

Solidarity Letter

Writing Assignment – Secondary

PART I: The Amazon Rainforest

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE–Caritas Canada is the official Humanitarian Aid and International Development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. It works through partnerships all over the world to promote social and ecological justice for all, especially the poorest and most marginalized people in the Global South. It also helps Canadians here at home to understand our place in building a world of justice.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is currently running a campaign called ‘For Our Common Home’ to help us to understand the crucial importance of the Amazon Rainforest for the survival of all humanity, and to tell the inspirational stories of the people who are bravely protecting it. By learning about this campaign, you are also contributing to protecting this precious piece of Creation.

WATCH the following videos about two communities in the Amazon – the Mura and Seringueiros – who are fighting to protect the areas of the Amazon Rainforest where they live:

Mura:

- youtu.be/8h-5gnmAutE
- youtu.be/xjNLtcLrQHE

Seringueiros:

- youtu.be/j398-OfiPW8
- youtu.be/uqtclKQQD5Q

PART II: Citizenship in action

Did you know?

In 1979 Development & Peace – Caritas Canada organized a letter-writing drive addressed to a group of mothers and grandmothers in Argentina, whose children and grandchildren were ‘disappeared’ by the Argentine Armed Forces following a military coup.

Over the course of a year, 170,000 Canadians sent solidarity letters to the Argentinian grandmothers. The grandmothers were immensely grateful for the letters, which instrumental in keeping their spirits and energies up as they struggled for justice for their missing family members. The women of Argentina were able to return many stolen children to their families through their struggle, and continue the work of reuniting families to this day.

This year, Development and Peace is collecting signatures on a Solidarity Letter for the Mura and Seringueiros to encourage them and let them know that Canadians support their struggle to protect their homes and the integrity of the Amazon rainforest.

Signing the solidarity letter online is a great way to show your support for the important work that the Mura and Seringueiros are doing.

READ the letter at devp.org/act and consider signing it too!

PART III: Write your own letter

Now its your turn!

WRITE a letter (250-500 words) of your own addressed to the Mura and Seringueiros, to explain your understanding of their situations and to express your solidarity.

Be creative while you're writing. Where possible, try to link to things that you've already learned or that you're curious about, such as your understanding of [Catholic Social Teaching](#), or the importance of biodiversity.

When finished, email a copy of your letter to your teacher (for grading) and schools@devp.org

Note: If you're able, you can also send your message in the mail to the following address:

Development & Peace – Caritas Canada
c/o Schools Officer
400-80 Hayden Street
Toronto ON M4Y 3G2

Youth from Development & Peace will be hand-delivering all the letters received (including yours!) to the Mura people and *seringueiros*!