

WEEK 1

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY: VISIT THE PRISONERS

People in prison are still people—they are made in the image and likeness of God. No matter what someone has done, they deserve the opportunity to hear the Word of God and find the truth of the message of Christ.

STORIES OF HOPE

“Lord, when did we see you?” —Matthew 25:37

Matthew’s Gospel invites us to remember that we are responsible for helping all our sisters and brothers, even those who are strangers to us. When we do this, we care for Christ.

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 stop us from fully loving God and our neighbor. When we **give alms**, we share what we have with others.

This Lent CRS Rice Bowl takes us to three countries—Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste. Hunger and malnutrition, which happens when we don’t get the right amount of nutrients, are challenges that too many families face each day. One out of every 10 people worldwide don’t have enough to eat. Sometimes this is caused by natural disasters like floods and droughts. Other times, families don’t have enough money to buy the food they need, or the food they can get doesn’t have all the vitamins and minerals they need to stay healthy.

CRS helps communities find solutions to each of these problems. Farming families learn new skills and grow stronger, healthier harvests. Communities train health care workers so children can get regular check-ups and parents can learn new nutritious recipes to make sure their families get a balanced diet. People in vulnerable areas prepare for unpredictable weather that could destroy crops.

Jesus calls us to help those in need. Our Lenten prayers, fasting and sacrificial gifts help us answer this call.



Photo by Jim Stipe / CRS

FACTS TO CONSIDER

- One in 10 people worldwide don’t have enough to eat and almost 1 in 4 of all children under age 5 are stunted, meaning that they are struggling to grow and develop.
- A study done by the World Health Organization and other international organizations estimates that almost 690 million people went hungry in 2019—up by 10 million from 2018, and by nearly 60 million in five years.
- The term malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients.



For downloadable photos, visit crsricebowl.org/photos and watch the video from Week 1 at crsricebowl.org/stories.

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY: VISIT THE PRISONERS

45 MINUTES

OBJECTIVE

This Lent, by journeying to Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste, students will have a deeper understanding of how their sacrifices benefit communities around the world and will reflect on our Christian call to serve Jesus by carrying out the corporal works of mercy. In this lesson, students will identify prayer, fasting and almsgiving as the three pillars of Lent while reflecting on the corporal work of mercy visiting the prisoners.

MATERIALS

- Map
- Week 1 story or video (available at crsricebowl.org/stories)
- Spinning toy (available in this guide and at crsricebowl.org/1-8)
- Week 1 Activity Sheet: Grades 4-6 (available in this guide and at crsricebowl.org/1-8)

DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

1. Find Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste on the map.
2. Read or watch the story from Week 1.
3. Reflect:
 - One in 10 people in the world suffer from hunger. Is that a big number?
 - *You can demonstrate with the students in your class what 1 in 10 people looks like. Emphasize that one person suffering from hunger is too many.*
 - What are some reasons people do not have enough to eat?
 - What can we do to help solve this problem?

ACTIVITY (25 MINUTES)

1. Explain the corporal work of mercy visiting the prisoners. People in prison are still people—they are made in the image and likeness of God. No matter

what someone has done, they deserve the opportunity to hear the Word of God and find the truth of the message of Christ.

- *You can refer to the time we had to stay home because of the pandemic: Many felt like prisoners in their own home. Wouldn't you have liked to be visited by others?*
2. As a group, participate in the first game on the Week 1 Activity Sheet: Grades 4-6. Then, have students complete the rest of the activities.
 3. If time permits, ask the students to share their answers to the questions.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

God of all life,

We pray to always remember that each person is made in your image. May we treat our sisters and brothers and all God's creation with honor and respect.

Amen

AT HOME

1. Share your activity sheet with your family and make your own spinning toy.
2. Look for information to learn about the patron saints of the prisoners from the word puzzle.
3. As a family, read today's reflection found in your **CRS Rice Bowl Lenten Calendar**.

IF YOU ONLY HAVE

**10
MINUTES**

1. Read or watch the Week 1 story.
2. Lead Discussion step 3.

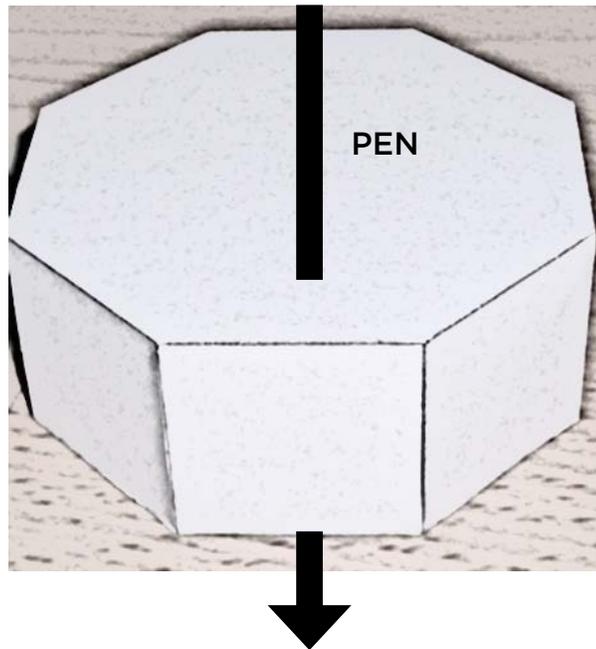


In some countries of Latin America, there's a toy similar to a spinning top but with flat sides.

You spin it, and once it stops spinning, you do what's written on the side that ends on top.

Note for the Educator: For time purposes, students are not expected to make their toys in the classroom. Bring one already made and then tell them to make one at home.

PREPARATION—Make your own! See next page for instructions.



Activity: Divide the group into two teams. For each turn, spin the toy and see what work of mercy ends up on top. The first team gives as many examples as possible of how to practice that work of mercy. Once the first team is finished, the second team tries to give more examples than the first team without repeating any of the answers already said. Whichever team provides the most examples gets the point for that round. Note: One of the panels says, "Extra Point." If a team gets this panel, then they get an extra point and they get to spin it one more time.

In the next word puzzle you will be able to find the names of some patron saints of prisoners. Below are some hints of the name you will find (each block corresponds to a letter).

Saint M X M L N Kolbe

Saint Peter C L V R

Order of M R C D R N S

Our Lady of M R C

Saint L N R D of Noblac

Saints F R N C S C and J C N T



SPINNING TOY

Instructions:

Trace the template on cardboard (you could use an empty cereal box). Cut along the solid lines and fold the dashed lines. Assemble and glue the flaps. Make a hole with a pen or pencil on the top panel all the way through to the bottom panel, so that it serves as the spinning point.

