



COMMUNIQUÉ  
For immediate release  
(IN HOUSE TRANSLATION)

**BELL-RINGING, PRAYING AND MOBILIZING TO COMBAT VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN**

**March 29, 2021** - In the past seven weeks in Quebec, seven women were killed by spouses or partners, bringing the province's total number of female murder victims to 14 since the beginning of the pandemic. Even one victim is too many. We unite our voices as Catholic faithful with those of organizations fighting against conjugal violence in asking that the Quebec government take action, bringing into effect the 190 recommendations submitted in the report "[Rebâtir la confiance](#)" (rebuilding trust) and providing adequate funding for the implementation of these recommendations.

We believe that it is possible to transform the current situation in order to put an end to violence against women, ensuring that women and children are believed and protected and have access to needed resources, and providing men who present violent behaviour with the services and treatment needed to prevent aggression and reduce the risk of re-offending.

With Easter just a few days away, Christians are preparing to commemorate the founding events of their faith. Jesus, who brought back dignity to the marginalized women of his day while healing the sick and teaching that love of one's neighbour comes before everything else, was put to death on a cross. We believe that despite this he rose from the dead and that life prevailed over death. This paschal mystery surpasses our understanding, but it fosters our hope in the face of the violence and evil in our world.

**In the name of this faith and in solidarity with the women and all the vulnerable victims of violence, we invite the churches of Quebec to take the following action during Holy Week:**

- On Wednesday of Holy Week, March 31, 2021, churches may toll the bells to commemorate the women slain.
- On Good Friday, during the commemoration of the Passion of Jesus Christ or as part of the Way of the Cross, those gathered may include special prayer intentions (Page 2).

*A message from the Réseau des répondantes diocésaines à la condition des femmes and the Church and Society Council of the Assembly of Quebec Catholic Bishops:*

## PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR GOOD FRIDAY

At the foot of the cross, let us pray for the women and girls in our society who have suffered humiliation, beating, and violence resulting in death. Like Jesus, they have carried the cross. Let us condemn all abuse, including the abuse that has been committed within this Church which now commemorates the Crucifixion. Let us pray that our Church and our society may be a model of protection, prevention and peace.

At the foot of the cross, let us pray for our Aboriginal sisters. Many of these women are missing and have been murdered. Many suffer violence and discrimination in the provision of medical care, and that relationship of trust has been broken. Let us pray for the rebuilding of trust through the efforts of listening, dialogue, and the elimination of racism.

At the foot of the cross, let us pray for all the women in the world who are victims of aggression, human trafficking and murder due to conflicts, wars and religious persecution. Let us pray that religions may be instruments of peace and unity. Let us pray for the perpetrators also, that they may recognize the evil that is within them and that they may find assistance in being delivered from it.

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