LENT 2021
RESOURCES FOR COORDINATORS

BRING LENT TO LIFE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY!

Planning Resources
- Get Started in 5 Easy Steps ...................... 2
- Tips for Collecting CRS Rice Bowls ........ 3

Prayer Resources
- Prayer to Begin the Lenten Season .......... 4
- Weekly Prayer Intentions ......................... 5
- Offertory Prayer to End the Lenten Journey ............................................. 6

Communication Resources
- Pulpit Announcement: Introduction to CRS Rice Bowl .................. 7
- Letter to Families ........................................ 8
- Bulletin Insert .......................................... 9
- Bulletin & Newsletter Announcements ...................................................... 10

crsricebowl.org

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GET STARTED IN 5 EASY STEPS

Ready to bring Lent to life with CRS Rice Bowl? Follow these five simple steps to a fruitful 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 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 call 800-222-0025. Order a CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar for every family, and use the posters, educational resources, online tools and videos to enhance your Lenten journey.

3 Spread the word—CRS Rice Bowl is coming!
• Hang this year’s CRS Rice Bowl poster in a prominent place.
• Include our ready-made announcements in your weekly bulletin or newsletter.
• Download an ad from our website.
• Spread the word from the pulpit or in your morning announcements: CRS Rice Bowl is coming, and our community is participating!

4 Distribute CRS Rice Bowls at Mass.
Make sure every family gets one!
Integrate CRS Rice Bowl into liturgy or a community gathering at the beginning of Lent. Pass out CRS Rice Bowls to each family in your parish or school on the Sunday before Lent or on Ash Wednesday. The Prayer to Begin the Lenten Season on page 4 can help you get started.

5 Make CRS Rice Bowl materials part of your community’s Lenten journey—visit crsricebowl.org.
There are 40 days of Lent, and CRS Rice Bowl has resources for each one. Our prayer intentions integrate CRS Rice Bowl themes into weekly liturgies, and our Stations of the Cross digital retreats (crsricebowl.org/stations-of-the-cross) infuse 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.

Online or in-person, these events can bring communities together. Customize a CRS Rice Bowl community giving page (crsricebowl.org/communitygiving) to connect your community’s giving—even if you can’t gather under the same roof.
TIPS FOR COLLECTING CRS RICE BOWLS

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

- **OPTION 1**
  Participants bring their CRS Rice Bowls with contributions to the designated collection area. Collecting 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 youth group members or Confirmation candidates to help!

- **OPTION 2**
  Ask participants to convert their CRS Rice Bowl gifts to checks made out to your parish or school for easier counting. Combine gifts into one check, write “CRS Rice Bowl” on the memo line, and send 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, MD 21297-0303

- **OPTION 3**
  Participants can use their CRS Rice Bowls at home throughout Lent and then make their donation directly to your community’s Lenten efforts online on your customizable CRS Rice Bowl community giving page. Follow the simple steps at crsricebowl.org/communitygiving to create your page and then share your custom link with your community.

- **OPTION 4**
  Participants donate directly to CRS. Donate online at crsricebowl.org/give or by sending a check to the address above. Twenty-five percent of your donation will go back to your diocese to support local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts.

**STEP 2**
Plan a meaningful ritual to collect CRS Rice Bowls.

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**
Publicize when and where CRS Rice Bowls will be collected.

Announce details in a variety of ways, including in your bulletin or newsletter, on your community’s social media pages, in announcements at Mass or in school, and by hanging up the collection poster you will receive midway through Lent.

**STEP 4**
Collect and count Lenten gifts.

Recruit volunteers from your parish ministries, religious education program, youth ministry or parish school to help you count coins. Send one check to your diocese or directly to CRS at the address in Step 1.

**STEP 5**
Thank your community and let them know about the impact of their gifts.

Display the Thank You Poster you receive from CRS at the end of Lent. Include one of the Thank You Ads in your bulletin. Share our Thank You Video and Digital Ads in your newsletter or on your social media pages. Visit the Resources section on crsricebowl.org to find the ads and see other creative ways to thank your community.
PRAYER TO BEGIN THE LENTEN SEASON

This prayer will help your community begin their Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. You can incorporate it into Mass after the homily, or during prayer services or other gatherings. Make sure you have enough CRS Rice Bowls to pass out after the prayer—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 an offering of peace, and our prayers a reflection of humble and grateful hearts. We ask the Holy Spirit to accompany us as we spend these 40 days reflecting on our responsibility to share what we have with our global human family. How may our Lenten reflection inspire us to reach out to those most in need? How may our prayers, fasting and almsgiving support people worldwide, especially those who are hungry and lack proper nutrition? We ask this 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 Gospel of Matthew (25:31-40).

Weekly Prayer Intentions
Pray for those in need around the world and our own community. See page 5 or crsricebowl.org.

Prayer to Begin CRS Rice Bowl
God of mercy,
You call us to recognize you in our sisters and brothers and to care for those most in need—for whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me.
This Lent, ignite your love in us so that through our prayer, fasting and almsgiving we may support all who experience hunger in body, heart and spirit.
May these CRS Rice Bowls be instruments of encounter, bringing us closer to you—our God—and to our neighbors both near and far.
May our Lenten journey help us to see our role in caring for the most vulnerable—particularly those experiencing hunger, poverty and obstacles to thrive.
Through these 40 days, may we deepen our 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
WEEKLY PRAYER INTENTIONS

Include these CRS Rice Bowl intentions in the prayer of the faithful or in other liturgical settings.

Introduction
Trusting in the mercy and love of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who calls us to recognize our own needs as well as the needs of our global human family, we voice our petitions, saying, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

First Sunday of Lent
For our sisters and brothers who experience chronic hunger and malnutrition, that they may access the resources they need to stay healthy and thrive. We pray to the Lord …
For our community, that we may be thankful for the gifts we have and realize that by sharing them with others we are sharing them with Christ himself. We pray to the Lord …

Second Sunday of Lent
For expectant and new mothers around the world, that their children may grow and reach their full God-given potential. We pray to the Lord …
For our community, that we may support mothers here and around the world so that all children experience the care they need to thrive. We pray to the Lord …

Third Sunday of Lent
For young people in El Salvador and the entire world, that they might find training and job opportunities to thrive and transform their communities. We pray to the Lord …
For our community, that we invest in and support our young people, who work to promote positive change for our human family, especially its most vulnerable members. We pray to the Lord …

Fourth Sunday of Lent
For farmers near and far, that they reap abundant harvests to feed their families, their communities and the world. We pray to the Lord …
For our community, that we may recognize the effects that our actions have on the environment, and those who cultivate the land for nourishment and livelihoods. We pray to the Lord …

Fifth Sunday of Lent
For our sisters and brothers who experience drought, floods and other natural disasters that impact their livelihoods and access to food, that they receive the help they need to recover and become more resilient to a changing climate. We pray to the Lord …
For our community, that we may enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God’s mercy. We pray to the Lord …

Palm Sunday
For our community, that we offer spiritual and corporal works of mercy for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers, recognizing that whatever we do for them, we do for our suffering Christ who redeems us. We pray to the Lord …

Easter Sunday
For those we encountered through CRS Rice Bowl, and all members of our one human family, that they might have access to enough nutritious food to thrive and reach their God-given potential. We pray to the Lord …
OFFERTORY PRAYER TO END
THE LENTEN JOURNEY

Use this offertory prayer for a CRS Rice Bowl closing ceremony or as a part of Mass. Encourage children and families to process forward with their CRS Rice Bowls and place them in a basket or collection area in the sanctuary or other church location.

God of love,

You call us to love one another as you love us, caring for the least of our sisters and brothers and recognizing that what we do for them, we do for you.

As we end our Lenten journey, we pray that these, our sacrifices, may be an offering of solidarity and a promise of ongoing efforts to support our sisters and brothers who are hungry and in need of our help.

As good stewards of your many gifts, may we always remember to reach out beyond ourselves to encounter the needs of all. And wherever we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty or clothe the naked, may we remember that we are encountering your risen Son, Jesus Christ.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen

Photo by Michael Stulman/CRS
PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENT:
INTRODUCTION TO CRS RICE BOWL

Good morning/afternoon. My name is ____________, and I’m here to invite each of you to participate in CRS Rice Bowl during Lent.

CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services’ Lenten faith-in-action program. It offers opportunities for your family to engage daily with the spiritual pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And it’s an opportunity for our parish/school to come together as a community and practice the works of mercy with our neighbors and our brothers and sisters around the world.

During the 40 days of Lent, we will encounter the stories of communities in Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste where CRS is at work. We’ll be invited to eat simple, meatless meals from these countries. Through the stories, we’ll learn about the principles of Catholic social teaching—and ways we can put them into action during Lent and beyond.

We will reflect on how we are called to recognize the suffering Christ in the most vulnerable members of our global human family. We will see how our prayers, fasting and almsgiving can provide for those worldwide who are most in need, especially those who are hungry and lack proper nutrition.

I’m excited to take this journey with our parish/school community, and to connect the prayer and reflections of each of our families to our global community of faith. I hope you will take home a CRS Rice Bowl, located ____________.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ___________ or talk to me after Mass. Thank you for your time.
For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me. —Matthew 25:35

Dear Families,

The season of Lent gives us a wonderful opportunity to reflect and make room in our hearts to welcome the stranger. Through our prayer, we encounter Jesus, who is present in the face of every member of our human family. When we fast, we encounter the obstacles that prevent us from fully loving God and our neighbor. When we give alms, we share what we have with others.

During Lent, our community will participate in CRS Rice Bowl, a faith-in-action program that invites us to reflect on the challenges of global hunger—and our Gospel call to care for our global human family.

Matthew’s Gospel invites us to remember that we are responsible for helping all of our sisters and brothers, even those who are strangers to us. When we do this, we care for Christ. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus tells us that, “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” Through our Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving, we can respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers, including the millions of men, women and children around the world who experience chronic hunger.

CRS Rice Bowl provides many resources for daily reflection throughout Lent. Consider these suggestions in your family’s Lenten plan:

- Use your CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar each day to guide your prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
- Read the Stories of Hope and daily reflections to inspire your Lenten journey.
- Use the CRS Rice Bowl recipes to prepare simple, meatless meals on the Fridays of Lent to eat in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world.
- Visit crsricebowl.org to watch videos of the people and communities you support through your Lenten gifts to CRS Rice Bowl.

Your sacrifices during this holy season have the power to change lives by providing enough nutritious food for families to thrive. And by practicing the pillars of Lent through CRS Rice Bowl, I hope both your faith and connection to our one human family deepens.

CRS Rice Bowls will be collected at the end of Lent, so stay tuned to learn more. Thank you for participating in CRS Rice Bowl with your family.

Sincerely,

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, without regard to race, religion or nationality.
This Lent, commit to our global human family through

- Daily prayer
- Weekly fasting
- Almsgiving

Jesus asks us to care for our sisters and brothers and to recognize him in them. With CRS Rice Bowl as our guide, we can answer to this Gospel call.

What you give up for Lent changes lives.
Communion Resources

BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY(S) BEFORE ASH WEDNESDAY

WE ARE CALLED

Join our faith community—and more than 12,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Pick up your family’s CRS Rice Bowl from [LOCATION] on [DATE]. During the 40 days of Lent, we will reflect on how hunger and malnutrition affect our human family, and on the need to take action to end this global injustice. Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

FIRST WEEK OF LENT

HUNGER IN OUR WORLD

Jesus told us that whatever we did for one of these least brothers of his we did for him. Reflect on the challenge of global hunger—it is a reality for millions of our sisters and brothers. What will you do to support the hungry in our community and around the world? Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

SECOND WEEK OF LENT

BETTER MEALS IN MADAGASCAR

In Madagascar, half of all children are undernourished. That means 50% of kids won’t grow to reach their full potential. But communities are changing this by focusing on improving health and nutrition. What role has food played in your life? How can you help those who lack access to enough nutritious food. Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

THIRD WEEK OF LENT

SUSTAINABILITY IN EL SALVADOR

Drought has become a big problem across El Salvador, making it difficult for farmers to produce enough crops to support their families. But new farming techniques—and a new generation of young farmers—are making a difference. What would you do if your livelihood was threatened? How can you support young people in your community and around the world? Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

TRYING NEW FOODS IN TIMOR-LESTE

Timor-Leste has the highest rate of child malnutrition in Asia, and many children suffer from stunting, which makes a big impact on a child’s growth and future. Home gardens and fishponds are helping families provide better nutrition for their children. What do you eat to stay healthy? What can you do to ensure children have enough food to thrive? Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

COMMUNITY IN MADAGASCAR

Poor nutrition can lead to devastating long-term consequences for individuals, communities and entire countries. That’s why communities must work together to ensure that all children have access to better food and nutrition. New planting and cooking techniques are helping many communities in Madagascar improve the health and wellbeing of their children. How does your community work together for the good of others? Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

PALM SUNDAY

SERVING THE SUFFERING CHRIST

As we enter Holy Week and celebrate Palm Sunday, let’s reflect on how our Lord suffered from our indifference: those who proclaimed him king of Jerusalem were the same who called to crucify him. We recognize we are all one human family. Are we contributing to the suffering of our sisters and brothers with our indifference to their realities? How does our faith inspire us to care for them and share the gifts that God has bestowed on us? Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

EASTER SUNDAY

HAPPY EASTER!

We prayed, fasted and gave alms—and now we rejoice because Christ is risen! Our Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl challenges us as we begin the Easter season to share the joy of having a loving God that is alive and accompanies us always. Let’s do the same by being present to our global family by caring for their material and spiritual needs. Don’t forget to turn in your CRS Rice Bowl at [LOCATION] on [DATE] or donate online at crsricebowl.org/give.

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] or donate online at crsricebowl.org/give.

*Include a link to your community’s CRS Rice Bowl community giving page, or info on your preferred method for turning in Lenten gifts.