

## **International Human Rights Day**

December 10<sup>th</sup> 2008 marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It is a landmark year in that what began as an initiative of governments is today the common goal of people everywhere. This year's theme *Dignity and Justice for All of Us* reinforces the vision of the Universal Declaration as a commitment to universal dignity and justice for all.

Our commitment to the sentiments contained in the Universal Declaration is as important today as it was 60 years ago. However, since its passage much has happened in our world that belies its intent. Wars, famine, poverty and disease continue to exact an unbelievable toll on people the world over.

Here in Canada, our children are suffering from unacceptable rates of poverty, mental illness and violence. Racialized people and women face a shortage of decent employment opportunities. Challenges like climate change confront us all.

Sisters and brothers each of us has the duty to stand up not just for our own rights, but for those of others. As we approach the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights we encourage each of you to re-commit to creating a world in which every person can realize their human rights.