



2013

Lent Resource

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



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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

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THE FAST

Reflections for the Season of Lent, 2013



DURING Lent we are preparing ourselves for the coming of Easter. We spiritually prepare ourselves during this season through intentional acts of prayer and penance. We physically demonstrate this through a tradition of fasting or giving something up.

This Lent PWRDF invites you to take a few moments each day to reflect upon the meaning behind your fast. We encourage you to slow down and enter into prayerful consideration of the physical and spiritual benefits of fasting. We invite you to join us in these Lenten Reflections, which encourage thought on issues of food security.

Each Sunday we will connect the weekly Gospel theme with a PWRDF good news story. Monday through Saturday we offer reflections on those themes within the context of a fast and of local realities. We will then enter into prayer and encourage your own spiritual challenge.

Ash Wednesday

THE FAST BEGINS



“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

“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.”

— Gospel: Matthew 6.1–6, 16–21

THE Gospel we hear as we begin our Lenten journey offers strict instructions as to how we are to live our lives. We are invited to focus on our own actions and perceptions, and to amend them as needed. This

season of Lent invites us to be generous, prayerful, humble, and focused on spiritual, not earthly, things.

This Lent we will focus our attention on our relationship with food, equally considering how we might be generous, prayerful, humble, and spiritual about this most basic need.

Our PWRDF good news story comes from PWRDF blog:

THE BEST \$2

by Simon Chambers

The drought and famine in East Africa was a major news story in 2011, and was an emergency that PWRDF promoted a lot. Anglicans responded with over \$750,000 dollars in donations to the relief efforts through PWRDF, money that is being put to good use in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

As we have been processing the donations, Ricky de Castro — a member of our Finance and Administration team — came across one of our online donations.

The donation was for \$2.

There was a note attached to it, which read: *In keeping with the Biblical account of the woman who gave two mites, I am giving the only \$2 I have right now, in the hopes that it will relieve someone, somewhere, in the Horn of Africa.*

Reading the note that this person attached to his donation made my day. Not just that he was remembering the importance of giving small things, but that he wanted to make sure his last \$2 went to help someone who was worse off than himself.

Thursday 14 February

In the Garden – *Environment*

How people think about the land will determine how people will treat the land. For some, land is a mere commodity to be bought and sold, used and abused. For others, land is appreciated as the source of nourishment necessary for life.

In Canada, we have the opportunity to ‘own’ land. Restricted only by local legislation, we can do whatever we like on that property; build structures, plant gardens, set pavement. We seldom appreciate a sense of relationship with the earth; we forget our responsibilities as stewards with creation. We become arrogant, forgetting that many people in other parts of the world do not have similar access to, or rights of use for the land.

We give thanks for the land which is available to us; for home properties and publically owned spaces. We pray for those whose land is not their own; we pray for those whose access to land is taken away. We pray for those whose attitude toward land is one of humble relationship.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Reflect on how you consider land – is it only a thing that can be owned or a resource to be treasured?

Friday 15 February

Going Back to the Source – *Access*

For some, access to food is so pervasive that it is not addressed; the sharing of food is considered hospitality. For others, access to food is so scarce that it cannot be ignored.

In Canada, we tend to greet one another with some variation of “Hello” and “How are you?” In many parts of the world, however, a standard greeting is “Have you eaten today?” Most Canadians have had their basic need for food met; any offering of food is merely an expression of hospitality. In places where food is scarce, this kind of greeting is not a hospitable nicety, but an offer to assist with survival.

We give thanks for the abundant access we have to food. We give thanks for the social services such as food banks, school lunch programmes, and soup kitchens, which assist those in need. We pray for those people who do not have access to these systems; we pray for those for whom these systems do not exist. We pray for those whose nourishment depends solely on the generosity of their neighbours.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How have you responded to hunger in your community?

Saturday 16 February

The Process – *Production*

In asking a blessing over a meal, we often give thanks for the food, for those who have made our food and for those who go without. Often, however, we do not consider how our food has been processed before we purchase it.

Despite recent trends toward eating local foods, most Canadians eat pre-packaged or imported foods, and so do not know who has made their food or where it was processed. In the developing world, most people only eat what they have grown themselves or what they have traded with their neighbours. Their only meals will be what they themselves have produced.

We give thanks for those who are involved in food production; for those who farm and fish for our benefit. We pray for those who farm and fish for their families’ survival. We give thanks for the PWRDF donors whose money provides seeds, education and other assistance for family food production.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: At a meal today, give thanks and ask blessings upon a food producer that you know.

Lent 1

TEMPTATION



Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

— Gospel: Luke 4:1–13

THE first few days of a fast can be the most difficult. We are acutely aware that we are going without something we used to enjoy on a daily basis. We recognize that adhering to our chosen fast will not be an easy

task throughout the forty days of the season. The more we think about what we have given up, the more we seem to want it; we will be more aware of advertising or other people enjoying that treat. Our temptation seems more difficult because this fast is by choice. For many people the fast is enforced by circumstances beyond their control.

Our PWRDF good news story celebrates increased nutritional diversity:

HALF A MILLION PEOPLE RECEIVE HELP THROUGH PWRDF/CIDA JOINT EFFORT

by Simon Chambers

Between August 2008 and December 2011, PWRDF programs in Bangladesh, Burundi, Mozambique, and Tanzania were funded in conjunction with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Working with local partner organizations in each country, the \$4,956,000 program reached over 557,000 people.

Partners’ programs focused on health care, environmental sustainability, and promoting good governance, including the construction of health clinics, working with farmers to promote chemical-free farming techniques, and a focus on enhancing the role of women in local communities.

Josephine Kabanga is a farmer, a widow, and the mother of six children; she was living in Tanzania as a refugee but has now returned to Burundi. Here is her story:

When I came back from the refugee camp in Tanzania, I did not have anything. My husband’s family had taken back our land. I had to start from scratch. I was living in my mother’s house that had a small plot of land, but we did not use it for agriculture. In the refugee camp we didn’t have much to do. I didn’t even know how to work the land

and grow vegetables and fruits. Through the program I learned so much. I have planted 'lenga-lenga' [amaranth], onions, and eggplant. I have also planted bananas, papayas and an avocado tree. I have a goat and my children can have milk from it every day. We don't go hungry anymore. I sell lenga-lenga in the market and bring home 6,000 Burundian francs (approximately \$4 Canadian) a day. Some days even more. Before, I could not even make 1,000 Burundian francs (approx. \$0.67 Canadian) a week. We had our first papayas from our trees and next year I will have my first bunch of bananas. My life has changed. And I am sure it will continue to change even more.

This week

we will consider temptation and doing without variety within the food system.

Monday 18 February

We Want – Health

A healthy diet is balanced with proteins, dairy, fruits/vegetables, and grains. A good variety of these components is optimal to provide the nutrients the human body needs.

In Canada we have guides to assist with attaining a balanced diet. We use recipes with plenty of spices to keep our food experience interesting and enjoyable; we get bored without variety. In some places, people are happy to eat the same bland food day after day, as it is the only food they will receive.

We give thanks for the abundance of food in our lives, where we can choose what to eat based on our whims and preferences. We pray for those whose limited food is lacking in variety.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are your prayers as balanced as your diet, or could they benefit from new variety?

Tuesday 19 February

We Don't Want – Inequity

In the desert, the devil's temptation offers an immediate reward, but Jesus knows that in the long term, his resistance is better. We too are invited to consider the benefits of long-term food security over short-term band-aid solutions. Ending hunger requires both the immediate feeding as well as processes for improved access to food production.

In Canada, we discuss food issues from a well-fed perspective, knowing that there is a 'next meal' to expect, knowing that our temptations are luxuries that offer little nutritional value. In countries like Tanzania and Bangladesh, discussing food security happens from a place of insecurity, where one person's overindulgence may mean another's immediate hunger.

We give thanks for the food which we store in our pantries and freezers, allowing us options for our meals and demonstrating the surplus we have access to. We pray for those without such abundance, and are grateful for the work of local partners who help reduce immediate hunger and establish food secure programmes.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Does your food storage demonstrate surplus? What other areas of your life demonstrate surplus?

Wednesday 20 February

Mix It Up – Consumption

Growing a variety of crops is a good idea, not just for a variety of food stuffs, but also to prevent pests and keep the soil healthy. Complementary planting is a zero-technology, low-cost, natural and effective way to keep plants healthy.

In Canada when we choose to grow a garden, we have many methods of pest control available to use. We have easy access to chemical pesticides, naturally sourced pesticides, garden netting,

and other means, some even formulated just for one type of crop. We are also blessed with alternative means of acquiring food should our gardens be overrun by these pests. These pest control resources are not always available or are too expensive in many parts of the world, where a pest infestation can mean crop devastation, which leads to hunger.

We give thanks for the gardening aids available to us to prevent pest infestations. We acknowledge that our use of such resources is a luxury. We pray for those who are learning skills through the PWRDF/CIDA programmes so that their gardens will be healthy and pest free.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are your spiritual practices varied enough to withstand an unexpected spiritual pest?

Thursday 21 February

In the Garden – *Environment*

A key component to plant health is soil health. Plants need a variety of nutrients in order to thrive; different crops use different nutrients. By rotating crops on the land year to year, the soil is given an opportunity to replenish its nutrients. Monoculture, the practice of consistently planting only one crop, will deplete the soil of nutrients and lead to eventual crop failure.

Canadian geography provides significant amounts of abundant and fertile soil. We also have the ability to supplement our soil with fertilizers of both natural and chemical composition. We have the capacity to test our soils to determine what nutrients are missing and so provide those to the soil. In the developing world, these resources are scarce; crop rotation is essential to maintain soil health and crop success which will sustain life.

We give thanks for the fertile soil upon which we live, and we realize that we often take this soil for granted. We give

thanks for the knowledge of the benefits of crop rotation, being shared with those whose soil is less fertile than our own. We pray for those whose continued food security depends on natural means of soil preservation.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are you spiritually fertile or barren? Do you need to rotate or change your spiritual practices to maintain new life?

Friday 22 February

Going Back to the Source – *Access*

As with anything, you have to know what you are doing if you are to be successful. In trying to learn how to make food accessible, you have to know what it needs. Whether fishing, animal husbandry, or crop gardening, one must observe, learn, and experience the processes.

In Canada people learn in a variety of ways. There are formal education programmes, learning from experienced people, books to read, and plenty of internet tutorials offering advice and suggestions. In the developing world, however, these resources are not always available. Whether raising livestock or planting vegetable seeds, knowledge is often forgotten or unknown. Access to this knowledge can make the difference between abundant nourishment and starvation.

We give thanks for the ways in which we learn and experience. We give thanks that our daily food does not often depend on our knowledge. We pray for those who have lost knowledge of how to access sustainable food, we pray for those who are working to reinstate that common knowledge.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Do you know how to enliven your spiritual growth, or is it time to ask someone for help?

Saturday 23 February

The Process – Production

What we produce must reflect what we wish to eat. We need to consider what our needs and preferences are, what is locally feasible to grow, and what we will be able to share or sell, to be of wider community benefit, should we have a surplus.

Canadians tend to know what can be produced in their local context; our ocean access provides fish and seafood, our prairies grow our grain, fruits and vegetables are abundant in the lowlands. Due to technology and greenhouses, our local restrictions are not severe; we are also blessed with the ability to transport foods to different markets. People growing food in developing countries are limited to what they will personally consume or be able to sell at market; transportation of surplus is usually not an option. The success of food production in these places is determined by growing marketable produce in sustainable ways.

We give thanks for the food choices made available to us through food transportation. We pray for those whose food choices are more restricted, and whose marketing options are limited.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are you producing and sharing spiritual growth within your community, or are you looking for it to be provided externally?

Lent 2

SELF-DENIAL



At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

— Gospel: Luke 13:31–35

THIS week we continue to feel the temptation, but we remain steadfast in our self-denial. Jesus’ knew that his ministry to those in need was so important that he denied himself the safety the Pharisees were trying to offer. We are invited to recognize those times in our own lives when we are called to help those in need, sometimes denying ourselves some level of comfort in doing so.

*Our PWRDF good news story this week comes
from the PWRDF blog:*

GROCERY SHOPPING

By Simon Chambers

In the last couple of years I've found the prices for the basics — bread, milk, fruits and vegetables — have been going up quite a bit. My wife and I are conscious of these price shifts, and are looking at the effect it is having on our bank balance. Combine that with the rise in the price of gas, and we start to get a bit worried.

Now for us, groceries make up about 10% of our budget. So a 50% rise in staple prices would hurt for sure, but we would likely get through it by cutting back on the extras — seeing movies, eating out, etc. Maybe I'd buy fewer DVDs and my wife less knitting yarn.

For the poorest people in the world, 50-80% of their income goes towards buying food.

A 50% rise in the price of staples like rice and vegetables can easily push people into starvation. In fact, the number of people living in hunger in the world sits at around 900 million right now, which is down from the 963 million who were hungry at the height of the 2008 food crisis, but more than the 820 million who had lived in hunger before that crisis started.

The Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, has joined with other Anglican leaders in pressing the G20 agriculture ministers who met in Paris in 2011, to work to address the issues of high food prices and food insecurity which afflict so many around the world — mostly subsistence farmers, many of whom are women.

The Primates are calling for:

- More support for small farmers — most of whom are women who produce 60 to 80 per cent of food in the poorest countries
- More investment in agriculture, especially research and development
- Measures to stop speculation in food commodities
- Better training, access to credit and markets, and insurance schemes for small farmers
- Backing for recommendations that have come from agriculture ministers in developing countries
- G20 countries to keep the promises of the 2009 Aquila Food Security Initiative to achieve clear targets for higher spending on agriculture: Canada being the one country that has a record of meeting the goal.

This week

*we will focus on seeing the importance of helping others in need,
rather than keeping our focus on ourselves.*

Monday 25 February

We Want – Health

We want to be able to stick to our chosen diets when we are out shopping; we want to be able to afford the same level of nutrition that we have enjoyed in the past. We make our food choices based on our preferences.

Many of us in Canada eat special diets due to necessity (caused by allergies or intolerances) or due to personal choice (ethnic foods, vegetarianism, etc.). Additionally, some of us choose to eat organic foods, local foods, diet foods, food supplements. In the developing world, however, these choices are simply not available; food is food. Some areas have food,

others do not; some foods are affordable, others are not. PWRDF works in food security so that there will be sufficient food for everyone and systems where everyone can access nourishment.

We give thanks for the options we have when we are acquiring our food. We are grateful for the opportunity to make choices concerning our health through our food, for the privilege of being picky eaters. We pray for those who do not have that luxury; we pray for PWRDF partners whose work supports community health through nutrition.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How healthy are your food choices? How healthy is your spiritual nourishment?

Tuesday 26 February

We Don't Want – *Inequity*

Food prices are increasing, and will continue to do so. The cost of food in North America has depended on cheap transportation, increased fuel costs are increasing food costs. Climate change is affecting food prices; in the summer of 2012 grain prices rose in North America over 10%. We all have to make choices around our food purchases as a result.

In Canada these decisions will require moderate decreases in other spending; this most directly affects those already in low income situations. In the developing world, as food prices are increasing 50% and higher, the choices become more difficult; as hunger increases so does conflict over accessible food.

We give thanks for the food we have. We give thanks for the relatively low cost of our food and our ability to continue to eat daily. We pray for those whose budgets simply cannot afford the increase, for those whose food is being stolen, for those whose lives will see increased conflict over food supplies.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: As food costs continue to increase, what area(s) of your life are you cutting back on?

Wednesday 27 February

Mix It Up – *Consumption*

Food waste is a problem; nearly half of all food produced globally is wasted. I'm not referring to the inedible scraps, but perfectly good, healthy food. Transportation causes decay, processing can create more waste than useable food, supermarkets discard one third of food for not being pretty enough, 'western' kitchens pay for one quarter of their food to be carted away with the trash.

With infrequent shopping trips, bulk sizes and an all-you-can-eat mentality, many Canadians do not know appropriate portion sizes to cook or to eat. Many leftovers and forgotten foods get thrown out. While we would not consider taking one quarter of our food budget and throwing it in the trash, our habits are doing that for us. The developing world does not waste food to the same extent as it does not have the food to waste. PWRDF funded programmes teach people how to cook and store food to obtain maximum nutrition and decrease waste.

We give thanks for the abundance which has led us to carelessness with our food supply. We pray for wisdom to improve our relationship with food and so decrease our own food waste. We pray for those who would consider our waste to be a feast.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: What changes could you make to decrease your food waste? What changes could you make to decrease other areas of waste in your life?

Thursday 28 February

In the Garden – *Environment*

Food labelled "Organic" is becoming more common around the world since its introduction in the 1940's. Why organic? Because "conventional" food may have been genetically modified, exposed to chemical pesticides or fertilizers, human sewage sludge, irradiation, industrial solvents, food additives,

growth hormones, genetic organisms or nanotechnologies. These are done not to improve health but to increase appeal to consumers. These can damage the soil, water and air.

In Canada, organic farming and food purchases are a choice. The practice is key to food security in other areas. For example, a 2008 United Nations study shows organic agriculture to be more sustainable in the long-term, with improved soil fertility and drought resistance, and organic crops yielded more than double their conventional counterparts.

We give thanks for the opportunity to support environmental health and food security through organic farming. We pray that organic practices may continue to benefit the earth and the food system.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are your spiritual practices sustainable, or do they rely upon artificial external support?

Friday 01 March

Going Back to the Source – Access

The 'locavore' or local food movement began in North America in 2005. As publicity increased, people chose to eat only foods produced close to home (the distance varies, 50 or 100 kilometres); local foods mean a diet of foods eaten in their natural season or preserved from that time. Choosing local food options supports local economies and decreases the negative impacts of transporting food.

In Canada it can be difficult to eat exclusively local foods; urban dwellers do not have sufficient access to land or farmers markets, northern landscapes cannot support balanced diets. In the developing world, almost everyone is a locavore. Home gardens are a necessity rather than a hobby, transportation is done in baskets or carts rather than trucks and cargo ships.

We give thanks for those opportunities to support local food producers by choosing local foods. We recognize the denial

of variety when we do choose only locally sourced foods. We pray for those people whose food systems have never been able to generate any foods but what the people are able to produce themselves.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Can you be spiritually fed close to home, or do you need to travel?

Saturday 02 March

The Process – Production

The Slow Food movement recognizes the importance of pleasure connected to food, and encourages people to prepare and eat their food with intention, rather than simply ingesting senselessly. This movement encourages trying new recipes and new foods, encourages home cooking and shared meals, embraces a slower pace of life, and connects the quality of food to the quality of life and identity.

The first Anglican Church of Canada Justice Camp in 2005 focused on food. One immersion group visited a potato processing plant to learn that every day 2.2 million pounds of potatoes were processed into 1 million pounds of fast food fries (the majority of the waste gone to landfill); the goal of these fries was texture, not taste. Canadians have fast and easy access to such food, produced for profit and consumption rather than for taste and enjoyment. In the developing world, fast food is unattainable due to distance or cost. Often food is cooked with what could be described as slow food methods, shared with family and savoured for its pleasure as well as the nutrition it provides.

We give thanks for those who spend time appreciating their food; we respect the opportunity to connect with family and the world around us over a shared and home-made meal. We pray for those who have never known any other kind of meal, that they may continue to benefit from this healthy relationship with food.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Would you give up some leisure time to enjoy higher quality food? Would you give up some leisure time to enjoy some high quality worship?

Lent 3

REPENTENCE



At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them--do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

— Gospel: Luke 13:1–9

Our PWRDF good news story comes to us from a reflection on the context of the PWRDF Strategic Plan 2012–2015:

REFLECTION

by Adele Finney, Executive Director

The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers describes edge habitat as “a loosely defined type of habitat that occurs at the boundary between two different habitat types (e.g., where forests border on non-forest land).” Life is abundant in edge habitat; more species live there than in either of the adjacent habitats. Life is also precarious. Species from both systems can live in a fragile balance of interdependence or find their sustenance suddenly gone as forest, tidy farmer or invasive species takes over.

Edge habitat is a transitional place. It is inevitably a place of loss because all do not survive. We either resist or accept learning how to walk in and through grief. Edge habitat is then also a place of understanding identity and mission in altered circumstances. Edge habitat requires a mindful spirit to see what our own need is, to discern how challenge and opportunity converge, and to discover and hold on to sustaining ways of being and doing. It also requires a quick, decisive flexibility to find allies and networks for food, shelter and survival. It is a place of creativity where seeds unleash the power of transformation.

This week

week we will reflect on the role of patience and repentance within our food system.

Monday 04 March

We Want – Health

Our health depends on a delicate give and take of what we want and what we are willing to do to achieve it. We must make the decisions around what we put into our bodies from what is available to us, what to do with our bodies to use the nourishment available to us, and how we will adapt as our environment changes. Human health depends on ecosystem health; it is impossible to maintain healthy people in an unhealthy habitat.

Here in Canada we recognize that our habitats are mostly stable and safe, leading to the potential for good personal health. We acknowledge that most of our health instability has been caused by our introducing poor choices into the equation, through diet, exercise, and lifestyle. We realize that the majority of the world does not enjoy stable and healthy living situations, nor do they have access to therapeutic supplements to improve the health they have.

We give thanks for the abundance and security in our lives which permits us to sometimes neglect our health. We pray for those whose health is continually threatened in their environment. We give thanks for the Edge Habitat focus of PWRDF which seeks to increase food security for those in the midst of instability.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How healthy is your habitat – physical, emotional and spiritual?

Tuesday 05 March

We Don't Want – *Inequity*

In Edge Habitat, the fragile relationship between species is understood; it is identified as key to survival. In considering food, resources themselves become critical to this relationship. As food resources decrease and need increases, conflict can arise thereby disrupting these fragile relationships.

In Canada we enjoy a relaxed, almost cavalier relationship with our food supplies; our stores are often stocked with more than sufficient supplies to last extended periods of time. There is seldom a lack of land, water or seed for those wishing to produce their own food. People in the developing world regularly face shortages in these resources and therefore have a much more intentional and fragile relationship with their food supply.

We are grateful for the food that is brought to our communities for our consumption. We give thanks that we do not need to fight our neighbours in order to feed our families. We pray for those whose hunger causes them to act from a space of damaged relationship, which can lead to conflict.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: What is your relationship to the food you purchase? What is your relationship to the spiritual food you receive in worship?

Wednesday 06 March

Mix it Up – *Consumption*

Life can be full of contrary realities, some of which can be of benefit. One of these realities is waste — manure happens; we all produce it. We know that it can be a negative reality, with germs and bacteria. Yet it is also of great use when we are trying to grow a garden, providing the soil with vital nutrients. We are called to recognize unexpected and creative relationships in our lives which may increase our output.

In Canada we literally flush away our waste. Many food scraps are likewise discarded in the garbage; only 10% of Canadians practice composting, some 15% of that is in municipal collection. Ironically, Canadians purchase nearly 4 million tonnes of fertilizer each year for food production. PWRDF partners teach the use of home compost as a replacement for synthetic fertilizers in many areas; thereby creatively managing waste and providing additional support to food production.

We give thanks for creative solutions to problems. We pray for an abundance of new creativity to assist the most vulnerable in our world. With PWRDF partners we celebrate discovering the potential for new growth.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: What aspects of your spiritual life are you wasting, rather than using creatively?

Thursday 07 March

In the Garden – *Environment*

As we are recognizing the environmental impact of our practices, we are being challenged to establish and re-establish a healthy balance between what humans need for nourishment and what the earth is able to provide. We are challenged to acknowledge our excessive ways, and change to more sustainable ones through self-limitation and an awareness of our connection to (and dependence upon) the Earth.

While humans increasingly dominate nature, we have proven to be very poor managers of natural systems. There is an increasing trend in Canada toward the preservation of the earth and we are making choices accordingly. In the developing world, the need to re-establish balance with the earth is more severe as resources are less accessible and the consequences more dire. Sustainability is not so much a choice as a requirement for survival.

We give thanks for the excess of the past, and for the increasing knowledge of the need for self-limitation. We pray for those who have never known such excess, yet live in the reality of scarcity. We celebrate the increased role of environmental sustainability within PWRDF programmes.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Do you experience balance within your physical, emotional and spiritual lives? Do you need to self-limit in one area to benefit another?

Friday 08 March

Going Back to the Source – Access

A loss of space or a change in the environment can greatly influence those living within a habitat. A field edged by a hedgerow enjoys a certain variety of life; the removal of that hedgerow would cause a loss of home and nutrition for many creatures. So too when human environments are changed, access to livelihoods can be lost.

Canadians can be proud that they have been a safe haven in years past for those from around the world whose habitat has been lost. Furthermore, Canadians have a heritage of supporting refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in other parts of the world. 2012 saw approximately 15 million refugees and 26 million IDPs; all people whose habitat has been taken from them through conflict, climate change, and other violence; without this habitat they cannot provide food for themselves.

We give thanks for the space that we take for granted. We pray for those whose habitat has been taken from them, who cling to life. We give thanks for the work of agencies such as the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGFB) through which PWRDF supports refugees and IDPs through feeding and food security programs.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Have you ever felt spiritually homeless? How did you survive?

Saturday 09 March

The Process – Production

With the reality of climate change, we are all living in a state of Edge Habitat, which requires adaptation to the surroundings; being flexible and willing to change can mean the difference between survival and death. Food security also requires adaptability; with changes to climate, environment, and resource access, food production must be flexible enough to survive in a state of flux.

In Canada we have growing seasons that we know; and benefit from the assistance of experts and marked growing zones. We know a wet spring can delay sowing, and an early frost can impact harvest. For many of us in Canada, we can develop strategies to work around such challenges; the majority of our habitat remains the same. In many areas where PWRDF works, habitat is experiencing changes that are either dramatic or rapid; sometimes too much so to adapt.

We give thanks that in Canada our ability to adapt ensures a relatively stable food system. We pray for those whose land or waterways have changed so much due to the uncertainty of their rapidly changing climate that they are unable to sustain their food production. We hold in prayer those PWRDF partners working to minimize the impact of these habitat changes.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Are you spiritually flexible? Does your spiritual growth occur or falter in adverse situations?

Lent 4

GENEROSITY



Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So he told them this parable: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’

So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has

killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

— Gospel: Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32

IN this fourth week of Lent we are considering what it means to be generous. As we are considering those things that others do without, we are becoming more aware of those things that we have to share. We are called to recognize opportunities to reach out, and to do so with joy in our hearts. We are challenged to focus on the benefit of giving to enhance the wider community, rather than the disappointment that can be felt at perceived personal deprivation.

Our PWRDF good news story considers the short and long-term work of PWRDF following the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION IN HAITI

By Simon Chambers

The numbers were staggering as the world watched the aftermath of the 7.0 magnitude quake whose epicenter was in Léogâne, Haiti on January 12, 2010: 3.5 million people affected including 220,000 dead, 300,000 injured, and 2,000,000 displaced. Over 180,000 homes were damaged or destroyed, leaving 1,500,000 homeless; and 4,000 schools were damaged or destroyed

Immediately, PWRDF — through the ACT Alliance — responded to the disaster. ACT's relief efforts included having over 70 water points established around Port-au-Prince within 48 hours of the earthquake, providing food for over 85,000 people, health and hygiene kits to over 75,000, over 8,100 households provided with emergency shelters, and over 20,000 people who received livelihood support. ACT's work in water provision involved the distribution of 14 billion purification tablets, close to 500,000 rehydration doses and training over 375,000 people in cholera prevention.

PWRDF also contributed to the Episcopal (Anglican) Diocese of Haiti, which supported 100,000 people through its efforts.

As the relief phase of the earthquake began to move into the reconstruction phase, PWRDF's focus shifted from the immediate needs to longer-term ones: shelter, education and sustainable food production.

Working with the Centre Diocésain de Développement Intégré et de Secours (CEDDISEC) of the Diocese of Haiti,

PWRDF provided 70 transitional shelters (6m x 3m homes with two windows, separate toilet and bathroom, and mosquito netting – designed to last 5 to 7 years) in the community of St. Matthieu. Additionally, 300 families around Port-au-Prince are involved in a pilot project where they are provided with planters, seeds, and training to grow vegetables and herbs on their balconies, in the shells of their old houses, or wherever else they have space to grow. All of the families have children under the age of five who are suffering from malnutrition.

PWRDF is also involved in a school feeding programme in partnership with Finn Church Aid (another member of the ACT Alliance) and the Bureau Anglican de l'Education en Haiti (BAEH) of the Diocese of Haiti. Through this program, 8,000 students at 33 schools are provided a hot lunch of rice and beans each school day — often the only meal they will get that day.

This week

we will reflect on the role of generosity and sharing within our food system.

Monday 11 March

We Want – Health

“Give a person a fish, and feed them for the day. Teach a person to fish, and you feed them for life.” This adage does speak to the benefit and sustainability of long-term development rather than the short-term quick fix aid, but it misses the immediate need - to feed the hungry while they wait for the long-term goal to be stable and sustainable.

Most Canadians have food stored in their homes for both short and long-term consumption. We keep fresh foods in the fridge, we preserve foods in the freezer or pantry. We purchase

some to eat in the next day or two, we purchase some to be saved and used over time. Following the earthquake, people in Haiti had minimal access to food; they did not have enough for each day, let alone to store for the future. The sudden lack of fresh food and water negatively impacted health on the island.

We give thanks for the immediate action of PWRDF through ACT Alliance in Haiti. We are grateful for the continued contribution of PWRDF assisting with the ongoing stabilization of food systems within Haiti. We pray for those whose access to food is still unstable over 3 years later. We celebrate PWRDF and its partners in meeting the needs of those experiencing immediate hunger and planning for long-term food stability.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Does your faith benefit from both short and long-term sustenance?

Tuesday 12 March

We Don't Want – *Inequity*

The gospel this week identifies the notion of greed – in spite of an abundance, the older brother doesn't want to share with the returned son even though he specifically mentions slaughtering a goat for a party. Humans have a tendency to hoard things, creating an imbalance.

Canadians can be hoarders when it comes to food. We like to keep our fridges, freezers and pantries full. Some people have so much food that it spoils before it can be eaten, even while some in their neighbourhood go hungry. Greed and hoarding can be divisive in communities where there is enough for all; it can be destructive in communities where everyone is wanting.

We are grateful for the abundance that we enjoy, recognizing that our food practices may resemble greed to those who are hungry. We pray for those who think only of themselves and do

not see the hungry around them. We celebrate the programmes in Haiti that support the equitable distribution of food.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Do you hoard the blessings in your life, or do you celebrate them in community?

Wednesday 13 March

Mix it Up – *Consumption*

The prodigal son is prompted to return home as a direct result of his hunger; he realizes that he cannot work when he is hungry. School children who are hungry cannot learn; they are unable to concentrate, the hunger pains are distracting. Higher test scores, higher attendance and fewer classroom disruptions occur when children are well fed.

School feeding programmes exist in Canada, over 100,000 children in low-income areas benefit from breakfast programmes. In Haiti, the rice and beans meal provided to school children encourages physical, mental and spiritual health; it also celebrates the spirit of community as everyone is eating the same thing.

We give thanks for hearing the gospel call to feed the hungry. We pray for those whose hunger is not addressed. We celebrate the generosity of PWRDF donors in meeting the nutritional needs of these children.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: We all work better when we are not hungry; is your faith at its top potential or does it need to be fed?

Thursday 14 March

In the Garden – *Environment*

Food production requires physical space. Fish need space to swim, animals require pasture land to graze, fruits and vegetables

need soil to take root. Use of space is important at the best of times; following a disaster when space is limited and need increases, creative solutions must be sought.

As a whole Canadians enjoy a large physical space; while much of the population remains in urban centres, rural dwellers know the abundant land we share. There is space to fish and farm; there is land for recreation and conservation. Haitians live in a much more densely populated country, thereby needing to take advantage of whatever space they can find for food production. Canadians may never consider using the site of a destroyed home as a space to grow food; Haitians benefitted from otherwise unusable spaces to supplement their food security.

We give thanks for the vast quantity of space we enjoy, for the useable soil we ignore or use for non-food growth. We pray for those who have re-purposed their living and recreation space for their food. We celebrate the creativity demonstrated in their growing projects.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Is there sufficient room in your faith to continue growth, or do you need to seek out creative new spaces?

Friday 15 March

Going Back to the Source – Access

Water is Life. Yet, the water of life must be potable; otherwise it can become the water of disease and death. Thirst is just as painful as hunger, but with more extreme effects. The average human can survive up to 7 days without food, but cannot survive more than 2 without water; these numbers decrease dramatically when water-borne diseases are introduced.

Most Canadians benefit from immediate access to potable water, those who do not can easily access purification processes. Although Haiti is surrounded by water, their access to safe drinking water diminished after the earthquake. As people struggled to find any water in order to survive, they were

inadvertently becoming infected. By providing safe water points and purification tablets along with cholera medication and prevention training, ACT Alliance partners worked to maintain the life sustaining properties of Haiti's water system.

We give thanks for the water which is brought to us. We pray for those whose water is not potable; we pray for those who must carry their water long distances; we pray for those whose only water is unclean. We celebrate the dedication of ACT to make safe water easily accessible to the people in Haiti.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Do you provide for your spiritual development as frequently and as cleanly as you provide your body's water needs?

Saturday 16 March

The Process – Production

Home is a sacred place. It's ideally a safe space, full of love and support and nourishment. Home is where the heart is; it's where we share with family over home cooked meals. Home is our foundation, home is where we return.

The size of the average starter home in Canada is now 200 square metres. The average apartment is approximately half that. Children enjoy separate bedrooms, there are multiple bathrooms and multiple car garages. Canadians want large, nice homes. In Haiti, the shelters provided by PWRDF are built to last 5 to 7 years. They are comprised of an 18 square metre living space with separate bathrooms and toilets that provide limited privacy. These transitional structures can be improved if the families are willing and able to do so. They provide more safety and protection than families would otherwise have and Haitians are grateful to have a roof over their heads.

We are grateful for our homes; for the physical space as well as the emotional comfort. We are blessed by our church spaces which offer a spiritual home. We pray for those who

are homeless, in structure and family and faith. We celebrate the new homes given to the people of Haiti, representing new possibilities in new sacred spaces.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How accessible is your spiritual home? How often do you visit?

Lent 5

POVERTY



Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

—Gospel: John 12.1-8

WE are reminded that the poor will always be with us — and that as much as we do, there will always be more work. We are challenged to be generous but also to acknowledge our own needs and to do so without guilt.

*Our PWRDF Good News story comes from
the drought stricken Sahel.*

SAVING LIVELIHOODS IN THE SAHEL

By Simon Chambers

In 2012 PWRDF began to work with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) in Niger. 3,836 households in 79 communities, vulnerable because of the poor harvest, were selected to participate in the programme. A further 226 households in Niamey, the capital of Niger, will also benefit.

Over 2,000 households were offered “Food for Work,” enabling people to contribute to their communities’ long-term food production while also buying food and seed at subsidized prices. The 300 most needy households will receive free food, as they don’t have the capacity to work or purchase food even at subsidized rates. The remaining households will have access to the subsidized seed and food during the period of this work.

Families will also have access to training in the use of acacia in food preparation to improve nutrition. The program also has a contingency in place to intervene if the Millet Head Miner Moth reappears this year so the pests will not destroy the harvest.

This project will help head off a potential food crisis in Niger, where approximately 6 million people (half the country’s population) were at risk of not having enough to eat. Beginning the work early will help to prevent an emergency of the scale seen in 2011 in the Horn of Africa.

This week

we will consider how poverty impacts what we eat — our ability to grow or purchase food, the quality of what food we eat, and how much we are consuming.

Monday 18 March

We Want – Health

In the Middle Ages, being fat was a sign of wealth; it meant that you had sufficient access to meats and grains. Those who were thin were eating what they could grow, usually vegetables. We now know that health is dependent on a combination of these foods; though some remain more expensive than others. A mix of foods is a key factor in establishing and maintaining good health.

In most communities in Canada, we enjoy access to affordable food, and can access fresh fruits and vegetables, grains, and protein sources. In many communities supported by PWRDF partners, this variety is too expensive for many and health may suffer as a result.

We give thanks that we are blessed with food choices at reasonable prices. We pray for those who cannot afford foods from each of the main food groups. We give thanks for PWRDF partners who are teaching communities how to achieve this healthy variety through local and seasonal means.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Is your spiritual life healthy through diverse practices or does it need new variety?

Tuesday 19 March

We Don't Want – *Inequity*

It is widely recognized that poverty can lead to hunger, but hunger can also lead to poverty. The poor without access to basic necessities like food are more likely to resort to desperate measures; conflicts and thefts increase, which can lead to destroyed resources and lost incomes due to incarceration; non-sustainable practices occur. Thus the cycle is devastating and ongoing.

While there is hunger within Canada, it is more pronounced in other areas of the world. Likewise, with existent social systems and security measures, Canadians generally do not experience conflict over food to the same extent as in developing countries.

We give thanks for those who do not live in the cycle of poverty and hunger. We pray for those who must engage in conflict over their food, we pray for those who, through desperation, steal food to save themselves. We give thanks for the work of PWRDF in preventing such conflict in hunger stricken places such as the Horn of Africa.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Is your spiritual food worth fighting for?

Wednesday 20 March

Mix it Up – *Consumption*

Impulse buying is the purchase of something without previous consideration; it is linked to emotional connections and distraction, and tends to provide a temporary sense of self gratification. Impulse buys are a luxury of the affluent; those who are strictly following a budget simply cannot afford such unplanned extras. People following tight budgets purchase what they need, not what they may want.

Many Canadians buy a lot of food that is wanted, not

necessarily needed: in 2012 Canadians spent approximately \$22 billion on fast food, we also ate approximately 250 million kilograms of chocolate. Impulse buys are not an option for the poor, their efforts go into making the most of the meagre amounts of food they have access to.

We give thanks for the impulse buys that tempt us at supermarkets and convenience stores; we recognize this temptation as Easter candies begin to fill the shelves. We pray for those for whom a rare treat is a balanced meal. We celebrate those whose impulse treat this week will be to financially support the work of PWRDF and its partners.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Is the time you spend in spiritual development carefully budgeted or is it time spent in a luxuriously impulsive way?

Thursday 21 March

In the Garden – *Environment*

No one likes pests; insects can threaten crops, diseases can harm livestock, aggressive species can deplete fish stocks. Whatever the cause, food supplies can be severely harmed by external factors. While preventative action can be taken around predicted pests, unexpected pests can cause devastating destruction to food supplies.

Canadians are blessed with the capacity to prevent and respond to pests that threaten our food system; we are also blessed with a sufficient variety of crops, due to our fertile soil, that prevents total devastation. In the Sahel, food production and crop variety are limited. External pests could change the situation from one of precarious threat to one of mass starvation.

We give thanks for the knowledge to recognize potential pests and to take action against their destruction. We pray for those who have been devastated by unexpected pest infestations. We celebrate the foresight of PWRDF partners who prepared

contingency plans to prevent pest infestations such as the Millet Head Miner Moth.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: What are the pests that have impacted your spiritual growth in the past? What actions are you taking to prevent future repetitions?

Friday 22 March

Going Back to the Source – Access

Poverty can be caused by any number of factors, including unjust social structures such as access to education and health care, armed conflict, natural disaster, and hunger/malnutrition. Half of the world's children live in poverty and hunger. The root causes of poverty are also root causes of food insecurity.

In Canada we enjoy a society with minimal natural disasters and armed conflict. We are blessed with access to basic education and health care. While the number of hungry Canadian children is depressingly high (1 in 5), it is significantly lower than the global average. Although we know we could do better, we also recognize that there are places in the world where poverty and hunger cause significantly greater suffering.

We express our gratitude that our ability to produce our food is not hindered by armed conflict, and that natural disasters have never eradicated all of our food producing land. We give thanks for the social structures that we take for granted, the systems which help keep us out of the cycle of poverty and hunger and its detrimental effects. We hold in prayer those whose poverty lies beyond their control, those poor that Jesus said would always be with us.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Do we recognize those areas in our own lives where we are spiritually poor? How do we interact with those around us whose spiritual poverty we recognize?

Saturday 23 March

The Process – Production

In many places, currency is used to quantify value. Money is given for work accomplished; that money is used to purchase commodities, including food. This system helps to maintain fairness; remuneration is determined by type and amount of work; purchase prices do not fluctuate from customer to customer based on their socio-economic status.

In Canada we are blessed with legislated minimum wages to ensure a specific level of earnings on a per hour basis, and those holding Will Work for Food signs make up a small percentage of the population. In the Sahel, this very sign indicates people's ability to work for their food while acknowledging their dignity and their contributions.

We give thanks for our employment which allows us to be consumers. We pray for those who are unemployed and underemployed, those for whom food purchases require difficult budgeting choices. We give thanks for those in the Sahel who are being valued as labourers, who are given opportunities to work and provide food for their families.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How much would you labour to receive spiritual nourishment?

Palm Sunday

JOURNEYING



After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’”

So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road.

As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.” — Gospel: Luke 19:28–40

THIS Holy Week is our final week of our Lenten journey. We enter it with shouts of joy and gladness, yet we recognize the darkness looming ahead. We will move from a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, a time of celebration and feasting, toward the journey to the cross, a devastating time of grief and confusion. Yet we are constantly reminded that we are called to continue our forward motion, called to carry on despite the challenges we face.

Our PWRDF Good News story this week celebrates how a physical journey can teach us about the importance of spiritual movement:

RUNNING IN HIS GRANDMOTHER’S FOOTSTEPS

By Christine Hills

Like any 11 year old, Liam Olsen loves playing and learning new things. He speaks Mandarin and English; does very well in school; is very musical. At school he is a member of the cross country and track programs. He is an avid reader, has traveled widely, and loves to design imaginary cities and towns.

But Liam has another passion — helping others.

Liam began fundraising for others in 2008 with The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund. Liam ran five km and raised more than \$1,700 for PWRDF. In 2009 he ran 5km for the Grandmothers Campaign at the Stephen Lewis Foundation, and in 2010 he ran 6km for the David Suzuki Foundation; in 2011 he ran once more for PWRDF. Liam’s 8km run raised funds for the Horn of Africa through PWRDF. On the day of his run, Liam had received cash and pledges totaling \$4,050 including his own donation of \$250-half of his bank account!

Inspiration can work both ways. In February of 2010, Liam’s grandmother Gladys Olsen walked 10,000 steps a day for one hundred days to assist the mission of PWRDF in its work around the world.

When asked why he does this, Liam responded, “We just don’t realize how fortunate we are to have so much when people just as good as us have nothing. And if you have the ability to act, why not?” He is much loved by the congregation of St. Anne in Richmond, BC. He has been described by them as “an old soul” and as “a deep thinker”.

Monday 25 March

We Want – Health

We know that good food is a key component of good health. We know that it fuels us for our journey; to consume food inadequate in either amount or nutrition will be to deny our bodies sufficient resources to journey forth. We know that children and young people have increased nutritional needs as they grow, and that the nutritional needs met in childhood can influence a person's health throughout their life.

In Canada we benefit from balanced diets and we have the capacity to ensure childhood nutritional needs are met. In the developing world, such resources are not always available. The drought in the Horn of Africa affected over 10 million people in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya; PWRDF's immediate response through partner agencies delivered food, shelter kits, and non-food items (tarps, clothing for women and children, soap and sanitary supplies) as well as child and youth development materials to assist in establishing and maintaining healthy conditions in an unhealthy situation.

We give thanks for our good health, and for the food which sustains our energy. We give thanks for those who share their resources. We pray for those who do not have sufficient food, who must rely on the kindness of strangers.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: How do you maintain the health of your physical and spiritual journey?

Tuesday 26 March

We Don't Want – Conflict

As individuals, people generally do not enjoy being told what to do, where to walk, when to sleep, etc. People appreciate the unique character of their lives and appreciate the ability to exercise their options. Attempts to stifle that individuality and

to deny one's options can be understood as a controlling, even hostile, act.

In Canada we benefit from many rights, which we may take for granted. Our national Charter of Rights and Freedoms promises Canadians security in our journey. Human rights are not always practiced around the world, many people suffer injustices we cannot even fathom. PWRDF journeys with the weak and vulnerable, celebrating people's uniqueness and individuality through harsh situations.

We give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy in our lives. We pray for those who have never experienced true freedom, who live in fear and oppression. We give thanks for the acts of solidarity practiced by PWRDF and partners.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Have you lived in fear? What spiritual practices helped you through that time?

Wednesday 27 March

Mix it Up – Consumption

This day is sometimes called Spy Wednesday, commemorating the days when Judas spied on Jesus in the garden at Gethsemane. Most people do not like the idea of being spied upon; they consider many of their activities to be private and expect that right to be respected. Eating is often considered a private activity, people choosing where and when they will eat. Some will only ever be seen by family or guests as they consume; others may choose to eat in public.

Many Canadians are private eaters, and will eat or snack in secrecy — eating at times and places when no one will see them; an apple in the car, some late-night popcorn watching television. This eating can be mindless, some do not even realize how often or how much they are eating in private. In refugee camps, like those in the Horn of Africa, there is no private eating. All food is kept secure and in public; all consumption

is witnessed not just by family but by everyone in the vicinity. There is neither space for privacy, nor excess food for mindless snacking.

We give thanks for the choices we have, for the actions we are able to take in public and in private. We pray for those who value privacy yet who have none, we hold up the journey of those who are always watched.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Would your food consumption change if you were always being watched? Would your spiritual practices change if you were always being watched?

Thursday 28 March

In the Garden – *Environment*

On this Maundy Thursday, we recognize the need for clean water in our lives. This day we recognize Jesus' ministry of humble service as he washed his disciples' feet with water. We celebrate the first institution of the Lord's Supper, witnessing water added to the wine we drink.

In Canada we almost all enjoy clean municipality provided water in our homes. We are blessed with the least expensive water in the world. Due to its abundance and accessibility, we have become mindless wasters of this resource, using an average of 355 gallons (1,345 litres) per day just for cooking and cleaning.

We give thanks for the abundance of water in our lives. We recognize our wastefulness of this resource, and will aim to be better stewards. We hold in prayer those who must survive on a mere 10 gallons per day. We give thanks for projects supporting the collection and distribution of safe water.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Consider how pervasive water is in your life; consider how pervasive prayer is in your life.

Friday 29 March

Going Back to the Source – *Access*

On this Good Friday our liturgies recognize the darkness of the day. Our Lord is dead; our altars are stripped, our churches are bare. It is a time of silence, a time of grieving. It is a time when the church is not offering new life to the world. It is a day when our spiritual lives are as empty as a desert.

In Canada we are blessed to have access to land which will grow the food we need to sustain us. We have so much fertile soil and access to nourishment that many of us have cultivated yards and flower gardens, whose purpose is simply decorative. With this excess, we do not have the experience of watching our land (as our only source of food production) fail us. We do not know the bareness that creeps upon so many around the world.

We give thanks for the privilege to reflect on the bare areas of our spiritual lives from a place of comfort and nourishment. We give thanks that our successful crops outnumber our failed crops. We give thanks for the reminder to appreciate our blessings before they are gone.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: What areas of your life have died? What aspects do you grieve? In what areas are you seeking new life?

Saturday 30 March

The Process – *Production*

This Holy Saturday we continue, until sundown, on our journey recalling the passion, death, and burial of Jesus. We experience a coming to terms with the darkness of the situation. After sundown, we are challenged, like the women going to the tomb, to accept the reality in front of us and to carry on. Yet as this day progresses into the darkness of night, we will enter into a space of hope and of new potential. So too as we consider our involvement in the food systems, we can move from a place of deep concern to one of hope.

There is hunger in Canada; 1 in 6 Canadians are at risk of hunger every day; 1 in 30 are forced to rely on food banks. There is hunger in the world; in 2010 nearly 1 in 7 people were hungry (only 4% of these billion hungry people came from developed countries). There is also hope, in Canada and in the world. There are programmes supporting food security and food sovereignty; there are people who give generously to ensure that there will be food for all.

We give thanks for the people who journey from despair into hope, who do what they can to support their neighbour in the world. We celebrate the potential for new life and health through the food systems. We pray for those who receive aid and assistance, who are building new systems and structures in sustainable and life-giving ways.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE: Consider how your relationship with food might enter an era of new life through a celebration of new hope.

Thank you to
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Food for Life



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