



Share
Lent 2020



Development
and Peace
CARITAS CANADA

4th Sunday of Lent

John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

Sometimes, we can be like the Pharisees in today's Gospel. Sometimes, thinking we know better, we make fun of those who are trying to help solve a problem. We think they are wasting their energy, that they don't understand and that their invitations for us to join them are a waste of our time. It is easy to become disillusioned, to lose sight of the hope in Christ's message. It is easy to accept poverty, doubt, injustice and other social evils as "normal" and to not respond compassionately.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis writes that this is how we relate to the climate crisis. He notes that even committed and prayerful Christians sometimes become passive to and even critical of expressions of concern for the environment (LS, 217). He pleads us to be transformed by our relationship with Christ. This transformation would make us treat the world with the love and care to which Christ calls us. This would be a deep love of not just humanity but also the natural world, itself a divine revelation loved by God with which we are in constant relationship. The Holy Father speaks of the need to hear the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor together. This means seeing environmental degradation and poverty as connected issues to be addressed as one.

In the way of Jesus, loving is the most important rule. His call to love our neighbour means loving even those of the global family whom we don't see everyday but with whom we are connected. These are people whose lives are impacted by what we buy, what our government do and how they are spoken of in the news and social media. We can love these distant, often-ignored neighbours by working for global justice.

When we focus on the obstacles, active love is hard. But possibilities begin to appear when we focus on the humanity of people, whether in front of us or far away; on what we have in common; and on what we can accomplish together. We must listen to other people's voices, ideas and stories with open hearts if we want to understand them better.

Accepting new ideas, new ways of working and new roles can be scary. But with Jesus accompanying us on the journey, we needn't be scared.

Discussion questions:

- **Who are the people in our daily lives to whom we can show the love and compassion of God?**
- **What practices can our family adopt for the well-being of the whole human family?**

The seringueiros are artisanal rubber tappers who also gather nuts and fruits for subsistence. They are facing down terrible threats and violence to protect their beloved rainforest lands from powerful loggers, hunters, ranchers, soybean farmers, etc. Watch their testimony at devp.org/campaign/seringueiros.