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To: The Faithful of the Diocese of London

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We have begun our Lenten journey. It is a time, Pope Francis says, 'both to journey toward God and toward our brothers and sisters'.

In his recent encyclical letter, *Fratelli tutti* (FT), the pope proposes for us a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel. It is a call to love others as brothers and sisters; a call to love with a new vision of fraternity, solidarity and social friendship that will not remain at the level of words (FT 3). It is in this spirit, that I invite you to enter Lent and to support this year's Share Lent Campaign: **Share Love, Share Lent**.

The vision of our Diocese is to be a mission-oriented Church that forms disciples of Jesus. During the Lenten season, the Church highlights the call to conversion and discipleship for all its members as we prepare to encounter the Risen Christ on Easter morning. Lent is a special time for prayer, fasting and giving alms. We take on these traditional practices to make room in our hearts, minds and lives for God and to open ourselves to Christ-like habits – praying for and reaching out to those in need by sharing with them our time and treasure.

The Gospel calls us to love God and neighbor and to demonstrate our love in service. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-17), we see that this love is to extend to all people. This parable, the pope emphasizes, shows us that "love does not care if a brother or sister in need comes from one place or another. For love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges. Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home" (FT 62).

I am writing to express my support for the annual Share Lent Campaign, organized by the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, and to ask you to be generous in supporting this year's campaign.

Attached to this letter, I am providing an Update on the *Joint Review of CCODP's International Partners*. I encourage you to visit the CCODP website at www.devp.org. To learn more about the 2021 *Share Love, Share Lent* Campaign and the many excellent resources available, click on the Resources/Share Lent link. Information about the Share Year-Round monthly giving plan and its benefits is available at www.devp.org/shareyearround.

May the Lord strengthen us in our Lenten journey. May it be for us a time to grow closer to Jesus as missionary disciples.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald Fabbro, C.S.B.
Bishop of London



Update – Joint Review of CCODP’s International Partners

In 2017, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) commenced a joint review of the international partner organizations that were receiving project funding from CCODP. The review, which was done by representatives of the CCCB and CCODP, was initiated to investigate a number of concerns raised by dioceses and the Catholic faithful that positions taken by the partners were in conflict with Catholic teaching. During this investigation, CCODP assured the Bishops that Share Lent contributions would not be used for any partners under review.

In a joint press release on 25 February 2021, the CCCB and CCODP announced that they had concluded the review. The final report was approved by both organizations.

As a result of the review, several critical steps will be undertaken to implement changes regarding the international partnership program. Among these changes are:

- revision of the CCODP Partnership Policy;
- development of new criteria for partner selection and review;
- creation of a new International Partnership Committee, which will include representatives of the CCCB, to review, approve and monitor all partnerships.

The CCCB is pleased with the review. The Bishops believe that a renewed system for managing international partnerships will be more transparent and ensure CCODP’s Catholic identity, vision, mission and expectations.

In his recent letter, the CCCB President, Archbishop Richard Gagnon, expressed the support of the CCCB for the 2021 Share Lent campaign. Going forward, the implementation of the review’s recommendations will strengthen the CCCB and CCODP as we work collaboratively to alleviate poverty, suffering and injustices in the world.

Further information regarding the joint review can be found at the following: <https://www.cccb.ca/media-release/canadian-conference-of-catholic-bishops-and-the-canadian-catholic-organization-for-development-and-peace-caritas-canada-conclude-joint-review-of-ccodps-international-partner-organiz/>.

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