

The litany ⁴ below gives grateful recognition of the unique and diverse gifts of a number of the world's spiritual traditions. It is shared here with a prayer that the deepest and the best that each religion has to offer to support life will prevail. Even as our world is shaken by frightening and disturbing change in the wake of September 11th, may each of us in our spiritual quest seek to bring healing and peace in our own neighbourhoods through creative partnerships and collaborative action.

CALL: We give thanks for our Baha'i brothers and sisters, for their genuine openness and desire for unity.

RESPONSE: We give thanks.
(After each CALL, respond "We give thanks")

CALL: We give thanks for our Buddhist sisters and brothers, for their sense of peace and relinquishing of self.

CALL: We give thanks for our Christian brothers and sisters, for their message of love and ethic of compassion.

CALL: We give thanks for our Hindu sisters and brothers, for their open-hearted acceptance of others and kindly disposition toward those of other faiths.

CALL: We give thanks for our Muslim sisters and brothers, for their commitment in prayer and faithfulness in worship.

CALL: We give thanks for our Jain brothers and sisters, for their deep respect for life and practice of non-violence.

CALL: We give thanks for our Jewish sisters and brothers, for their enriching symbols of worship and cherishing of tradition.

CALL: We give thanks for our Native brothers and sisters, for their reverence of nature and their ancient and still-living cultures.

CALL: We give thanks for our Sikh sisters and brothers, for their warm hospitality and public witness of faith.

CALL: We give thanks for our Taoist brothers and sisters, for their sense of the connectedness of all things and pursuit of harmony.

CALL: We give thanks for our Zoroastrian sisters and brothers, for their devotion to right thought, right speech, and right action.

LEADER: We give thanks for every faith tradition, named and unnamed, the variety and richness of their spiritualities, their united quest for truth, and their common dedication to the pursuit of peace, reconciliation and healing of the spirit.

RESPONSE: We give thanks. Ever unite us as one community of joy, hope, love, and peace.

Ever inspire us to live more genuinely and authentically: celebrating diversity, affirming unity, pursuing peace, not just for better relations among philosophies, but for a new and more just world. **Amen.**

For access to additional resources about restorative justice and how faith communities are responding, please visit the Restorative Justice portal on the following site: <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca>; and the Church Council on Justice and Corrections' site: www.ccjc.ca

This leaflet was prepared in collaboration with the Church Council on Justice and Corrections who was under contract with the Correctional Service of Canada.

NOTES

- 1 Zehr, p.150
- 2 Patricia Monture-O'Kane, as quoted in Restorative Justice: What Are We Talking About?, a reflection sheet printed by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections. www.ccjc.ca
- 3 Zehr, Howard, Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice, Herald Press (Pennsylvania: 2005) p.144.
- 4 From the writings of Lorraine Berzins, Community Chair of Justice for the Church Council on Justice and Corrections.
- 5 Vanier, Jean, Community and Growth, Paulist Press (New Jersey: 2003) p.1.
- 6 Vanier, p.18.
- 7 Bishop A. Harris, as quoted in Justice For the Soul, a reflection sheet produced by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections. www.ccjc.ca
- 8 Used with permission of the Interfaith Office of the Scarborough Missions. Adapted from All in Good Faith: A Resource Book for Multi-faith Prayer, Jean Potter and Marcus Braybrook, eds., a worship service of the World Congress of Faith Conference 1993, the World Congress of Faiths, Oxford: 1997, pp. 111, 112. Rewritten by JW Windland, Encounter World Religions Centre, www.worldreligions.ca.



Correctional Service
Canada

Service correctionnel
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Creative Partnerships, Collaborative Action

"Shalom is possible only if we look out for the welfare of one another, even in wrongdoing."¹

"In the Mohawk language when we say 'law' ... what it really means is 'the way to live most nicely together.'"²

"Law" was intended as a means, not an end. It was an instrument for building shalom, for building relationships that are right. Its characteristic purpose was not to punish but to redeem, to make things right."³



RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE WEEK

NOVEMBER 12 TO 19, 2006

Canada

Creative Partnerships, Collaborative Action



A SOBERING ANALOGY

There's a story of a man who lost a coin in the middle of a lawn, but his friend finds him looking all over for it on the sidewalk. "Why are you looking all over for it here when you lost it over there?"

"Because it's dark over there; this is where the street lamp is".

Everything we now know about the complex set of factors and conditions that contribute to the events that get labeled as crime tells us that to be looking for solutions by putting the spotlight on the criminal justice system, to punish and imprison individuals, is to be looking for solutions in the wrong place. The criminal justice system has long been the only place on which the street lamp has been focused. Experience tells us that this does not work. Instead we must move the spotlight back to the community, within which we all strive to co-exist. We must examine our interconnectedness and seek holistic ways to repair our brokenness.

Restorative justice claims that there can be no criminal justice without social justice. We can only deal with crime by building a peaceful, safe and just society. The foundation of building healthy relationships in our communities is a focus on the common good, rather than satisfying our individual needs and desires. This involves the participation of all groups who in some

way contribute to the spiritual and economic well-being of individuals and communities.⁴

"Nowadays, people who live in the same area are no longer part of a homogeneous group. Cities are made up of neighbours who do not know each other – and this will soon be true of villages too. ... in the cities, where solidarity has disappeared, people are afraid, and so shut themselves up in their own houses, frightened of neighbours and of intruders. Human community is no longer to be found in the market place, the neighbourhood or the village. Mobility has brought about a mixture of people, religions, and philosophies."⁵ "The difference between community and a group of friends is that in a community we verbalize our mutual belonging and bonding. We announce the goals and the spirit that unite us. We recognize together that we are responsible for one another. [So help us God.] We recognize also that this bonding comes from God; it is a gift from God."⁶

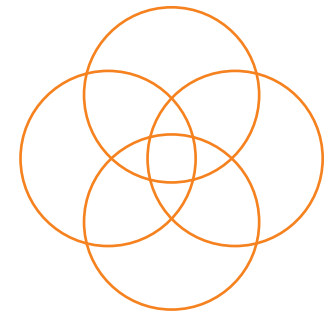
Reflecting on the teachings of Jesus, Bishop A. Harris says: "So many things seem unfair – the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, the brother of the prodigal son – unbalanced, irrational, as far as I can see. But there is the rub – as far as I can see. Christ came to take our vision beyond the horizon. He came to reveal something we

have never experienced – a God who is completely loving – no strings attached – no ulterior motive. And because God's love is total, it is given not because we have earned it, but because we need it. Here is the criminology of Christ."

Recently a hopeful change has occurred in the way that some Canadian organizations seek to effect change. In 2006 the Canadian Association of Police Chiefs held a national forum on crime prevention that brought many new community players to the table. The Church Council on Justice and Corrections was among those groups. This was an important development given that the Church Council on Justice and Corrections has embarked on a new series of public conversations about What Justice Is, that include faith groups, community organizations, individuals and members of the arts community. It is often when we see something of great beauty that we are profoundly moved and our understanding reaches a new level. We cannot fix what is wrong with the Canadian justice system by continuing to address crime in the same way. We need to find a new way of seeing. And this new way of seeing invites creative participation and collaborative action from all who value healthy communities. Together we can make it happen!

"When citizens participate in justice, the health of the community improves – the quality of life, a collective sense of caring, respect for diverse values, a sense of belonging. It increases a community's natural capacity to prevent crime, redress the underlying causes, rebuild the broken lives and relationships."

The symbol of overlapping circles expresses this concept of healing.



The space of "overlap" is the most reliable grounding for community safety. We need to strengthen this place of connectedness."

- From Restorative Justice: What Are We Talking About? , a reflection sheet printed by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections. www.cjcc.ca