



**Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon**  
**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

123 Nelson Rd  
Saskatoon SK S7S 1H1  
www.rcdos.ca

Phone: 306-242-1500  
Fax: 306-244-6010  
Toll free: 877-661-5005



March 8, 2026  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent / St John of God

**SHARE LENT 2026**

**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

The theme of this year's Share Lent campaign is *On Track for Justice*.

The Gospel for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent is from St. John the Evangelist. Jesus raises from the dead His friend Lazarus. In responding to the ultimate obstacle to all human life – death itself, Jesus dramatically establishes His power over death, leading to a realization about what life and death are really about.

The First Reading from the Prophet Ezekiel is also incredible. Ezekiel's dramatic vision of a whole people being reborn, brought out of graves, gathered and placed on their own soil corresponds vividly to the Easter hope that God's people will not only be raised from the dead, but will be restored to the fullness of abundant life that Jesus promises all people. (*see John 10:10*)

In *Dilexi Te* - the first apostolic exhortation from Pope Leo XIV- the Holy Father calls our attention to *the preferential option for the poor*, a core component of Catholic Social Teaching that highlights how all people of good will work together to bring restoration and renewal to those facing poverty and other forms of disadvantage. To say that God has a preference for the poor does not mean He excludes people. Rather, Pope Leo XIV explains,

*"...wanting to inaugurate a kingdom of justice, fraternity and solidarity, God has a special place in His heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and He asks us, His Church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest."* (§16)

I also recall Pope Francis's reminder to us about the pathway to peace: *"If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry."*

Let us support the *On Track for Justice* appeal by a renewed commitment to *have the same mind and heart as Christ Jesus* in all things - He who holds in His Sacred Heart all our peoples of our world.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops again designates the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent as Solidarity Sunday when our annual Share Lent collection will be taken up. On Sunday, March 22, 2026 I ask you to please be generous in donating to Development and Peace / Caritas Canada.

Sincerely in Christ,

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✠ Most Reverend Mark A. Hagemoen  
Bishop of Saskatoon