



Lent 2015 Resources for Coordinators

Look inside for
everything you need
to get started with
CRS Rice Bowl!

Encourage your
community to download the
CRS Rice Bowl app!



crsricebowl.org



YouTube



In this guide, you'll find:

- Five Steps to Bring CRS Rice Bowl to Your Community
- An Introductory Letter to Families
- A Blessing to Begin Your Lenten Journey
- Prayer Intentions
- Bulletin Announcements
- A Bulletin Insert
- Reflections on Sunday's Readings
- Collecting CRS Rice Bowls: 5 Steps to Success
- An Offertory Prayer to End Your Lenten Journey

**Download these and more resources
at crsricebowl.org/parish.**

FIVE STEPS TO BRING CRS RICE BOWL TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Ready to get started with CRS Rice Bowl? These five simple steps will guarantee a fun and successful Lent.

1. Talk with your pastor or principal.

Getting the support of your pastor or school principal is essential to CRS Rice Bowl success. They can help engage the wider community, recruit volunteers and promote the program from the pulpit or at meetings.

2. Invite volunteers to serve as CRS Rice Bowl coordinators.

Volunteers make all the difference. Having individuals who will champion CRS Rice Bowl within their community inspires others to get involved. Consider reaching out to one or two leaders within your parish or school, or form a small committee to oversee all Lenten activities.

3. Order materials.

Place your order for **FREE** CRS Rice Bowl materials at least 3 weeks before Lent. You can order online at crsricebowl.org/order or by calling 800-222-0025. Each year, CRS Rice Bowl develops new materials, including the CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar, posters, educational resources, community reflections, videos and more!

4. Hold a kickoff event to distribute CRS Rice Bowls. *(And make sure every family gets one!)*

A CRS Rice Bowl kickoff event is a great way to bring your entire community together before Lent. Simple meals, prayer services and community catechetical events are great opportunities to begin your CRS Rice Bowl Lenten journey!

5. Make CRS Rice Bowl materials part of your community's Lenten journey.

There are 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, and CRS Rice Bowl has resources for each one of them. Our prayer intentions integrate CRS Rice Bowl themes into weekly liturgies, and our Stations of the Cross resource infuses this Friday Lenten devotion with Catholic social teaching. Families, students, youth groups and small-faith sharing communities will love incorporating simple meatless recipes from around the world into weekly Lenten suppers. And don't forget to check in with Catholics from around the country on the CRS Rice Bowl Facebook and Twitter pages!

A little planning will go a long way in bringing Lent to life in your faith community!

The 40 days will fly by, so don't forget to plan a fun way to collect your community's CRS Rice Bowls at the end of Lent. See crsricebowl.org/parish for ideas!

Start here! Send the following letter home with families.

"Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty."

—Pope Francis

Dear families,

This Lent we will participate in CRS Rice Bowl, a faith-in-action program that will help you experience Lenten spirituality by living in solidarity with people in need around the world.

As we, the global Church, prepare for the World Meeting of Families 2015 in Philadelphia this fall, it is especially appropriate to come together in prayer as a family this Lent. Your cardboard CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar are great tools to guide your Lenten prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Read these materials together and consider what you will give up for Lent as a family or as individuals. Be sure to write your goals on the side of your CRS Rice Bowl.

Your Lenten Calendar has brief activities for each day of Lent, Stories of Hope from people around the world and recipes for simple meatless meals. Consider reading the Lenten Calendar as a family each day at dinner. Try one or more of the recipes for a meatless Friday dinner and be sure to watch the CRS Rice Bowl Global Kitchen videos to learn how to prepare each meal.

Be sure to visit crsricebowl.org to view videos of people whose lives are touched by your support of CRS Rice Bowl. You can also find fun activities for your family. And download the CRS Rice Bowl app to receive daily reflections right on your phone—and to track your Lenten sacrifices.

We will be collecting your CRS Rice Bowls at the end of Lent, so stay tuned to learn more.

Thank you for using CRS Rice Bowl with your family this Lent.

Sincerely,

A BLESSING TO BEGIN YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY

These blessings will help your community begin its Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. You can incorporate them into Mass after the homily, or during prayer services or other communal gatherings. Make sure you have enough CRS Rice Bowls to pass out after they've been blessed—and encourage volunteers to help distribute them.

Introduction

As we look ahead to our Lenten journey, may our fasting be a hunger for justice, our alms a making of peace, and our prayers the change of humble and grateful hearts. We ask for God's help to put our faith into action, to work in love, to persevere in hope, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen

Reading

Let us listen to the words of the Prophet Isaiah (58:5–8).

Prayer Intentions

Pray for those in need around the world and in your own community. (See crsricebowl.org/parish.)

Blessing of the CRS Rice Bowls

Loving God, you are blessed and the source of every blessing. Be with us now and as we use these CRS Rice Bowls (*sprinkle with holy water*) in prayer, fasting and almsgiving this Lent. May they be an instrument of your love and a reminder of your great desire for peace and justice. May they serve to unite us with our brothers and sisters around the world, especially those who are hungry, homeless and in need. May they help us deepen our own faith in you and our love for one another as we await with joyful anticipation the great celebration of Easter. Amen



Photo by Karen Kasmauski for CRS

Remind your community that ...

CRS Rice Bowl is the faith-in-action Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, the official international development and humanitarian relief agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

CRS Rice Bowl is celebrating 40 years of helping communities live out Lent in solidarity with our poorest brothers and sisters around the world.

Seventy-five percent of every donation goes to help the poor overseas, and twenty-five percent stays in your diocese to support local hunger and homelessness alleviation projects.

You'll find more prayer, educational and family resources available online at crsricebowl.org and on the **CRS Rice Bowl app**.



PRAYER INTENTIONS

Integrate CRS Rice Bowl into your liturgical celebrations with these prayer intentions.

Introduction

Trusting in the mercy and love of our God who walked among the poor, the vulnerable and the outcast, we voice our own petitions, asking for what we need, and for the needs of our brothers and sisters all over the world, saying, “Lord, help us to be instruments of your peace.”

First Sunday of Lent

For people around the world who are hungry, especially children, that they receive the nutritious food they need to live healthy, productive lives. We pray to the Lord.

For our own community of faith, that we remember the words of Christ: “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me.” We pray to the Lord.

Second Sunday of Lent

For farmers around the world who work to improve their harvests while preserving natural resources, that they may support their families through the fruits of the land. We pray to the Lord.

For our community of faith, that we do our part to preserve our natural environment and be good stewards of the gifts God has given us. We pray to the Lord.

Third Sunday of Lent

For workers around the world, that they may find productive employment and earn fair wages for their labor. We pray to the Lord.

For our community of faith, that we may each find work that allows us to use those gifts and passions that God has placed in our hearts. We pray to the Lord.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

For those who are forced from their homes by war, natural disasters and other tragedies, that they may be welcomed with love and hospitality in new and foreign lands. We pray to the Lord.

For our own community of faith, that we may welcome the homeless, the lost and the wanderer, recognizing that Jesus himself lived without a permanent place to call home. We pray to the Lord.

Fifth Sunday of Lent


For communities around the world that are devastated by natural and man-made disasters, that they may be given the courage and resources they need to rebuild their lives. We pray to the Lord.

For our community of faith, that when disaster strikes, we be given the courage and strength to persevere and to seek God even amidst tragedy. We pray to the Lord.

Palm Sunday

For people around the world who struggle to provide enough food to meet their families’ daily needs, that they may overcome the challenges of hunger and poverty. We pray to the Lord.

For our community of faith, that we may deepen our relationship with Christ by recognizing his face in the faces of our brothers and sisters in need. We pray to the Lord.



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday Before Ash Wednesday

Hungering for the Journey

Join our parish community—and more than 13,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Pick up your family's rice bowl from [LOCATION] on [DATE], and don't forget to download the CRS Rice Bowl app! Remember, your Lenten sacrifices change lives.

First Week of Lent

Hungering for a Better Life

Our journey with CRS Rice Bowl begins in Tanzania, where a simple soybean is changing lives! What actions can you take this Lent to change lives—at home and around the world?

Second Week of Lent

Hungering for a Bountiful Earth

This week CRS Rice Bowl takes us to the coffee highlands of Nicaragua, where we're called to protect both the goodness of creation and the livelihoods of struggling families. How will this week's fast remind us of the sacredness of God's creation and our duty to protect it?

Third Week of Lent

Hungering for a Season of Hope

The next stop on our CRS Rice Bowl journey is the African nation, Niger, where we're reminded that life's joys and challenges are often seasonal. This week we pray for people who struggle to feed their families during the hungry season—when food is in short supply—and we commit to acting for the common good.

Fourth Week of Lent

Hungering for Peace

We journey with CRS Rice Bowl to Lebanon to be present to a people who themselves are on a journey. Here we meet a family of

Syrian refugees, a family perhaps not so unlike our own. We are challenged through our almsgiving this week to reach out to those who are forced to flee their homes, who are seeking shelter in a land of peace.

Fifth Week of Lent

Hungering for a Healthy Harvest

CRS Rice Bowl brings our Lenten journey back to Africa this week, to the Democratic Republic of Congo. We join our fasting in solidarity with people who go hungry, and we remember in prayer the importance of building a community that is willing to support those most in need.

Palm Sunday

Hungering for Seeds of Home

We follow Jesus this week on our Lenten journey as he enters into Jerusalem, a community he knew well. CRS Rice Bowl asks us, too, to prayerfully enter into our own communities, to find those who are hungry and thirsty, who need our help. How does our Lenten journey motivate us to serve those we encounter in our daily lives?

Easter Sunday

Hungering for Celebration!

We prayed, fasted and gave alms—and now we celebrate! Our Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl ends in our own hearts, where Jesus reigns forever. Let us rejoice in our risen Lord—and in the lives we've changed this Lent in Tanzania, Nicaragua, Niger, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and all over the world! Don't forget to turn in your CRS Rice Bowl [PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS].

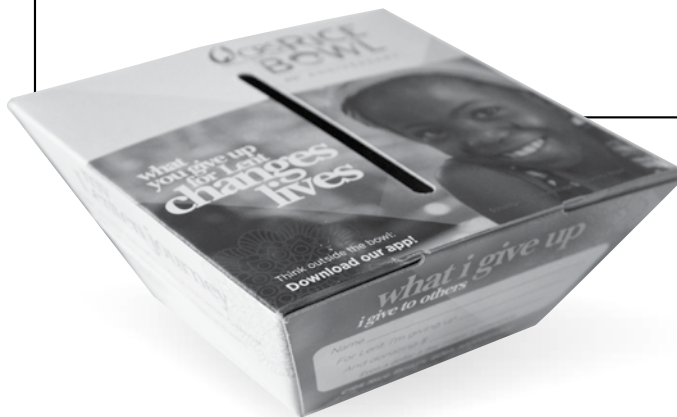
After Easter Messaging

Our community changed lives this Lent, and CRS Rice Bowl wants to say THANK YOU!! Don't forget to turn in your CRS Rice Bowl [PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS].

CRS RICE BOWL
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES
40th ANNIVERSARY

Lent is a journey.
Where will it take
you this year?

CRS Rice Bowl is your passport
to global solidarity.



Forty years ago, Catholics in the United States wanted to respond to famine in Africa. Could we feed the hungry through Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving? The answer was yes—and it came in the form of a small cardboard box. Forty years later, it still does. And now, there's an app for that too.

Pick up a CRS Rice Bowl
for your family and
download our app!



crsricebowl.org



YouTube



REFLECTIONS ON SUNDAY'S READINGS

Use these notes to weave themes from CRS Rice Bowl into weekly homilies, reflections and faith-sharing gatherings. Catholic social teaching principles for each week are taken from the CRS Rice Bowl Lenten Calendar. All Sunday readings come from Cycle B.

Week 1 - February 22: *Genesis 9:8-17; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15*

Sacredness and Dignity of the Human Person

When God created us, he made us in his image and likeness. That means that every human being has a special value and purpose. We need to care for each other so that we can be the people that God calls us to be.

- † God never leaves us. He created each of us as unique, valuable persons and works actively in our lives, desiring that we grow closer to him. *How has God been at work in our lives during these first days of Lent?*
- † Today's readings show us that God gives tangible reminders of his committed love and his desire to be present to

us: the rainbow after the flood, Jesus' preaching, the waters of Baptism. *How do we act as tangible reminders of God's love, especially to those who are most in need?*

- † This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to Tanzania, where we are reminded of the important role a community can play in supporting an individual's work. This takes trust and commitment—two themes apparent in today's readings. *Am I committed to myself, my God and my neighbor? How do I show this trust and commitment, and where is there room for growth?*

Week 2 - March 1: *Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9*

Care for Creation

God created every plant, every mountain-top, every animal—everything. And God said that these things are good. We find God in these good things he made, and so we must take care of creation, both for ourselves and for all of our human family.

- † God makes a promise to Abraham and his descendants, and God keeps his promises. *What promises do we make to those who will come after us, especially in thinking about how we care for God's creation?*
- † Abraham's faith in God—not some legal contract—is what allowed God to act in the life of Abraham's family.

How often do we try to regulate how God works? Is this thinking not as God does, but as human beings do? Do we allow the Spirit to move in us?

- † This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to Nicaragua, where we are reminded of the essential link between the health of the earth and the health of humanity. *What lessons does the Transfigured Christ offer us as stewards of creation? What are we called to do in "coming down from the mountain," in working in the nitty-gritty reality of daily life?*



Week 3 – March 8: *Exodus 20:1-17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22*

Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers

Jesus spent years working as a carpenter. Work is important to help people live good lives, so people must be paid a fair wage to provide for themselves and their families.

† We are reminded that God worked and God rested, and we are asked to do the same. *Do we empower others to attain meaningful work? Do we help others to keep the Sabbath? Do we keep it ourselves?*

† Jesus is angered by injustice and takes action. He is unafraid to let his opinions be heard. *Do we speak out against injustice where we see it, or do we assume it's someone else's responsibility?*

† This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to Niger, where we meet a family whose livelihood is governed by the seasons. We all experience seasons of challenge, injustice or sorrow. *How do we*



Habibou Alassane, his wife, and nine children are farmers in Tourbey, a remote village in Niger. Nearly half of the population in this West African country struggles with getting enough food.

Photo by Francois Therrien for CRS

display our hope that a season of justice will come, our trust that “the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom?”

Week 4 – March 15: *Numbers 21:4-9; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21*

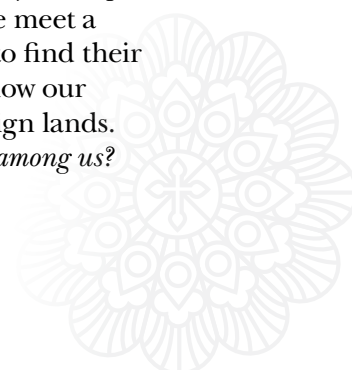
Option for the Poor

Jesus tells us to care for those who are most in need in the world. He reminds us of our Christian duty to give a voice to those who go unheard and to help those who are most vulnerable.

† The bronze serpent became for the Israelites a symbol of hope, one they could look to for healing. In the same way, the risen Christ becomes that same hope for us. *Are we symbols of hope for those who live in difficult situations, especially the poorest of the poor?*

† We are created in Christ to do the particular good works God has prepared for us. That means we have a duty both to pursue our own good works and empower others to do the same. *How do we empower those around us—poor and rich—to do those good works?*

† This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to Lebanon, where we meet a family of refugees struggling to find their place in a foreign land. We know our Israelite ancestors fled to foreign lands. *How do we welcome the stranger among us?*



Week 5 - March 22: *Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33*

Call to Family, Community and Participation

Human beings are social by nature. We, like the early disciples, are called to come together as a community whether that community is our classroom, workplace or family.

† God makes covenants with groups of people—entire communities—and he keeps his promises. *What does this say about God? What does this say about how we, in community, relate to God?*

† Jesus recognizes that he has arrived at a difficult point in his life for the sake of glorifying God. He commits to doing God's will, no matter the cost. *Do we offer our suffering up for the glory of God? Do we help others work through their own difficulties for God's greater glory?*

† This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where we meet a community that comes together to



After learning different ways of treating banana wilt disease on Hamuli's farm in Democratic Republic of Congo, community members visited each other's fields and worked together to clean the disease from the trees. Photo by Jean Paul Cigulube/CRS

improve their harvests. *Do we see God in new ways when we come together as a community? How does God speak through others?*

Week 6, Palm Sunday - March 29: *Isaiah 50:4-9a; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47; or Mark 15:1-39*

The Common Good

As God's family, we are all called to look out for one another. It's not just about "me." It's about "us." How can we be sure that the decisions we make in our own community and in the world help build up and protect God's entire family?

† Isaiah reminds us that God gives us a "well-trained tongue ... to answer the weary a word that will waken them." *Do we listen to God's Spirit within us? How does the Spirit motivate us and guide our words as we work for a more just world?*

† Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." *How are we called, especially during Lent, to empty ourselves for the good of others?*

† This week's CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope takes us to a community in the United States, in the Diocese of Albany. *How have our Lenten reflections on global solidarity affected how we view poor and vulnerable people in our own communities?*

COLLECTING CRS RICE BOWLS: 5 Steps to Success

1. Decide which collection method works best for your community.

- **Option 1:** Participants bring their cardboard CRS Rice Bowls with their contributions inside. Collecting donations in the CRS Rice Bowls makes your community's Lenten efforts concrete and visible.

To consider: Be prepared to empty the CRS Rice Bowls, count coins and handle checks. Recruit volunteers to help! Consider youth group members or Confirmation candidates.

- **Option 2:** Ask participants to convert their CRS Rice Bowl gifts to checks for easier counting. **Checks can be made out to schools or parishes with "CRS Rice Bowl" in the memo line.** A second collection or a CRS Rice Bowl display box are common ways to collect donations.

To consider: Be prepared to cash the checks and combine them into one donation. **Be sure to write "CRS Rice Bowl" in the memo line of your check,** and send your check to your local diocesan director (visit crs.org/contact to find your diocesan director) or to:

Catholic Relief Services
CRS Rice Bowl
P.O. Box 17090
Baltimore, Maryland 21297-0303

- **Option 3:** Participants donate directly to CRS. Donate online at crsricebowl.org/give or by sending a check to the address above. **Consider** asking participants to tell you how much they donated so you can share your results.

2. Plan a fun and meaningful collection ritual.

CRS Rice Bowl offers An Offertory Prayer to End the Lenten Journey to help your

community conclude this holy season. Visit crsricebowl.org/parish for more ideas.

3. Spread the word about when and where CRS Rice Bowls will be collected.

Be sure to let your community know when and where they should turn in their CRS Rice Bowls. Announce your collection details in a variety of ways so that everyone will get the news!

- Hang up the collection poster that you will receive mid-Lent.
- Use our bulletin announcements and bulletin inserts.
- Publish details on your community's Facebook page or Twitter account.
- Announce details after each Mass on the Sunday before your collection.
- Send home the Letter to Families: Turn in Your CRS Rice Bowls (crsricebowl.org/parish).

4. Collect and count donations.

Recruit volunteers from your parish ministries, religious education program, youth ministry or parish school to help you count change. Send one check to your diocese or directly to CRS.

5. Thank your community, and let them know the impact their gift will have.

Hang up the Thank You poster you receive from CRS at the end of Lent. Let parishioners know how much they contributed and what impact their donations will have. Use the symbolic amounts in the CRS Gift Catalog on gifts.crs.org. See crsricebowl.org for other creative ways to thank your community.

AN OFFERTORY PRAYER TO END YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Use this Offertory Prayer at a CRS Rice Bowl closing ceremony or as a part of the Mass. Encourage children to process in carrying their CRS Rice Bowls and ask them to place them in a communal space for the entire congregation to see.

Loving God,

You call us to be good stewards of creation and of all the gifts you have blessed us with. As we end our Lenten journey, walking with our brothers and sisters around the world who are hungry and in need, we pray that these, our Lenten sacrifices, may be an offering of solidarity and a promise of continued work on behalf of all poor and vulnerable people. As good stewards of your many gifts, may we always remember to love our neighbors as ourselves. And wherever we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty or clothe the naked, may we remember that we are encountering the risen Christ.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

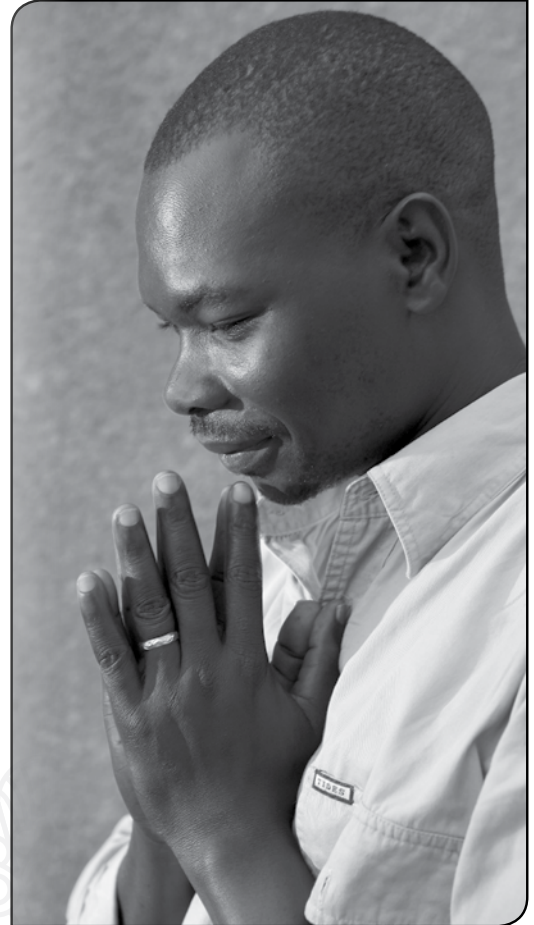


Photo by Sara A. Fajardo for CRS