

A photograph of dry, thorny branches, likely from a desert shrub, set against a textured, deep purple background. The branches are dark brown and covered in sharp, light-colored thorns. They are arranged in a dense, tangled pattern, filling the upper half of the frame.

# LIVING LENT 2018



The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund  
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

## Vision

A truly just, healthy, and peaceful world.

## Mission

As an instrument of faith, PWRDF connects Anglicans in Canada to communities around the world in dynamic partnerships to advance development, to respond to emergencies, to assist refugees, and to act for positive change.



### **THE PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND**

The Anglican Church of Canada

80 Hayden Street, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 3G2

Phone: 416-924-9192 or 1-866-308-7973

Fax: 416-924-3483

Website: [www.pwrdf.org](http://www.pwrdf.org)

Email: [pwrdf@pwrdf.org](mailto:pwrdf@pwrdf.org)

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## Thank you

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Cover photo: Blue Design/Shutterstock

February 2018

# Introduction

## Lent 2018

### Entering Into the Season

A few year ago, my church began preparing for Lent on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday by us all singing *Turn Turn Turn*, that classic song by The Byrds, and we all literally turned around in a full circle each time we sang “turn, turn, turn.” Apart from being a dizzying experience, that song helped us enter a season of turning closer to God. We talked together about what it meant to turn back to God or to turn closer to God in the season of Lent and throughout all of the seasons of our lives.

This reflection guide will invite you to do some turning of your own throughout the Lenten season. It will encourage you to reflect on and engage with some of the challenges in the world, but will also offer you stories of some of the amazing, wonder-filled, and holy work being done by PWRDF and partners throughout the world. As you read these stories, and journey through the lectionary readings for Lent, consider the ways in which you are called to turn—perhaps towards God, or towards new action, or deeper understanding.

Each week will focus on a theme from the work of PWRDF and partners and that theme will be explored in a similar pattern throughout the week. The reflections and prayers draw on stories from PWRDF and from the Revised Common Lectionary for Year B. Each day will either share a story and invite you to reflect on it, or will offer prompts for you to Pray, Act and Give as you continue thinking about a story you read recently. For some of the days in this reflection guide, in the Act section, it will prompt you to add a coin to a jar. Not everyone has coins around anymore, so if that doesn’t make sense for you, be creative about how you express that—you might keep a tally on a paper posted somewhere that you will see often throughout the day, or keep track in a note on your phone or in a journal. You can submit donations on-line, by telephone, or by mail at the end of Lent, but having a visual sign of the accumulation of things that you honour, remember or celebrate throughout this season can be a powerful representation of your Lenten journey of reflection.

# ASH WEDNESDAY

## February 14

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### Voices of Hope—Guatemala

Teresa Coc Cajbon is from Guatemala but her mother tongue is Q'eqchi, not Spanish. As a child, she was ashamed of speaking out in public because she could not speak the language, but not any longer. Teresa joined the Asociacion Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas (IXMUCANE), a women's association that runs the Women's Rights and Health Program for women in Petén, the northern most region in Guatemala. It has 528 members and was set up by women who fled to Mexico during the civil war in the '80s, then returned in the '90s. Since 1993, IXMUCANE has empowered women by improving their knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, educating them on their rights, preventing discrimination, exclusion and violence against women. PWRDF funds have supported IXMUCANE with many training and capacity building projects over the years. For Teresa, Ixmucane helped her become literate and she no longer fears speaking out in public. Programs teaching women about sexual and reproductive health have empowered mothers to educate their daughters and now early age pregnancies are on the decline. She also notes IXMUCANE informs women how to protect themselves about the law; programs have helped decrease violence against women.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about IXMUCANE?*

**PRAY:**

Holy One, we are reminded on this Ash Wednesday that we must not hold our lives, and all we have and enjoy, too tightly. Grant us a generosity of spirit through these Lenten days and beyond, that we might open ourselves more fully to the needs of others. Make us mindful of how we can use the reality of our lives to impact the reality of others'. May we be aware of your love for the whole human family, and the desire you have for all to be fed well, with a place at the table. **Amen**

**ACT:**

Share a simple supper of soup with at least one person outside your household each week through Lent.

**GIVE:**

Set aside a coin in honour of each person who joins you in these meals and helps you observe the discipline of separating wants from needs. God our companion, we give you thanks for Teresa Coc Cajbon, and for all of the brave, passionate and dedicated women who are part of IXMUCANE. We give thanks for the important work that they do in caring for and supporting the women in their region. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping more women become empowered and live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives.

# THURSDAY

## February 15

### READING:

*Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
rend your hearts and not your clothing. Joel 2:12–13*

### PRAY:

Ever-present God, we read in Joel this week that the day of the Lord is coming. We know that your kingdom is both close at hand and already here. Be with us throughout this Lenten journey as we read stories from scripture and from PWRDF and partners, help us to hear the hope of your both present and yet to come kingdom. Help us to live out that call in Joel to rend our hearts, not just our clothes, to help bring your kingdom into fullness. **Amen**

### ACT:

Throughout your day, look for signs of hope for the empowerment of women. Find an organization in your community or region that provides education, support or resources for women and girls. Learn about the work that they do and how you can support them.



### GIVE:

Think of a woman in your life who, like Teresa, has been supported or who could use the support of a community agency. Say a prayer of thanksgiving or hope for her and add a coin to your jar in honour of her.

# FRIDAY

## February 16

### READING:

*'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:20–21*

### PRAY:

Generous God, You have abundantly blessed your world with many good gifts. In the gospel of Matthew we hear that we shouldn't store up those gifts here on earth, but should store up our treasures in heaven. That can be hard. Strengthen us as we continually turn from our desires to gather up treasure for ourselves here on earth, to sharing the gifts we have with one another in service of your kingdom, for where our treasure is, is where our heart is also. **Amen**

### ACT:

The women of IXMUCANE invest their gifts in one another and in the women of their region, striving to empower and inform them. It is clear to see that is where their hearts are also. Look at your gifts—your time, your money, and your resources, and see where you are investing them. Find two ways to make a change so that your gifts are better invested where your heart is called.



### GIVE:

Offer a prayer of petition for God to strengthen and support you in making those changes. Add a coin to your jar for each change you will make.



# SATURDAY

## February 17

### READING:

*So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.  
2 Corinthians 5:20*

### PRAY:

O, God of all, in these early days of our Lenten journey, we are reminded of the need to travel lightly, and to be mindful of the source of all that we need to keep us going along the way. We pray for those who sacrifice much to farm and create goods in a sustainable manner. Make us mindful of those choices and purchases we make that tax the earth for the sake of our own convenience. Help us to imagine more sustainable ways to secure what we truly need. **Amen**

### ACT:

Identify one staple in your diet that you know to be imported and replace it with a locally sourced product. Learn the story behind that item and share it with others.

### GIVE:

Set aside a coin for each time this past week you included a locally made or farmed product in a meal you prepared.

<http://www.justgeneration.ca/why-pwrd/>

# WEEK ONE

## SUNDAY February 18

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### Ride for Refuge beneficiary gives women a chance to thrive

The mouth-watering scent of fresh baking wafts out of the living room of Elisa Mateus, as the Mozambican entrepreneur happily serves lunch to a hungry customer. The eight-table restaurant and catering business she runs out of her home is thriving and she is planning to expand it. She now employs five people.

But things weren't always so happy. Mateus used to dream of having a small business, but interest rates in Mozambican banks are a prohibitive 34%. By contrast, a typical small business loan in Canada would charge about 6%. Mateus, like many low-income women in Mozambique, could not afford to apply for a bank loan. But in 2014 a friend told her about CCM Pemba, a Cooperative of Credit of Women in Pemba, in Mozambique. When she opened her account, she became a member of the cooperative. After saving for three months, she was eligible for her first loan with an interest rate of 4%. The loan allowed her to refurbish a portion of her house and set up the restaurant and a catering business. It also allowed her to buy a good oven for her bakery part of the business. Her pastries are in high demand and that keeps her very busy.

The decision has changed her life, as well as her family's. The income from her business is allowing her to pay her three children's tuition, make repairs to her house and improve the

quality of life of her family, which includes her orphaned nephews and nieces and her mother. Mateus is very thankful for having an institution like CCM that allows low-income women to set up small business. CCM Pemba has a membership of 600 low-income women. Every member has the right to vote at Annual General Meetings and propose suggestions on how to improve the services of the cooperative. Like Mateus, members use the loans to set up small businesses ranging from food stands, hairdressing salons, tailor shops and charcoal sales. All of the members say the loans have contributed greatly to improving their families' lives by paying school tuitions and helping them stay healthy.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about CCM Pemba?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for Elisa Mateus, and for all of the lives that are changed by loans received from CCM Pemba. We give thanks for the way in which receiving loans gives women the ability to improve their own lives and to support their communities. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping women and their families to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# MONDAY

## February 19

### READING:

*And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.*

*1 Peter 3:21–22*

**PRAY:** Holy One, we know that we can be complacent when it comes to our relationship with money and the Earth. Help us to have a discerning spirit and intentionality in all our ways, O Lord, as we continue in this Lenten journey of turning toward you and your kingdom. Help us to watch for those who do not have the option to be complacent about money, as they have little of it. Bless PWRDF's and their partner's efforts to do the same on a scale that is hard to fathom, but which is life changing for many. **Amen**

**ACT:** Research micro-finance initiatives in your community or region and share with a friend or colleague the work that they do and how you can support that work.



**GIVE:** Reflect on a job, a loan, or an opportunity that enabled you to reach a goal in your life. Say a prayer of thanksgiving and add a coin to your jar in celebration of that.

# TUESDAY

## February 20

### READING:

*God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Genesis 9:12–13*

### PRAY:

We give thanks, gracious God, for the covenant you made with Moses and with all living things. Make us mindful of the ways in which we are connected to one another and to all living things, through you and through the Earth you gave us to share. In this Lenten season and beyond, help us to seek a balanced life, rooted in an awareness of the whole human family, and our calling to be good stewards of the earth and all that fills our lives. **Amen**

### ACT:

The loan given to Elisa did more than just help her, it also helped those who she is connected to, and enabled her to connect to others through her restaurant and catering. Think about the people whom your food connects you to, and look to see if there are ways that you can connect more intentionally to your community or region through the food you purchase. Have at least one meal this week that supports food producers in your area.



### GIVE:

Say a prayer of thanksgiving for the people you are connected to by the food you eat. Add a coin to your jar for each local connection your next meal has.

# WEDNESDAY

## February 21

### READING:

*In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' Mark 1:9–11*

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### Voices of Hope—OfERR

Empowering women is a key to helping Tamil refugees work towards a return to their homes in Sri Lanka. PWRDF's partner the Organisation for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR) supports 70,000 Tamil refugees living in India. "The men were disoriented by the change in their life situation when they arrived in the refugee camps," said S. C. Chandrahassan, OfERR's founder. "So women took on the burden. Women think of a permanent home. They are more careful with their money, so in the camps, it is the female head of the household who receives money from the government." This led to a significant economic change as women instead of men were in charge of the money. Self Help Groups in the camps bring small groups of women together to engage in micro-finance loans within their group. The women then use the loans to start small businesses to support their families. There are about 480 groups in the camps in India. These women have grown to take charge in their households, in their Self Help Groups, and are taking the lead in preparing to go home.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about OfERR?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give thanks for the work of OfERR, in particular their work in creating and promoting Self Help Groups. We often see in scripture and in our world that when small groups gather with a common goal, incredible things can happen, starting small and growing from there -as we also see in those Self Help Groups. We pray that by your grace, the work of OfERR will continue to prosper, helping Tamil refugees to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# THURSDAY

## February 22

### READING:

*And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Mark 1:12*

### PRAY:

It can be hard to hear your voice in the midst of our daily lives, O God. We sometimes forget that your Son walked a 40 day journey, as we are doing this Lent, and that he always stood for those who were wounded, struggling and alone. Help us to listen for your voice calling us to remember who we are and what we are about. **Amen**

### ACT:

When Tamil refugees arrived in refugee camps, it was disorienting, new and different. In situations like that, it can be hard but is so important to remember who they are and what they are about. This struggle is present for refugees beyond just camps. Arriving in a new country for resettlement can bring up those same things—how do you remember and honour who you are and what you are about in a new country, in a new culture? Contact an organization in your community or region that helps newcomers to establish businesses of their own. Find out how you might support these initiatives and spread the word.



### GIVE:

Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the refugees who have safely arrived in this country and for those who helped to make it happen. Add a coin to your jar for a local business supported by you and owned by someone new to the country.



# FRIDAY

## February 23

### READING:

*Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' Mark 1:14–15*

### PRAY:

Creator of Days, we thank you for the gift of a week full of challenge and opportunity. Remind us of where your Spirit has been at work and where, perhaps, we've failed to see it. We give thanks at this time for those relationships in our lives that build us up and support us. Make us mindful of people who do not experience connections that will move them in the way of growth and life, feeding their souls and helping them make healthy choices. May they find people who help them to turn toward a life of connection and hope in community. **Amen**

### ACT:

The work of OfERR's Self Help Groups happens in a small group. In small groups, people build relationships and community with one another and can encourage and support one another. Send a hand written note to someone you may not know well, but whom you sense could use some encouragement.



### GIVE:

Reflect on the relationships in your life where you find encouragement. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for those relationships and add a coin to your jar in celebration of the role of those people on your life.

# SATURDAY

## February 24

### READING:

*For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. 1 Peter 3:18–20*

### PRAY:

Holy One, we acknowledge that we can be complacent when it comes to our relationship with money and the Earth. Grant us a discerning spirit and an intentionality in all our ways, O Lord. Help us to watch for those who do not have a place at the table, enough to eat, or the satisfaction that comes from being able to feed one's loved ones. Bless PWRDF's efforts to do the same on a scale that is hard to fathom but which is life changing for many. **Amen**

### ACT:

Research micro-finance initiatives and share with a friend or colleague possibilities you see in their application with regard to food security.

### GIVE:

A coin for a loan you remember receiving that gave you the freedom to create a plan for growth and work toward achievable goals.

### REFLECTION:

<http://www.justgeneration.ca/the-united-nations-and-the-economic-empowerment-of-women/>

# WEEK TWO

## SUNDAY February 25

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### UBINIG

Midwives play an important role in Bangladesh's health sector. Through their assistance and dedication, they protect and enhance the health of women who have recently been pregnant or given birth. PWRDF works to provide support and training to midwives in Bangladesh, helping them to improve their skills and capabilities, benefiting the lives of all the women and children with whom they work. On this basis, in 2008, PWRDF and its partners UBINIG implemented a maternal health program in the country. This program has helped 259 midwives increase their skills in assisting women and newborns. The ripple effects experienced by this program have been substantial. In addition to helping to increase the immunization rate of pregnant women and children to 100%, it has ensured that women are visiting health clinics at least twice during their pregnancies and within 48 hours of giving birth. Overall, 11,000 women, children, and newborns have been treated by midwives trained through these programs, a tremendous achievement for Bangladesh as it works to improve the health of its female and youth population.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about UBINIG?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for UBINIG. We give thanks for the 11,000 women, children and newborns who have been treated by midwives trained through UBINIG's maternal health program. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping women, children, and infants to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives.

**Amen**

# MONDAY

## February 26

### READING:

*God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.’ Genesis 17:15–16*

### PRAY:

God of Truth, even when Abram and Sarai were very old, you promised that a child would be born to them. You made a covenant with them, and they became Abraham and Sarah, and then they became parents to Isaac. We hear and we read stories of you fulfilling the promises that you make to your people, and still we doubt and fall away when we are struggling. Help us, like Abraham and Sarah, to turn to you and to be changed by the promise you gave to us in your everlasting love. **Amen**

### ACT:

If a woman as old as Sarah were to give birth to a child today (as unlikely as that may seem!), it would be considered a high risk pregnancy, and she would need specialized care to ensure a safe pregnancy and safe delivery of her baby. All pregnant women, even those who aren’t quite as full of years, need care like that provided by the 259 midwives who have been trained by UBINIG. Find out what resources are available in your community or region to support and care for expectant and new mothers. Send an encouraging email to the organization thanking them for the role they play in the health of your community.



### GIVE:

Reflect on the story of your own birth—whether you know lots about it or little. Say a prayer of thanks for the doctors, nurses, midwives, or whoever else helped your entry into the world. Add a coin to your jar in celebration of your birth and one for any other significant births in your life.

# TUESDAY

## February 27

### READING:

*I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. Genesis 17:7*

### PRAY:

Holy God, in the story of Abram and Sarai becoming Abraham and Sarah, we see a clear depiction of the transformation that happens when people fully turn and follow you. Shape us and guide us throughout this season of turning ever closer to you, and help us to pour our transformation out into the world, helping to build your kingdom here and now. **Amen**

### ACT:

In stories of scripture and stories of PWRDF partners we often hear of transformation. Reflect on a time of transformation in your own life. What caused that transformation? What was different as a result of it? Where was God in all of that?



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar in honour of that time of transformation.

# WEDNESDAY

## February 28

### READING:

*No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Romans 4:20–21*

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### Partners in Health—Rwanda

PWRDF is making a difference in Rwanda with Partners in Health. PIH's philosophy is to deliver state-of-the-art medicine to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. As part of its All Mothers and Children Count program, PWRDF funds North American health care professionals to train and mentor Rwandan doctors and nurses in lifesaving procedures for newborns. AMCC is funded with a 6:1 match from Global Affairs Canada. One such physician is 26-year-old Dr. Joselyne Uwinkesha who just graduated from medical school last year. One of the procedures she learned in her extra training is how to resuscitate a baby who is born not breathing. On the day that she finished learning this technique, she found herself in the position of using it, not once but twice. She was not able to save the first baby, but the second baby, born just hours later, survived. Dr. Uwinkesha says she found strength and comfort in the fact that she was able to take correct and appropriate steps to try to save the babies' lives. She did right by the babies and their mothers. She knew the steps that she had to take and how to stay calm doing it. Dr. Uwinkesha's training is already paying off.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about Partners in Health?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion on this journey,  
We give you thanks for Partners in Health and especially for Dr. Joselyne Uwinkesha. We give thanks that because of their work, people in need of medical care are able to receive it, regardless of whether they can pay for it or not. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping many people, particularly mothers and children, to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**



# THURSDAY

## March 1

### READING:

*For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith.  
Romans 4:13*

### PRAY:

God of Healing, we give thanks for the gift of your Son, sent on earth to live as one of us. He lived as a human being, in a body vulnerable to illness, disease and accident—fully as one of us. We remember all those who are unwell, particularly those who do not have access to sufficient health care. Be with them and those who care for them. **Amen**

### ACT:

Think about a time in your life when you were sick and could not take care of yourself. Call to mind the face of each person who was a help to you and recall in what ways they made a difference in your life at that time.



### GIVE:

If you feel well today, add a coin to your jar.

# FRIDAY

## March 2

### READING:

*Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' Mark 9:2–5*

### PRAY:

Creator God, we read in Mark this week of the moment when, up on the mountaintop, Jesus was transfigured. In the glow of this holy moment, Peter decides that they should set up camp and stay in this holy place. Be with us when we find ourselves in our own holy moments on mountaintops, and help us to be confident in coming back down the mountain and carrying that holy moment with us into the valleys we come to in our lives. **Amen**

### ACT:

In the midst of the hope and joy of the healthcare provided by Partners in Health, we read in Wednesday's story of a baby who could not be resuscitated. In valleys like this, filled with grief and loss, it can be hard to remember holy mountaintop moments. Reach out to your local hospital to find out what support or resources are available for mothers and families who lose a baby or child, and ask if there is anything you can do to help—writing caring sympathy cards, building awareness, etc.



### GIVE:

Say a prayer of thanksgiving for those who have supported you when you have been in a valley. Add a coin to your jar in celebration of those people.

# SATURDAY

## March 3

### READING:

*He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. Mark 9:6–8*

### PRAY:

O, God of love, there are times when the problems in this world seem so big we cannot imagine how they might be redeemed. Remind us today of how Jesus lived and moved in the world and that then, as now, bringing life to others can be surprisingly simple. We thank you for the work PWRDF does to support people in doing business and sharing resources in ways that maximize health and wholeness. Grant us the courage and imagination to do the same, even where we are, this day. **Amen**

### ACT:

Reflect on a problem to which you know you more often contribute than work to resolve.

### GIVE:

A coin for doing something today that, either quickly or over time, would contribute to the resolution of this problem.

### REFLECT:

<http://www.justgeneration.ca/rwandan-doctor-shares-inspiring-story-of-resilience/>

# WEEK THREE

## SUNDAY

March 4

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### **PWRDF joins Foodgrains Bank Rohingya relief effort**

PWRDF is contributing \$20,000 from its Canadian Foodgrains Bank account to a food relief project in Bangladesh being managed by fellow Foodgrains Bank member World Renew. The effort will provide about 18,000 Rohingya refugees — who have fled to the Cox's Bazar region — with emergency rations of rice, lentils, oil, sugar, salt and high energy biscuits for three months. The project is budgeted at \$700,000.

The response is part of a larger cooperative effort between Foodgrains Bank, World Renew and Emergency Relief and Development Overseas (ERDO) in collaboration with their local partners, with funding by seven other Foodgrains Bank members. The project implemented by ERDO is providing an additional 1,375 households (about 8,000 people) with the same rations and is budgeted at \$315,000.

More than half a million people have recently fled extreme violence in Myanmar in search of safety and freedom. “It’s a rapidly growing humanitarian crisis where hundreds of thousands of innocent people are in urgent need of help,” says Foodgrains Bank program manager Matthew Van Geest, who is coordinating the response on behalf of the organization. “We’re glad that through our member churches and agencies, the Canadian church can be so visible in the face of so much suffering,” he adds.

generations ago. They speak a different language and are of a different religion than the majority of Myanmar's citizens, who are Buddhist. The Myanmar government considers them stateless, and places restrictions on their rights as citizens. <http://pwrdf.org/2017/pwrdf-joins-foodgrains-bank-rohingya-relief-effort/>

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about the Canadian Foodgrains Bank?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and PWRDF's fellow member World Renew. We give thanks for their work to eliminate hunger. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping people throughout the world to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# MONDAY

## March 5

### READING:

*Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:1–3*

### PRAY:

Holy One, we thank you for the gift of your Son, who shows us the way to abundant life and sets a pattern for us of community and sharing. We see that community and sharing within the organizations that are members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Keep us mindful in our own lives of how we relate to money, creation, and the food we access, and the impact this has on the lives and relationships of others. **Amen**

### ACT:

Think of a time in your life when you did not have enough food and were hungry. If you can remember a person who helped you during this time, reflect on what you might do this week to honour them by passing it on.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar to honour the memory of someone who fed you when you were hungry.

# TUESDAY

## March 6

### READING:

*You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.*  
Exodus 20: 13–17

### PRAY:

O, God of compassion, in the Ten Commandments, the way that the Israelites were called to live was spelled out clearly. Most of the 10 are about how to live in relationship with one another, it is complicated work as people can be so different from one another. Be with us when we struggle to live in healthy relationship with one another as you call us to, and be with all those who are suffering from violence or oppression because of the challenge of overcoming and living with difference. **Amen**

### ACT:

The Rohingya refugees who received emergency food aid faced extreme violence in Myanmar, which led them to flee for their own safety. Do some research to find out more about their story, and reflect on these words from Desmond Tutu:

“We know that you know that human beings may look and worship differently—and some may have greater firepower than others—but none are superior and none inferior; that when you scratch the surface we are all the same, members of one family, the human family; that there are no natural differences between Buddhists and Muslims; and that whether we are Jews or Hindus, Christians or atheists, we are born to love, without prejudice. Discrimination doesn't come naturally; it is taught.”



### GIVE:

If you faced extreme violence and needed to flee your home today, what is one thing (other than people) you would want to take with you? Reflect on what that item means to you. Add a coin to your jar in memory of all those who are fleeing violence today and one for the things that add meaning to their lives.

# WEDNESDAY

## March 7

### READING:

*Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' John 2:19–20*

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### **PWRDF and Foodgrains Bank: 'Together we are stronger'**

Ending global hunger can seem like a daunting task, but for Gary Weir it's an essential one to tackle. Weir is a member of St. George's Anglican Church in Fitzroy, Ontario.

"It's important for us to give back because we are a wealthy country," says Weir. "We live in a global society, so we need to support other people as well."

For that reason, in 2009, Weir and his brother Ron began sharing proceeds from their dairy farm to help people experiencing hunger overseas.

"It was my brother's idea," says Weir. "He thought it would be a good way to contribute back." Each year, they'd donate money to Canadian Foodgrains Bank, designating it to The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund's (PWRDF) account for its work in reducing hunger worldwide.

A couple of years later, the brothers decided they wanted to do more to support people overseas, and the West Carleton Growing Project was born.

They rented 25 acres of land and began planting, tending and harvesting a crop. Once harvested, the growing project sells



the crop and donates the proceeds to PWRDF's account at the Foodgrains Bank.

Since Weir and his brother attend St. George's Anglican Church in Fitzroy Harbour, he says it was natural for them to designate the money they raised to PWRDF's account.

It was also natural for local Anglican churches to get involved.

The growing project receives support each year from the local Parish of Fitzroy Harbour and Christ Church Bells Corners. Through offerings and various events, the parishes raise funds to help cover costs of inputs like seeds, chemicals and fertilizers.

Weir says he's grateful to partner with the churches in addressing world hunger.

"You have to start from somewhere," says Weir. "So we're starting from somewhere."

Since 2009, the West Carleton Growing Project has raised over \$60,000 for PWRDF's account at the Foodgrains Bank.

It's just one example of the ways Canadian Anglicans have been working together to end world hunger since PWRDF joined the Foodgrains Bank ten years ago. Not only have they been working together to end hunger, Anglicans have also been working alongside other Christian denominations for the past ten years.

"Joining the Foodgrains Bank has allowed for truly ecumenical work to respond to global hunger," says Naba Gurung, PWRDF's humanitarian response coordinator.

<http://pwrdf.org/2017/together-we-are-stronger/>

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about the Canadian Foodgrains Bank?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for Gary and Ron Weir, and the West Carleton Growing Project. We give thanks for the way in which churches are partnering together to address world hunger. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping people around the world to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# THURSDAY

## March 8

### READING:

*For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 22–24*

### PRAY:

Holy One, Your Son spoke truth to power and challenged those who would follow him to do the same. Foster in your Church a spirit of imagination to dream up new ways to share resources and life. Make us into a people that link ministry to time spent over a shared meal at the table and sharing our abundance with others. **Amen**

### ACT:

The work of the West Carleton Growing Project began with 25 acres of rented land to grow produce to sell to raise money for PWRDF's account in the Foodgrains Bank. They grew food in their own community to help feed people around the world. Find out what community gardening projects exist in your community or region.



### GIVE:

Pray for good weather and abundant harvests for all to share. Add a coin to your jar, planting it like a seed in the ground.

# FRIDAY

## March 9

### READING:

*For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. 1 Corinthians 1:25*

### PRAY:

God of Power and Wisdom, we hear so often in the news, in our world, and in our communities of deep pain and struggle—poverty, war, inequality, hunger, illness and more. Help us to remember what we read in 1 Corinthians this week—that even your weakness is stronger than our strength. Help us to continue to turn to you when we need strength to continue seeking justice in our world, and for your wisdom to guide us.

**Amen**

### ACT:

Read your local news, praying for those experiencing pain and struggle. Find a tangible way that you can help relieve some of that pain and struggle.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar, reflecting on the way in which CFGB and their partners work to alleviate pain and struggle by seeking to end hunger.

# SATURDAY

## March 10

### READING:

*Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. Exodus 20:8–11*

### PRAY:

Faithful God, we remember during Lent that our Lord spent time with the crowds, time with those closest to him, and time in prayer, with you. As he found ways to remember what his time on earth was about, may we make it a priority to do the same. We pray for PWRDF partners throughout the world, as well, that they would have access to food that would feed their souls, even as they work to bring food to others. **Amen**

### ACT:

At a meal today that you share with others, at work, at home, or elsewhere, challenge those eating with you to refrain from using the words “I” or “me”. Bring to each participant’s attention the importance of the discipline of balancing our needs and concerns with those of others.



### GIVE:

A coin to the work of PWRDF each time one of you says “I” or “me” during your shared meal.

### REFLECTION:

<http://www.justgeneration.ca/from-placemats-to-postcards-for-pikangikum-my-involvement-in-pwrdf/>

# WEEK FOUR

## SUNDAY

March 11

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### **PWRDF leading \$375,000 food assistance project in South Sudan**

As winter begins to settle across Canada, hunger persists in South Sudan. PWRDF is leading a food distribution project that aims to feed thousands in a rural county in Eastern Equatoria State, through our equity in Canadian Foodgrains Bank and a 4:1 match from Global Affairs Canada. We are grateful for a contribution of \$100,000 from the United Church of Canada towards this project.

“We are now responsible for making sure everything goes as planned, dealing with the suppliers, monitoring and evaluating,” says Naba Gurung, PWRDF’s Humanitarian Response Coordinator, who is in touch with Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) South Sudan on a daily basis.

The budget of \$375,024 allowed the purchase of 201.6 tonnes of sorghum (a staple grain similar to oats), 26.88 tonnes of beans, 16.13 tonnes of cooking oil and 4.03 tonnes of salt, including transportation and staff support. ADRA South Sudan is distributing the food.

The project is benefiting 1,799 households (8,960 individuals) in the seven payams or districts of Kapoeta North County: Chumakori, Najie, Nakwa, Paringa, Wokobu, Lomeyen and Lokwamor. ADRA South Sudan staff and the local communities are now planning the third and final monthly distribution for the end of December, just before Christmas. <http://pwrdf.org/2017/the-happiest-day-of-my-life-has-finally-come/>

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about South Sudan?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion,

We give you thanks for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency South Sudan. We give thanks for the work they have done distributing food to those in need. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping those who are hungry to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# MONDAY

## March 12

### READING:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. John 3:16*

### PRAY:

O, Divine Communion of Love, we know that your desire for us is to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. We give thanks for those who have taught us to walk in the path of Christ. We remember those, who, supporting the work of PWRDF, are teaching others to move in ways that would feed many. We also pray for those throughout the world who are feeding the hungry and working to find long term sustainable solutions for food security. **Amen**

### ACT:

Visit <http://pwrdf.org/2017/the-happiest-day-of-my-life-has-finally-come/> and read the stories of the people benefiting from this food assistance project.



### GIVE:

Pray for all those who are hungry today, that the day will soon come when they no longer know hunger. Add a coin to the jar in thanksgiving for the meals that you ate today.



# TUESDAY

## March 13

### READING:

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*

### PRAY:

O, God of all, we know that every good and perfect gift comes from you and, yet, we store up more than we need and fail to share with others as we could, and should. Make us mindful this day of what we cling to too tightly. Show us what we might open ourselves to by letting go of our grasp even slightly. **Amen**

### ACT:

Learn about what happens to picked-over produce, or goods nearing or past their best before dates at your local grocery store. Contact store management to share ideas of how passed over items might be distributed in ways that would greatly improve the dietary intake of those who don't have access to sufficient healthy food.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar for each item of produce you purchase but don't consume (or share) this week.

# WEDNESDAY

## March 14

### READING:

*Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:17*

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### Voices of Hope—Cuba

Roberto Chavez, a small-holder Cuban farmer, has received agricultural training from PWRDF partner the Cuban Council of Churches (CIC). He established a family farm on the roof of his home that provides him with fruits and vegetables, as well as an area to raise animals, which are valuable protein sources. Roberto's project has been so successful that his family does not require all of its produce, so he is able to sell it to other households who are in need. PWRDF has worked with CIC to provide education for households like Roberto's, and to encourage communities throughout Cuba to use sustainable agricultural practices. Roberto and other farmers have found that sustainable agriculture is an effective way to achieve prosperity and to help the community survive the economic crisis that hit Cuba after its primary trading partner, the Soviet Union, collapsed in the early 1990s.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about Roberto Chavez and CIC?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for Roberto and the Cuban Council of Churches. We give thanks for the way in which their work helps people grow and raise healthy food in sustainable ways. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, providing people with education that will help them to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# THURSDAY

## March 15

### READING:

*From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' Numbers 21:4–5*

### PRAY:

Steadfast God, You brought your beloved people out of slavery in Egypt into freedom in the wilderness, where they knew hunger. Be with those who are hungry in your world today, as you were with your people then, and be with those who are seeking new ways to feed themselves, their families, and their communities. **Amen**

### ACT:

Contact your local food bank to find out what help they need—volunteer time or food. Offer what you can to help, and invite a friend to join you.



### GIVE:

Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for those who regularly give their time to food banks, helping to ensure people in their communities have something to eat. Add a coin to your jar in honour of them.

# FRIDAY

## March 16

### READING:

*For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.*  
*John 3:20–22*

### PRAY:

O, Keeper of Days, we give thanks for our identity in you, and that we are saved by your grace, not our own works. Show us ways in which we might support the work of feeding those who don't have food security, even from afar, remembering that, helping us to remember that it too is part of who we are through you. **Amen**

### ACT:

Food security is about more than just having enough to eat today. Do some research to learn more about what food security means (be sure to take a look at PWRDF's youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/PWRDF>)



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar if you are food secure.

# SATURDAY

## March 17

### READING:

*But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4–7*

### PRAY:

O, God of every living thing, remind us today of your desire to always grow good things in and through us. Make us mindful of ways in which we bring life to others and of those ways in which we do not. In all that we say, do, and give, may we only make choices that build up individuals and communities, in the way of Christ. **Amen**

### ACT:

With other friends from your parish and community, watch for vegetable plants growing in your own gardens or obtain locally sourced vegetable seeds that are ready to plant. When the time comes to transplant them, sell the plants at a minimal cost to raise funds to support the work of PWRDF.



### GIVE:

A coin for every plant or cutting in your garden or home you recall receiving from someone else.

### REFLECT:

<http://www.justgeneration.ca/hunger-and-fullness/>

# WEEK FIVE

## SUNDAY

March 18

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### Waiting to go home: an Iraqi woman's story

In June 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, known as ISIL, took over Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. In less than a year ISIL had expanded into central Iraq. By mid-2015, the Iraqi government, with help from the international community, began taking back some centrally located cities, including Fallujah. Last October, the military operation to take back Mosul began and it is ongoing.

In the meantime, the number of displaced persons in Iraq sits at a staggering 3.3 million, plus approximately 225,000 Syrian refugees. That's roughly the population of the Greater Toronto Area, or more than the population of all four Atlantic provinces combined, or Saskatchewan and Manitoba combined. The UN has called it "the single most complex humanitarian operation in the world."

PWRDF responds to emergencies through ACT Alliance, an umbrella organization of church-funded development agencies from around the world. Since 2014, PWRDF has given \$100,000 to an ACT Alliance project supporting refugees in northern Iraq. The key members of ACT facilitating the work are Christian Aid, the Lutheran World Federation, Norwegian Church Aid and Hungarian Inter-church Aid. There are several local partners on the ground working with these ACT members.

The overall objective of this \$8-million project is to make life bearable for the refugees. They are in desperate need of the basics: food, water, shelter, hygiene, schools, cash and psychosocial supports.

<http://pwrdf.org/2017/waiting-to-go-home-an-iraqi-womans-story/>

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about the ACT Alliance?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for ACT Alliance and their members. We give thanks for the way in which ACT helps to meet the needs of refugees. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping those who are displaced to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**



# MONDAY

## March 19

### READING:

*The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. Jeremiah 31:31–32*

### PRAY:

Loving God, we acknowledge that we often take our safety and security for granted. Open our eyes to the ways you are at work in our lives and the ways in which you care for us. Help us to become agents of your grace for those in our communities who are unsure of their place in society, who live in conflict, or who struggle to feel your presence. As you fulfilled Jeremiah's promise of a new covenant through the coming of your son Jesus, may you fulfill the hopes of those—like Zinab—who live in expectation of better days ahead. **Amen**

### ACT:

When considering the experience of refugees, we might think their problems are over when they arrive in a safe country like Canada. However, the work of building a new life in a new country (with many cultural differences) is only just beginning. Consider how overwhelming it would be to leave an entire life behind because of war or unrest and face the daunting task of starting again. Thankfully, there are newcomer resettlement organizations that work to make this transition easier. Find a resettlement organization in your area and contact them to learn how you can make the adjustment to Canadian life easier for a newcomer family.



### GIVE:

Reflect on each of the places you've lived in your life where you felt safe and secure, or perhaps even took your security for granted. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for these places and add a coin to your jar for each.

# TUESDAY

## March 20

### READING:

*But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*  
*Jeremiah 31:33*

### PRAY:

God of hope, we know that all of humanity fails to love our neighbours as ourselves, which we see through the persecution and oppression of our siblings throughout the world. In our brokenness, help us to recognize the anguish we cause others. Help us to turn towards you so that we may instead bring about your unity and healing. Bless the work of organizations such as the ACT Alliance, who are beacons of your love and healing for people living in conflict and strife. May we be inspired by their example to see the places where there is darkness and work to bring forth your light.

**Amen**

### ACT:

Despite the ways we fail to love our neighbours as ourselves, simple gestures can still make a world of difference in someone's life. Is there a new-to-Canada family living in your area? Write a card or a letter that welcomes them to the neighbourhood and expresses your gratitude for their presence in your community.



### GIVE:

Reflect on a time when you lived in waiting, but felt comforted by the presence of God. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace, and add a coin to your jar to celebrate both God's—and your own—perseverance.

# WEDNESDAY

## March 21

### READING:

*No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. Jeremiah 31:34*

### —PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY—

#### Refuge Eygpt

Rasha is a 27-year-old Sudanese woman who has been living in Cairo for a year. She is pregnant and suffering from anemia. Her aunt told her to visit the health clinic at Refuge Egypt. She came to Egypt with her husband but unfortunately, he abandoned her and now she will be a single mother. At Refuge Egypt she received excellent care. "There is not a place like the place here," says Rasha. "I can come at any time during work hours and I'm sure I will find help. I cannot get help at any other place." Since 1987, Refuge Egypt has been operating as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Egypt based in All Saints' Cathedral. About 250,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in Egypt, arriving from the wartorn and drought plagued places that have dominated our headlines for the past two years. PWRDF has supported Refuge Egypt's work for more than 20 years as it administers health care, emergency food relief and other social supports. When a family brings their child to the Well Baby and Well Child clinics at Refuge Egypt, they receive a food basket with milk, rice, cooking oil, biscuits, cheese and peanut butter. These food packages draw parents to bring in their children, as well as provide an opportunity for staff to talk about proper nutrition to ensure their child's growth is not stunted. Good health is key to helping a family resettle or prepare for their next move.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about Refuge Egypt?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for Refuge Egypt. We give thanks for the health care, emergency food relief and social supports offered to refugees. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping those who are displaced to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# THURSDAY

## March 22

### READING:

*So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'; as he says also in another place, 'You are a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek.'* Hebrews 5:5-6

### PRAY:

God of healing, we thank you for the life of your son Jesus Christ, who restored the sick and kissed the leper clean. May you protect those who follow in His footsteps, providing care for those who need it—even in places where it's dangerous for them to do so. May you send your healing energy to all who are suffering, and may you continue to bless the work of organizations like Refugee Egypt, who restore our siblings to health. **Amen**

### ACT:

Displaced peoples living in refugee camps often struggle to access adequate health care. Newcomer families—even after arriving in Canada—face challenges to settling in their communities. Despite the good work that's taking place both here and across the world, there is still so much more to do. Write your elected officials and strongly encourage them to make more funding available for international development across the globe and for newcomer settlement here in Canada. Language and employment skills training go a long way towards helping newcomers establish a stable life for their families.



### GIVE:

Reflect on a time when you embarked on a new beginning and consider the people who helped you along the way. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for their role in your life and add a coin to your jar in their honour.

# FRIDAY

## March 23

### READING:

*Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.' John 12:23–24*

### PRAY:

Gracious God, you have provided enough resources so that all your children should have access to what they need for a healthy, prosperous life. Through our own greed, we have failed to ensure that our siblings can share equally in what you have created. We give thanks for those organizations who ensure that all who are hungry—especially refugees and the displaced—have food to meet basic nutritional needs. May you move our hearts to reimagine systems where all humanity, whether newcomer or established citizen, may take only what we need and share the bounty with others around us. **Amen**

### ACT:

Refugees and newcomers are especially vulnerable to food security issues, as they often don't have the resources to provide for their families—even after arriving in a country like Canada. Research how these groups are particularly affected by such issues and identify ways you can make it easier for newcomers in your community to access the food and supplies they need to build a healthy life.



### GIVE:

Reflect on a time when you received a blessing that made it easier to provide for your family. Say a prayer of thanksgiving and add a coin to your jar in gratitude for this blessing and the impact it had on your life.

# SATURDAY

## March 24

### READING:

*Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. John 12:25–26*

### PRAY:

O, God of those who wander, we remember today refugees who struggle to provide for their families because their lives have been derailed. We give thanks for PWRDF partners who work with creativity and compassion to empower these people to get their lives back on track. Make us ever watchful for ways to support this work even in, and with the gift of, our relative stability. **Amen**

### ACT:

Consider factors that might impact a refugee's ability to provide balanced and nutritious meals for loved ones here in Canada. How would education, access to medical care, employment status and housing each impact food security for this portion of the population in particular?



### GIVE:

Donate a coin for each nationality represented by a friend or loved one in your life, giving thanks for the ways in which each colours your life.

### REFLECT:

<http://pwrdf.org/i-was-a-stranger-and-you-welcomed-me/>

# HOLY WEEK

## PALM SUNDAY

### Sunday, March 25

#### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

### Philippines

When Typhoon Lawin ripped through the Cordillera region of the Philippines in October 2016, it left a thick layer of silt, pebbles, stones and boulders in its wake. The rice paddies in the villages of Namitpit and Patungcaleo were destroyed. It was a case of déjà vu for the peasant farmers who just a year before had painstakingly cleared their fields of 73 centimetres of silt courtesy of Typhoon Ineng. Newly-built gabion dikes, designed to prevent this from happening, could not withstand the forces of Lawin. The deposits are actually the result of mine tailings from the Lepanto gold mine up the Abra river, which are moved by the severe storms. The damage to crops affects not only the farmers' food security, but their livelihoods. Since the 1980s, PWRDF has partnered with Cordillera Peoples Alliance, a consortium of more than 250 community-based organizations of which Cordillera Disaster Response and Development Services (CorDis RDS) is a member. This partnership made it possible for PWRDF to provide \$11,000 for food relief to the more than 500 affected households. This distribution was carried out in December, when food supplies were down and the lack of farm income was severe.



**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about the Cordillera Peoples Alliance?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for the Cordillera Peoples Alliance. We give thanks for the over 500 households who received food relief after Typhoon Lawin. We pray that by your grace, their work will continue to prosper, helping people to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# MONDAY

## March 26

### READING:

*Hosanna!*

*Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—  
the King of Israel!*

*Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:*

*‘Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.*

*Look, your king is coming,*

*sitting on a donkey’s colt!’ John 12:13–15*

### PRAY:

As people changed by the good news of Jesus, O God, we confess that we sometimes struggle with what can seem to be bad news all around. As we turn to you, remind us that this world is a gift full of possibility, and that our choices make a difference. Grant us the grace of hope in the face of all that we encounter and the courage to believe that good things can indeed be grown. Strengthen our PWRDF partners in the work that they do and assure us all that, while you don’t need the right conditions to bring about change, you do require people committed to making it happen. **Amen**

### ACT:

With a friend or family member, discuss a region in the world you know to be in a state of crisis. What do you find most distressing about that situation? What is being done to help the people? Share your findings with your parish. In cooperation with those at your church, discuss the possibility of a bake sale or other fundraiser to collect funds for the work being done there.



### GIVE:

A coin for some good news you hear today.

# TUESDAY

## March 27

### READING:

*O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his steadfast love endures for ever! Let Israel say,  
'His steadfast love endures for ever.'* Psalm 118: 1–2

### PRAY:

God our Cornerstone, we know that you are good, and that your steadfast love endures forever. Help us to remember that and help us to turn to you when we hear of emergencies in the world and we question your role in those things. Remind us that your love is with those that are suffering, and help us to put our love there as well, as we seek to love one another and draw nearer to you. **Amen**

### ACT:

Find out what resources and supports are available in your community or region in the event of a natural disaster or emergency.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar in celebration of those who prepare to care for others in an emergency.

# WEDNESDAY

## March 28

### READING:

*Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*We bless you from the house of the Lord.*

*The Lord is God,*

*and he has given us light.*

*Bind the festal procession with branches,*

*up to the horns of the altar. Psalm 118:26–27*

### –PWRDF GOOD NEWS STORY–

#### Emergency Response—Fort McMurray

Thick black smoke enveloped and smothered all that was visible while embers were falling from the sky. There was a tunnel of fire surrounding the highway out of city. The intense heat was causing tires to melt and car trunks to be inoperable. Neighbourhoods had been abandoned and declared lost. On May 3, 2016, Tara Munn and her husband made the decision to evacuate Fort McMurray with their four daughters, three dogs, and two cats, and head north to safety. They left behind their house filled with precious belongings—including a bag of their youngest daughter’s beloved stuffed animals. (They put them in a hearth in the farthest corner of the basement in the hopes it would survive if the house burned down.) At the PWRDF Annual General Meeting in November, Tara shared her family’s story of the fire that devastated Fort McMurray and the surrounding area last April and May. She spoke of the utter destruction that they witnessed as well as the outpouring of support that they received from across the country. The food bank was open 12 hours a day with lines stretching around the block when Fort McMurray residents were finally allowed to return on June 5. Many organizations, including PWRDF, have given grants or provided help in many forms including food, money and the

opportunity to rebuild homes. Tara would like to thank people for responding generously and quickly. She also asks for prayers of help and guidance as it will take time and hard work from everyone to rebuild and strengthen the Fort Mac community. Much was destroyed in the fire, but their faith, desire to rebuild and the sense of community and belonging was not. Please keep them in your prayers.

**Q:** *What surprises, challenges and gives you hope from this story about Fort McMurray?*

**PRAYER:**

God our companion, we give you thanks for the generous response to disasters like the Fort McMurray wildfires. We give thanks for the safe evacuation and return of the people who live there, and for all of the support and resources that were available to them. We pray that by your grace, PWRDF will continue to support local communities in response to emergencies, and work will continue, helping people in crisis to live more truly just, healthy and peaceful lives. **Amen**

# MAUNDY THURSDAY

## Thursday, March 29

### READING:

*His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. John 12:16*

### PRAY:

God our Creator, as we near the end of this Lenten journey, help us to continue to turn to you, striving to live in the way that you call us, modelling our lives after Jesus, who on this night gathered with his friends, washed their feet, and broke bread with them. **Amen**

### ACT:

Think back on these Lenten reflections. What actions have you put off until later? What changes did you decide to make? Make concrete plans for those things to happen.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar for each thing you plan to do. Add one if you've done everything already.

# GOOD FRIDAY

## Friday, March 30

### READING:

*I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.*

*The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone. Psalm 118:21–22*

### PRAY:

Holy One, your Son knew what it was to feel abandoned and alone. Make us mindful of those in our daily lives who may feel the same and grant us the courage to be present to them in their sense of loss. Help us to provide a secure base for them to heal and grow, even as PWRDF does for so many throughout the world. **Amen**

### ACT:

Think of a person known to you who has experienced loss. Invite them to share a meal with you this week.



### GIVE:

Add a coin to your jar in honour of a person or community who supported you through a time of loss.

# HOLY SATURDAY

## Saturday, March 31

### READING:

*O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever. Psalm 118:29*

On this day, as we sit in the grief of the death of Jesus, waiting with expectation for Easter morning, think back on these 40 days of reflection. Offer prayers of thanksgiving for all of the good work you heard about, and offer prayers of comfort and peace for those who are in the midst of their own “Holy Saturdays”, those who are hungry, those who grieve, those who are displaced, those who are oppressed, and all those who do not know true justice, health and peace. Pray that, as Jesus overcame death, that justice, health and peace will overcome struggle throughout the world.



# LIVING LENT 2018



The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund  
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