)

**Reflection:** Jesus had a dignified burial. Joseph of Arimathea had taken care to honour his body.

Who are the Josephs of today? It is harsh and sometimes dangerous work for those who must bury the dead following disasters. The images of the countless people who do this noble work are on the evening news. They are unknown faces who provide dignity and decorum in times of sorrow and destruction. We feel gratitude toward them.

**Laudato Si’:** “We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it.” (229)

Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Give strength, O Loving God, to those who toil in times of disaster. So too, bless those around us who work to educate our communities; who encourage and inspire their neighbours to take action for the common good.

15th Station: Jesus rises from the dead.

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ and we bless you.

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

**Scripture:** “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.” (Matthew 28: 6)

**Reflection:** What amazement Mary Magdalene and the other Mary must have experienced. Jesus’ death was so real and seemed so final. Yet, why did Jesus die on the cross, if not to give us new life and new hope? We are on a critical pilgrimage at this time in history and Jesus’ resurrection inspires us to live in a different way. We can chose to take the path of mercy, a new journey of living simply and sustainably so that the Earth heals and all of humanity and creation rise again.

**Laudato Si’:** “When we ask ourselves what kind of world we want to leave behind, we think in the first place of its general direction, its meaning and its values. Unless we struggle with these deeper issues, I do not believe that our concern for ecology will produce significant results. But if these issues are courageously faced, we are led inexorably to ask other pointed questions: what is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? What need does the Earth have of us? ... Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.” (160)

Let us pray

**Leader:** Let us pray (a few moments of silent reflection)

**All:** Divine Love, we choose the path of mercy, a new journey of living simply and sustainably so that the Earth heals and all of humanity and creation rise again. We “entrust the life of the Church, all humanity and the entire cosmos” to You. “Pour out Your mercy upon us like the morning dew, so that everyone may work together to build a brighter future.” (*Misericordiae Vultus* 5)

Amen