

# Symbols of Solidarity

Please refer to page 9 of the Solidarity Resource Book for tips on how and where to draw on the symbols. Feel free to adapt this presentation to your needs and resources. Ideally, you should have at least 9 participants (one to present each of the 4 symbols, another to join that person in solidarity and a narrator). You may wish to elicit the help of the choir or some musicians. This is a marvelous way of involving new parishioners, children, youth and seniors. You can still present the symbols effectively with less people if roles are shared and by eliminating music/sounds. Special thanks to Eileen McGowan for sharing her creativity and generating the symbols.

## **Narrator:**

In many ways, the vision that breathes life into the work of our Church through DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE and into the struggles of our partners in the Global South is a vision of solidarity.

It is a vision of presence with others. Whether we are present with our partners in person or through symbols, we discover, and share their joys, hopes, grief and anguish and stand with them in solidarity.

Through the symbols of solidarity, we will show how this vision binds our lives with those of our partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

We share the joy of Maria in El Salvador. Thanks to the Centre for Consumer Defence, a DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE partner, she learned how to understand her water bill. She then fought an over-charge on her bill and won.

[A person representing Maria proceeds to the altar wearing bright blue clothing. She could be dancing to joyous music or playing an instrument. She is holding up her water bill. She can be followed by people undulating blue pieces of cloth or paper streamers (to indicate flowing water). A person from the pews joins her at one point in the procession (embracing her with a hug or holding her hand) and shares her joy as she places her bill at the altar, surrounded by the blue streamers.]

We share the tears of grief of Cecilia in South Africa. Her child died of cholera, a disease caused by using unclean water. After South Africa's water services were privatized, Cecilia's water costs increased so much she could no longer afford clean water.

[A person representing Cecilia proceeds to the altar wearing black clothing, perhaps with a black veil pulled over her head and a handkerchief held to her face to wipe away tears. She is walking slowly, as she mourns the death of her child. She is holding up a glass beaker or pitcher containing dirty, brown water. There is silence. She can be followed by people holding up black pieces of cloth or paper streamers (to indicate mourning). A person from the pews joins her at one point in the procession (embracing her with a hug or holding her hand) and shares her grief as she places her water container on the altar, surrounded by the black streamers.]

We share the hope felt by Yim Sophoeun and her children in Cambodia. As a widow, Yim was unable to secure a livelihood, provide food for her family and send her children to school. After she received a grant from a DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE partner, however, she was able to buy fishing tools, a bicycle and other materials she would need to run a small business. She now participates in the development of her community.

[A person representing Yim (perhaps with her children) proceeds to the altar wearing green clothing. She is walking with enthusiasm holding either some fishing tools, a bicycle or other materials she would need to run a small business. There is a drum beat mimicking that of a heart beat. She can be followed by people waving pieces of green cloth or paper streamers (to indicate new life). A person from the pews joins her at one point in the procession (embracing her with a hug or holding her hand) and shares her hope as she places her business tool on the altar, surrounded by the green streamers.]

And, we share the anguish of the thousands of communities that were destroyed as its women, children and men lost their homes, their livelihoods and families in the tsunami in Asia, Hurricane Stan in Central America, and the earthquake in South Asia.

[A person representing someone (or a group of people) who lost his home proceeds to the altar wearing brown clothing. He is walking irregularly, all the while holding a clenched fist to his forehead. He has an armful of withered or dead plants or some broken tools (representing lost livelihood). There is a jarring noise (perhaps each person in the choir singing/playing a different tune or banging on things). He can be followed by people dragging pieces of brown cloth or paper streamers (to indicate the mud that now covers his land). A person from the pews joins him at one point in the procession (embracing him with a hug or holding his hand) and shares his anguish as he places his plant on the altar, surrounded by the brown streamers.]

As followers of Christ in this world, then, and with the vision of sharing in the lives of all humanity, we remember the opening lines of the Second Vatican Council document, "The Church in the Modern World," as they explain what this vision of sharing means:

"The joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well."