

**Remarks by CCCB President**  
**Reception in honour of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CCODP**  
**26 September 2017**

We have four Gospels to help us grasp the person, the mission, and the mystery of Jesus Christ. Each offers a unique perspective which is fully appreciated and understood only in the light of the other three.

We have four papal Basilicas in Rome to help us comprehend the apostolic witness and fullness of the Church: the diocesan cathedral of Saint John Lateran, the shrine over the tomb of Saint Peter, that marking the martyrdom of Saint Paul, and the basilica of Saint Mary Major, dedicated to the Mother of our Lord.

Today we celebrate four facets of the vocation and witness of the Church in Canada: the blood and dedication of martyrs and missionaries at the service of the Indigenous Peoples; the ecclesial witness of hope, healing, formation and pastoral service offered since the beginnings of our nation; Mary's example of making Christ present in the world; and the evangelical mission of reaching out to those in need, a primary example of which for 50 years is the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace / Caritas Canada.

Each facet can only be fully appreciated and understood with the help of the others. The mission the Bishops of Canada entrusted to Development and Peace is "*to assist the poor and the oppressed people of the world in their struggle for justice, and to educate us in Canada about the problems of underdevelopment.*" This vision of community, communion and solidarity, reiterated by the Second Vatican Council, and finding new expression in Blessed Paul VI's Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, is from our Lord himself: "*Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me*" (Matthew 25:40). When founding Development and Peace, the Bishops were building on exemplary Canadian traditions of missionary work, formation in the social teaching of the Church, and the apostolate of the laity. The CCODP mission can be summed up in the word "*mercy*". In Hebrew the words for mercy and womb are closely related. The womb of Mary bore and gave birth to Jesus Christ, just as we in our mercy are called to do today.

Development and Peace is part of the structure and mission of the Church, working with and on behalf of the Catholic Bishops and faithful in our country. On this wonderful occasion when we celebrate the first jubilee of Development and Peace / Caritas Canada, and the third jubilee of Confederation, I repeat the invitation that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops made almost a year ago in its pastoral letter to Development and Peace and to all Catholics in our country:

- Continue the mission of announcing the Good News of the Gospel by giving witness to mercy and being bearers of joy and peace;
- Give new energy and impetus to education and formation for justice and peace;
- Renew efforts to empower and engage youth and new Canadians in the work for justice and peace;

- Continue promoting development projects that respect and promote the sacredness and dignity of the human person at every stage of human life;
- Work together in strengthening our common ecclesial identity and outreach;
- Foster a communion of solidarity among all Catholic development and humanitarian agencies, and with all Catholic lay associations, movements and organizations;
- Explore and help identify ways to expand and improve emergency aid and development assistance to those Canadian communities and regions also in need of assistance and encouragement.

As I wrote then, so I say again, “*we are all the more effective in facing the serious and urgent challenges of our world when we walk together.*”

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI  
Bishop of Hamilton and  
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops