



Aid to the  
Church in Need

ACN CANADA

## Red Wednesday 2018

As a Catholic and Pontifical organization, Aid to the Church in Need is particularly concerned with the poor, oppressed or persecuted communities.

Red Wednesday is an event aimed at highlighting the persecution and injustice suffered by Christians, while promoting respect and tolerance between people of different religions. We want people to take a stand for their faith, and more broadly, for religious freedom.

**Currently, 200 million of the world's Christians cannot live their faith freely. They suffer from oppression or persecution. Although it is difficult to keep a precise count, we believe that 75% of religiously motivated violence is perpetrated against Christians.**

In solidarity with Christians who suffer for their faith, we are inviting people to organize an event around that theme, to make themselves visible by wearing red, illuminating their church or another significant building in red, as this colour is associated with martyrdom in the Christian tradition.

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## What you can do

The scheduled date is **November 21<sup>st</sup>** (3<sup>rd</sup> week of November). We are trying to coordinate so that the events take place on the same day in order to draw attention to persecution.

You can:

- ✧ Illuminate in red a church or other important building in your area
- ✧ Organize a mass for persecuted Christians
- ✧ Organize a vigil or a moment of prayer
- ✧ Say a rosary
- ✧ Choose special universal prayers to include in a celebration
- ✧ Invite people to wear red
- ✧ Organize a presentation on religious persecution or religious freedom with the help of Aid to the Church in Need

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☞ Use social media to publicize the event and raise awareness of the cause

☞ Hold a press conference

☞ Have a fundraiser to help the affected communities

**If you wish, we will supply the following material:**

(can be downloaded from our website <http://acn-canada.org/red-wednesday> )

- Posters to publicize your event
- Texts describing the issue
- Examples of cases of persecution
- Texts to celebrate a mass
- Texts for a rosary
- Texts for a prayer vigil
- Adapted universal prayers
- Red scarves to wear to show our solidarity (contact us)

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Our dream is to rally dioceses and parishes from across Canada in order to have a greater impact on the collective psyche and to make the situation of our brothers and sisters who suffer for their faith known. Furthermore, we are showing them that they are not forgotten.

You can adapt the material to your own situation.

**Join #RedWednesday or #MercrediRouge**



Red Wednesday has already taken place in England, Italy, Brazil and Mexico and now here! Belgium, the Philippines, Portugal, Spain and the United States are joining the event this year.

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**Tell us what you are doing, and we'll publicize it!**

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## Society and religious persecution

In our secular society, injustices against believers are largely ignored – possibly due to the fact that religion has been removed from public spaces. This is also due to the fact that people are increasingly less educated about matters of religion. All this makes it difficult to understand the situation. Most western people today do not fully understand the nature and scope of persecution.

That is why Red Wednesday aims to raise awareness among Christians on what is happening in the world and wants to encourage them to act through prayer and, in another way, by supporting the projects of Aid to the Church in Need in Iraq, in Syria or in any other country where persecution is experienced.

## Objectives

- ✂ Strengthening the faith of believers through the example of other believers who suffer persecution, but who remain very strong in their faith
- ✂ Informing and educating on religious freedom as well as persecution, since the lack of religious freedom is in fact a human rights and liberties issue, which is stated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ✂ Making the work of Aid to the Church in Need known in the various aspects of its mission, especially to the persecuted communities
- ✂ Encouraging Christians of all ages and traditions to stand up for their faith and for religious freedom as a right for Christians all over the world to live their faith in a peaceful way, without fear and without obstruction
- ✂ Awakening the interest of the population on the subject by using reports produced by Aid to the Church in Need: *Persecuted and Forgotten? A report on Christians oppressed for their faith* and the *Report on Religious Freedom in the World* in order for people to understand why this subject is, unfortunately, still relevant.

