



# Window on Social Justice

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## Our presence in the world

Lent is a privileged time that invites us to become signs of hope in our world. We as retired sscj, living in residence or in the infirmary or elsewhere often have the impression of being cut off from the world. It is true that today's means of communication keep us up to date on what is going on around us and on the planet as a whole. But do we still experience the feeling of being sent and engaged in the world? And yet number 11 of our Constitutions tells us, "our religious consecration... is a mission of tenderness and mercy, and a participation in the vocation of the Church *in the world.*"

Lent is a time of being interiorly transformed through prayer, certain sacrifices and charity. To give alms is to practice charity by getting close to those persons who are in need. In the name of social justice it means sharing our comfort and our abundance. It means living solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Southern countries who are engaged in building a world of justice and peace where everyone can live with dignity.

This year, Pope Francis invites us to hear the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth through the testimony of indigenous and traditional communities who are fighting to protect the Amazon forest against the shameless pillaging of its resources. He invites us to undergo an ecological conversion and take concrete action to preserve our common Home and that of future generations.

Our economic system forces us into a style of life focused on consumerism. In part, our way of consuming leads to illegal deforestation, industrial agriculture and intensive rearing of animals, not to mention the huge hydroelectric and mining projects in which Canadian companies and pension funds have heavily invested.

These commercial activities need the wooded land that shelters indigenous and traditional peoples who live peacefully in a way that conserves and preserves these lands. But they are also obstacles to those forces that wish to exploit the resources of this place of natural beauty. These people end up being driven from their land due to unjust criminal accusations and some even end up getting assassinated.

During lent, let's be present to those who live near us through concrete gestures of kindness and generosity. Let us also be present to the cries of the exploited indigenous peoples of the Amazon so that their way of life will be respected and so that a fragile ecosystem that the whole human family benefits from can be protected.

### **Have a good Lent!**

#### **Did you know:**

- Amazonia provides the world with 20% of its oxygen.
- It is viewed as being the lung of the Earth.
- It is the greatest tropical forest in the world, spread over nine countries.
- It occupies close to 40% of the surface of South America.
- It is the greatest reservoir of biodiversity in the world.
- It gives shelter to half the plants and animals on the planet.
- It helps to cool the planet and reduces the effects of climate change.

#### **Sources:**

- Share Lent 2020 Development and Peace.
- Wikipedia