

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17 October 2011

Theme:

From Poverty to Sustainability: People at the Centre of Inclusive Development

Introduction

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has been observed every year since 1993, when the General Assembly, by resolution 47/196, designated this day to promote awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries – a need that has become a development priority.

At the Millennium Summit, world leaders committed themselves to cutting by half by the year 2015 the number of people living in extreme poverty – people whose income is less than one dollar a day.

17 October presents an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty, a chance for them to make their concerns heard, and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty. Participation of the poor themselves has been at the center of the Day's celebration since its very beginning. The commemoration of 17 October also reflects the willingness of people living in poverty to use their expertise to contribute to the eradication of poverty.

The 2011 Commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) will be held on Monday, 17 October at United Nations Headquarters in New York, focusing on the theme "**From Poverty to Sustainability: People at the Centre of Inclusive Development**".

With global attention focused on the upcoming Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), it is critical to draw attention to the importance of poverty eradication for building sustainable futures for all. People living in poverty face increasingly difficult challenges as climate change, environmental degradation and rising food prices threaten their livelihoods and survival. The path to sustainable development must ensure that people living in poverty are included in decision-making processes, and that concrete action is taken to respond to their needs and demands.

Sustainable development is not only about a clean planet. It means ensuring that nobody is left behind. Only in this way can peace be brought about and development be truly sustainable.

The Lighting of Candles



Candle Lighter 1:

This is the light of Ruth, a foreigner who journeyed into the unknown for the sake of love and loyalty to Naomi, and who acted with initiative to change their lives for the better.

All: We praise God and claim Ruth's power of solidarity with all those people who are poor and oppressed and broken.





Candle Lighter 2

This is the light of all people who have struggled to build bridges of hope, justice and reconciliation in a world of poverty, suspicion and war – as peacemakers, lobbyists, community workers and good neighbours.

All: We praise God and claim the activists’ power to bring about dreams.



Candle Lighter 3

This is the light of many lives, shining through hardship, hoping in life’s difficulties, living with generosity and compassion, and committed to justice.

All: We praise God and claim the power to live in hope, in freedom and in justice.



Candle Lighter 4

This is the light of all those Presentation Sisters who have committed themselves to eradicate poverty and injustice and who have built cultures of peace and hope where everyone is welcome.

All: We praise God and claim the power of our commitment in smallness and fragility.

Readings

Reading 1

It is not from your own possessions that you are bestowing alms on the poor, you are but restoring to them what is theirs by right. For what was given to everyone for the use of all, you have taken for your exclusive use. The Earth belongs not to the rich, but to everyone. Thus, far from giving lavishly, you are but paying part of your debt.
St Ambrose

All: Response

We dare to imagine a world where poverty has no chance to show its face.
We dare to dream of a world where war and terror are afraid to leave their mark.
We dare to share in the creation of a world where all people’s rights are respected.
Dare we commit ourselves to work and pray for change?



Reading 2

The solidarity which binds humanity together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.

Pope John XXIII, Mater et Magistra, 157

All: Response as above

Reading 3

‘By what right do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?’ says the Lord Yahweh Sabaoth.
Isaiah 3:15

All: Response as above



Reading 4

He has pulled down princes from their thrones and raised high the lowly. He has filled the starving with good things, sent the rich away empty.
Luke 1:52-53

All: Response as above

Litany on the Millennium Development Goals

Leader: Let us pray for those who are poor, hungry, and neglected all over the world, that their cries for daily bread may inspire works of compassion and mercy among those to whom much has been given. Loving God, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for schools and centres of learning throughout the world, for those who lack access to basic education, and for the light of knowledge to blossom and shine in the lives of all God's people. Loving God, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to the divisions and inequalities that scar God's creation, particularly the barriers to freedom faced by God's children throughout the world because of gender; that all who have been formed in God's image might have equality in pursuit of the blessings of creation. Loving God, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for the health of women, children and families around the world, especially for an end to maternal and child mortality, that in building healthy families, all God's people may be empowered to strengthen their communities and repair the breaches which divide nations and peoples. Loving God, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to pandemic disease throughout the world, particularly the scourges of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; that plagues of death may no longer fuel poverty, destabilise nations, and inhibit reconciliation and restoration throughout the world. Loving God, in your mercy,

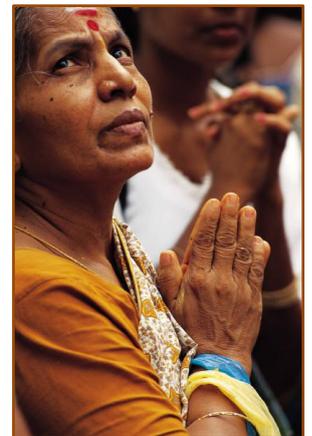
All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to the waste and desecration of God's creation, for access to the fruits of creation to be shared equally among all people, and for communities and nations to find sustenance in the fruits of the earth and the water God has given us. Loving God, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for all nations and people who already enjoy the abundance of creation and the blessings of prosperity, that their hearts may be lifted up to the needs of the poor and afflicted, and partnerships between rich and poor for the reconciliation of the world may flourish and grow. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.



Episcopal Office of Government Relations, United States

SHARING

If you are praying in a group, share the ways you see your sisters working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in their efforts to eradicate poverty.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'.

All: We pray for the children, women and men across the world who struggle each day to survive, pitted against economic conditions beyond their control. Give them strength to meet each day and hope for a different future.

Leader: Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers'.

All: We pray for the people and organisations campaigning for change as part of the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** coalition. May the call for trade justice, for an end to debt, and for more and better aid echo loud and clear across the world.

Leader: Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness'.

All: We pray for the leaders and politicians with the power to change things. Help them to take the side of the poor, to resist the voices of self-interest and complacency and to make bold choices for the good of all people.

Leader: Let us pray...

God of the impossible,
we pray for justice, peace and reconciliation.
And when the challenges seem too many,
remind us of your resurrection power and the miracles of your love
that happen whenever injustice is dismantled and rebuilt with peace.
Help us to hope that the impossible can happen
and live as if it might do so today.

All: Amen

CAFOD



For resources and ideas go to:

- www.overcomingpoverty.com
- social.un.org/index/Poverty/InternationalDayfortheEradicationofPoverty/2011.aspx
- www.makepovertyhistory.ca/, www.makepovertyhistory.com.au/ or www.makepovertyhistory.org
- www.atd-fourthworld.org/



Poverty
Social Policy and Development Division



EVERY MINUTE COUNTS
MAKE POVERTY HISTORY



INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT
ATD FOURTH WORLD