



Photo by Jim Sipe/CRS

Look inside for everything you need to bring Lent to life in your community!

LENT 2016 RESOURCES FOR COORDINATORS

In this guide, you'll find:

- Five Steps: 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
- Sunday Reflections
- Collecting CRS Rice Bowls: Five Steps to Success
- An Offertory Prayer to End Your Lenten Journey

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

Encourage your community to download the **CRS Rice Bowl app!**



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five steps:

BRING CRS RICE BOWL TO YOUR COMMUNITY

READY TO GET STARTED with CRS Rice Bowl?

These five simple steps will guarantee a fun and faith-filled Lent.

1. Talk with your pastor or principal.

Getting the support of your pastor or school principal is essential to CRS Rice Bowl success. He or she 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. Reach out to one or two leaders within your parish or school, or form a small committee to communicate with families, organize CRS Rice Bowl resources and promote the program.

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. Order a CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar for every family, and use the posters, educational resources, community reflections and videos to enhance your Lenten celebration!

4. Distribute CRS Rice Bowls after Mass. (Make sure every family gets one!)

Integrate your community's CRS Rice Bowl kickoff into the liturgy. Pass out CRS Rice Bowls to each family in your parish or school on the Sunday before Lent or Ash Wednesday. The *Blessing to Begin Your Lenten Journey* on page 4 can help you get started.

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. Remember to check in with Catholics from around the country on the CRS Rice Bowl Facebook and Twitter pages! **And don't forget to use our app—available for iPhone and Android—to bring Lent to life.**

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—check out page 11. And see crsricebowl.org for more ideas and resources!

START HERE!

Send the following letter home with families, and include the bulletin insert on page 7 in your weekly bulletin!



"I have often thought about how the Church might make clear its mission of being a witness to mercy. It is a journey that begins with a spiritual conversion."

—Pope Francis

Dear Families,

This Lent our community 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, continue our prayerful walk through this Holy Year of Mercy, it is especially appropriate to come together in prayer as a family this Lent, reflecting on how we can live this call to mercy more abundantly.

Use your cardboard CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar to guide your Lenten prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

As a family, read the Stories of Hope and daily reflections to inspire your Lenten journey—and motivate your Lenten giving.

Prepare simple, meatless meals on Fridays throughout Lent to eat in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world.

Be sure to visit crsricebowl.org to watch videos of the people and communities whose lives your Lenten gifts are changing through CRS Rice Bowl.

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,

P.S. Did you know that CRS Rice Bowl has a free Lenten app? Download it for iPhone or Android devices and get daily Lenten reflections right on your phone.

CRS Rice Bowl is sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. CRS is motivated by the example of Jesus Christ to assist poor and suffering people in more than 100 countries on the basis of need, without regard to race, religion or nationality.

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a blessing

TO BEGIN YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY

THIS BLESSING WILL HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

begin its Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Incorporate it into Mass after the homily, or during other communal gatherings. Make sure you have enough CRS Rice Bowls to pass out after they've been blessed—and recruit volunteers to hand one to each family.

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 and 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 page 5 or 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 Oscar Lema/Sherlight for CRS

Remind your community that ...

CRS Rice Bowl is the 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 helps Catholics in the United States live out the Lenten pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in solidarity with our poorest brothers and sisters.

Seventy-five percent of CRS Rice Bowl donations help the poor overseas, and twenty-five percent support local hunger and poverty alleviation projects in our (arch)diocese.

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

INTEGRATE CRS RICE BOWL into your liturgical celebrations with these prayer intentions. Or consider distributing these prayers to families to pray in their own homes.

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 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.

SECOND 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.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

For pregnant women, mothers, grandmothers and all women around the world entrusted with caring for and nurturing others, that they receive the support and resources they need. We pray to the Lord.

For our own community of faith, that we protect and uphold the rights of young people to learn and grow in safe, supportive environments. We pray to the Lord.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

For students, young and old, that they be given the opportunities and support they need to pursue their passions, and use their knowledge and skills for the betterment of their community. We pray to the Lord.

For our community of faith, that we value and uphold the important work of teachers, educators, tutors and mentors. We pray to the Lord.

FIFTH 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.

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.

SUNDAY(S) BEFORE ASH WEDNESDAY

HUNGERING FOR THE JOURNEY

Join our parish community—and nearly 14,000 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, what you give up for Lent changes lives.

FIRST WEEK OF LENT

HUNGERING FOR OPPORTUNITY

Our journey with CRS Rice Bowl begins in Colombia, where coffee beans are changing lives! What actions can we take this Lent to change lives—at home and around the world? Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

SECOND WEEK OF LENT

HUNGERING TO GIVE BACK

This week, CRS Rice Bowl takes us to Laos, where Hongkham is using her love of cooking to provide for her family—and feed an entire school. How do we use our passions and gifts for the betterment of those we meet? Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

THIRD WEEK OF LENT

HUNGERING FOR A HEALTHY START

The next stop on our CRS Rice Bowl journey is the African nation of Rwanda, where we're reminded to care for the unborn. This week we pray for pregnant mothers, that they may have the medical and nutritional support they need to raise healthy, thriving children. Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

HUNGERING TO LEARN

We journey with CRS Rice Bowl to the Central American country of Honduras, where we meet students who are learning that it's better to help your neighbor learn and grow than to leave him or her behind. To whom are we called to extend a hand this week? Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

HUNGERING TO GROW A NEW TOMORROW

This week's CRS Rice Bowl country is the island nation of Madagascar, where we're reminded of the important role farmers play in caring for God's creation. As we prepare our meals throughout the week, let us reflect on where our food comes from—and what role we can play in caring for our environment. Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

PALM SUNDAY

HUNGERING TO BUILD COMMUNITY

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

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 Colombia, Laos, Rwanda, Honduras, Madagascar and all over the world! Don't forget to turn in your CRS Rice Bowl at [LOCATION] on [DATE].

AFTER-EASTER MESSAGING

THANK YOU

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 at [LOCATION] on [DATE].



YOUR FAMILY CAN TRAVEL THE WORLD THIS LENT— WITHOUT LEAVING YOUR DINNER TABLE.

Let CRS Rice Bowl be your ticket to global solidarity as you **pray, fast, learn** and **give** this Lent in order to change the lives of our brothers and sisters in need.

All you need is a CRS Rice Bowl and a Lenten Calendar!

Keep the CRS Rice Bowl near your family dinner table during Lent so that you can refer to it each night.

PRAY using the Lenten Calendar and the CRS Rice Bowl app. What is the day's message? How does it connect to the life of your family?

FAST together. How is your family's Lenten fast going? How will it affect your lives today, tomorrow and after Lent?

LEARN about the people for whom this week's Lenten prayers are being offered. Read and discuss the Story of Hope. Who is your family helping this week? Where do they live? What do they do?

GIVE the suggested donation to your CRS Rice Bowl from the Lenten Calendar. Why is it important to give to others? How can you continue giving back even after Lent?

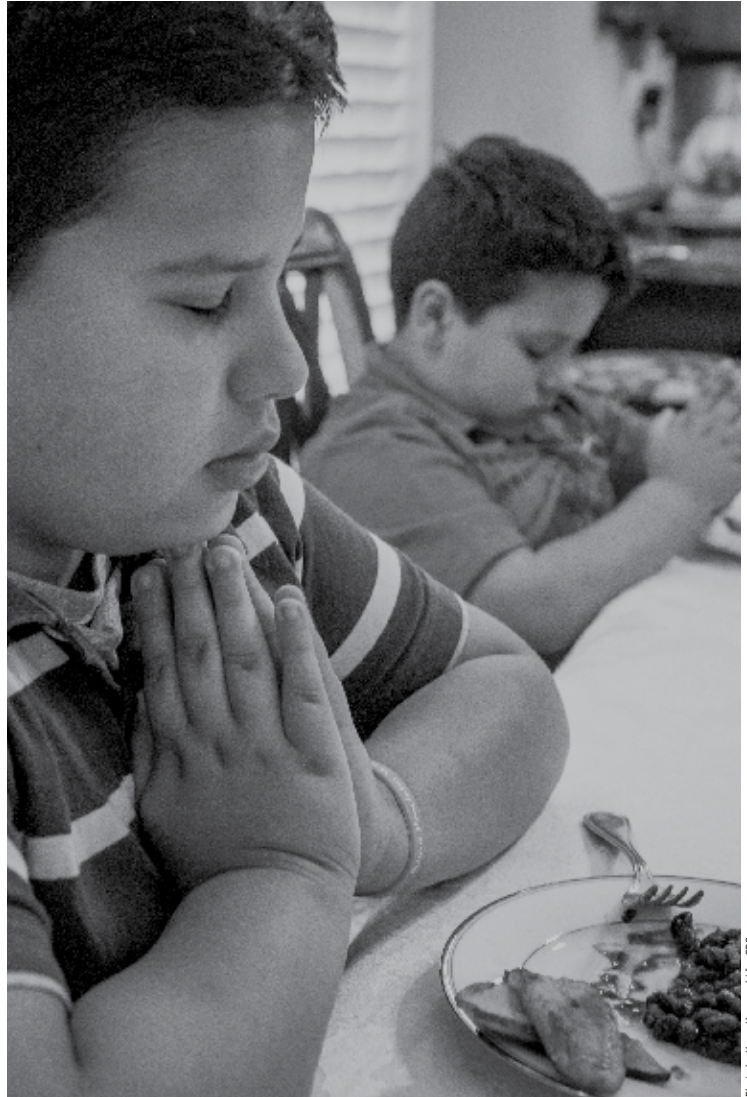


Photo by Karen Kaszinski for CRS

Find videos and more resources at crsricebowl.org



Download our app!



WEAVE THEMES FROM CRS RICE BOWL

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

WEEK 1: FEBRUARY 14

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

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.

- We hear in Deuteronomy, “We cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, and the LORD heard our cry and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression.”

If God hears the cries of the poor, how should we interact with those who are poor, oppressed and marginalized?

- Paul calls us to put our faith in God, trusting that in so doing, God will act. Jesus shows us what that looks like by resisting temptation in the desert and living those 40 days in trust.

Where in our lives are we called to trust God more explicitly this Lent?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl features a family from Colombia who, forced to flee their home because of conflict, experiences firsthand what it means to be aliens in a foreign place, left to rely on the fruits of the land. What initially appears frightening and lonely becomes the stepping stone to new opportunity and community.

How do I welcome the stranger in my daily life? Do I offer opportunity and community, or do I turn my back on my neighbor?

WEEK 2: FEBRUARY 21

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36, 37-43a

Rights and Responsibilities

As human beings, we have the right to live and grow in peace. Because we have that right, we have the responsibility to make sure others enjoy the same opportunity too.

- God makes a promise to Abraham and his descendants; God and Abraham have a responsibility to live up to that promise.

How do we uphold our responsibility to promises we have made to God and others?

- Paul reminds us that “our citizenship is in heaven.” God loves all people—all citizens of that heavenly home—equally.

What kinds of rights and responsibilities does that citizenship imply?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl features a woman from Laos who, recognizing the needs of her family and her own unique gifts, uses her love of cooking to feed her children—and an entire school.

How are we called to use our own unique gifts for the betterment of others?

WEEK 3: FEBRUARY 28

*Isaiah 55:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13;
Luke 13:1-9*

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 God calls us to be.

- Isaiah beautifully describes the invitation of grace God extends to each of us. We are reminded that our inherent dignity means that God lives in us and desires that we stay close to him.

How does this invitation from God guide us in our relationships with one another?

- Jesus' parable of the fig tree reminds us to cultivate our own lives—and those of others. We should not cut anyone down but rather build each other up.

How do we cultivate the Spirit at work in those around us?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl features a woman from Rwanda who, understanding the importance of good nutrition for her child, worked to ensure that her baby received the nutrition she needs from conception to her second birthday.

How do we work to protect life in all its forms, from conception to natural death?

WEEK 4: MARCH 6

*Joshua 5:9-12; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21;
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32*

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.

- Paul says, "So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us."

How am I called to bring God into my community? Where can I allow God to speak through me?

- "I no longer deserve to be called your son," says the prodigal, but his father sees things differently. As a member of the family, he has an important role that no one else can fill—and his father calls him back to it.

As members of God's family, do we recognize and live out our unique roles?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl features two schoolchildren from Honduras who help one another learn and grow.

Who does God put in our lives to help us grow? Who in our lives are we called to help?

WEEK 5: MARCH 13

*Isaiah 43:16–21; Philippians 3:4b–14;
John 12:1–8*

Care for Creation

God created every plant, every mountaintop, 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.

- Isaiah draws our attention to God at work in the natural environment. “See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

Where do we encounter God in creation?

- Jesus says, “You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.” Indeed, we now encounter Christ in the cry of the poor, and the cry of the earth.

Do we recognize the suffering Christ in the poor, in the earth? How do we respond?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl features a woman from Madagascar whose crops were destroyed in a recent storm. As a farmer, she needed seeds to get her family back on their feet.

Do we listen to the needs of others, or do we impose our own assumptions?

WEEK 6: MARCH 20 (PALM SUNDAY)

*Isaiah 50:4–9a; Philippians 2:5–11;
Luke 22:14–23:56 or Luke 23:1–49*

Global Solidarity

Jesus tells us to love our neighbors, even though they may be different from us. That means those neighbors who live next door and those who live on the other side of the planet. Jesus reminds us that we are all part of God’s great 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 in these last days of Lent, to empty ourselves for the good of others?

- This week, CRS Rice Bowl reminds us of the needs faced by communities in our own country.

How have our Lenten reflections on global solidarity affected how we view those in need in our own communities?



STEP 1

Decide which collection method works best for your community.

OPTION 1

Participants bring their cardboard CRS Rice Bowls with their contributions to the designated collection area. Collecting donations in the CRS Rice Bowls makes your community's Lenten efforts concrete and visible.

TO CONSIDER: Be prepared to empty the 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.

TO CONSIDER: Be prepared to cash the checks and combine them into one donation. 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.

TO CONSIDER: It may be difficult to track your community's cumulative contribution to CRS Rice Bowl if participants give online or through the mail. Consider asking participants to tell you how much they donated so you can share your results.

STEP 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.

STEP 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 gets 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 or Twitter page.
- Announce details after each Mass on the Sunday before your collection.

STEP 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 (see address at left).

STEP 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 on the panel of the CRS Rice Bowl or view the CRS Gift Catalog at 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 part of the Mass. Encourage children and families to process forward with their CRS Rice Bowls, and place them in a basket or other collection area in the sanctuary or at the front of the gathering space.

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

