

Simple Supper for Global Hunger

Use this Simple Supper for Global Hunger Guide to reflect on the injustice of global hunger and to take action in support of our sisters and brothers around the world who experience chronic hunger and malnutrition. Lead the way through prayer, reflection, simple meals, giving and action to help us create a world where every person has enough nutritious food to thrive.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Recipe supplies and cookware (or already prepared meals).
- Table decorations.
- Silverware, napkins, etc.
- CRS Rice Bowls.
- Order at: <https://crsmaterials.crs.org/us-materials/crs-rice-bowl/>.
- World map (find one on campus or Google and print an online version).
- Paper, pens and how-to-guides for letter writing, if you choose “Option 2 – Handwritten Letters” for the Advocacy section (see “Advocacy Preparation Directions” at the end of this document).
- Optional: Integrate photos and videos from the CRS Rice Bowl Stories of Hope.
 - Find photos and videos at: <https://www.crsricebowl.org/stories-of-hope/intro>

RECOMMENDED SET UP

- **Food:** CRS Rice Bowl offers simple, meatless meals from various countries where CRS works. Visit crsricebowl.org/recipe for available recipes, and encourage students to make one of the meals before you gather together for the prayer service.
- If gathering in-person, consider inviting participants to each prepare one of the recipes beforehand, creating a potluck-style dinner of simple meals from around the world.
- Determine when the meal will fit into the event and plan to direct participants accordingly. You could consider starting with the meal, sharing the meal in the middle or ending with the meal.
- **Tables:** Set up enough tables for all participants to have a place. Put a CRS Rice Bowl on each table, or at different places along a single table.
- **Map:** Tape the map to a wall in the communal space.
- **Advocacy:** Be prepared to lead others through handwriting or signing an advocacy letter to Congress. Review the “Advocacy Preparation Directions” at the end of this document in advance of the event.
- **PowerPoint:** You may choose to create a PowerPoint to guide your event by adding the prayers, photos from the CRS Rice Bowl Stories of Hope and the advocacy instructions you choose.
- **Space:** Review more information about global hunger at <https://university.crs.org/global-hunger> and display posters with stories and information or images from CRS’ work around the world.

PROGRAM

Opening Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God,

You are the God of life, and you have created the earth and all that is in it to sustain and nourish us. We know that many people lack access to nutritious food, and we are pained by the injustice of a world in which men, women and children go hungry each day. Provide sustenance to our sisters and brothers who experience hunger and give us courage to lead the way to a more just world where every person has the nutritious food they need to thrive.

Amen

Introduction

LEADER: Consistent access to sufficient nutritious food is necessary for good physical and mental health, and for honoring the dignity of each person. One in 10 people worldwide who experience hunger are denied this human right. We must work to end global hunger by both responding to immediate hunger emergencies and addressing the root causes of hunger. Today we will hear stories of communities around the world who have been impacted by hunger and who are responding in innovative ways to ensure they have access to good nutrition. We invite you to reflect on how we as a community can act in accordance with our faith to be prophetic advocates against this global injustice.

Stories of Global Hunger

READER ONE: In Madagascar, half of all children are undernourished. But through a CRS program called Community Led Total Nutrition, families are learning how doctor visits, hand washing and eating different foods with essential vitamins and nutrients can help them stay healthy. The program trains community health workers, who then work with families through innovative and creative approaches such as skits and puppet shows to teach them new ways to support their children's health and growth. The health workers perform regular check-ups to detect early signs of malnutrition or other health concerns. In this approach, everyone in the community works together to ensure all children have access to better food and nutrition.

READER TWO: Besides drinking, bathing, cooking and other uses, water is essential for farming. In El Salvador, soil erosion from deforestation and persistent drought due to climate change have made it difficult for farmers to grow their crops. It is one of the most deforested countries in the western hemisphere, and the farmland is so depleted that it cannot retain water and vital nutrients. As a result, roughly 400,000 small farmers are struggling to grow enough food to feed their families and earn a decent living.

At a high school in Ahuachapán, El Salvador, students in the Agriculture Baccalaureate program are learning new farming techniques and technology that will help restore the environment. CRS is partnering with the school program to engage local youth to become the next generation of leaders and land stewards. Through the program, students are learning new skills like the importance of distancing when plowing, how to use water, organic manure and other resources more efficiently to provide nutrients to the soil, and how burning harvest residue can harm the land and air. Through these and other practices, these future farmers will be able to restore the land to its former richness and produce more—and healthier—crops to feed their communities.

READER THREE: Many families in Timor-Leste live in rural areas and work as farmers, but challenges like climate change make it difficult to grow enough food. They depend on rice as a main part of their meals, and hunger and malnutrition are big problems—more than one-third of people in Timor-Leste don't have reliable access to enough nutritious food. With training from CRS, families are starting home gardens to grow different vegetables, beans and other foods rich in nutrients like vitamin A and iron. The gardens are built to withstand droughts and flooding, and the families add the food they grow—such as spinach, cabbage, peanuts, carrots and tomatoes—to their daily rice staple, providing more nourishing meals that help children grow and their families stay healthy.

As part of the CRS program, parents attend community nutrition groups where they learn how to build and improve their gardens and new recipes to use their fresh produce. Program participants can also choose to raise chickens or start a fishpond which provide additional protein and income.

READER ONE: These three stories show how communities around the world—with support from CRS—are leading the way in addressing global hunger and malnutrition. I now invite anyone else gathered here to share how they have encountered hunger either globally or locally. Taking turns, go to the world map and tell a story of solidarity. It could simply be the name of someone you would like to pray for, a profound experience you had, or something else you want to call to mind.

[If participants brought simple meals potluck-style from the CRS Rice Bowl recipe archive.] If you brought a dish, you may also wish to tell a story or share information regarding CRS programming in the country from which your recipe originated.

READER TWO: Now that we have heard stories of global solidarity, touchstones in other countries, cultures and traditions, we will now provide space to respond with concrete action so that we can directly contribute to creating a world in which all people have access to the food they need to thrive.

Advocacy

[See “Advocacy Preparation Directions” section at the end of this resource for more details and guidance and to prepare the details of your script to effectively lead participants through an advocacy action.]

LEADER: Pope Francis has said, “An authentic faith—which is never comfortable or completely personal—always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it ... If indeed ‘the just ordering of society and of the state is a central responsibility of politics,’ the Church ‘cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice’” (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 183). We can lead the way and support those experiencing hunger and malnutrition by contributing to the work of organizations like Catholic Relief Services, by volunteering to support local agencies in our own communities and by using our power through our democracy, where our voice matters.

We know that one in 10 people globally do not have enough to eat, and we believe this is unacceptable. We must ask our government to do all in its power to meet the immediate needs of those experiencing food insecurity and work to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. Let’s share with our nation’s leaders the real stories of the communities in Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste, and join the voices of students and advocates across the country to ensure our nation leads the way with policies that promote justice, peace and a brighter future for all.

[Note: Lead the group in their advocacy action, based on what you’ve selected from the “Advocacy Preparation Directions” at the end of this document. Be sure to remind them to personalize their message, whether they are signing a digital letter or handwriting a letter. If participants are handwriting letters, you may want to display or handout the template and instructions. You will also want to let the group know how their handwritten letters will be delivered to Congress.]

Closing Prayer

Lord and Savior,

When you taught us how to feed the hungry, you did not do it in a city or in a garden, but in a desolate place where few things grow green, and life struggles to sustain itself. And so you taught us that there is no place too desolate and no hour too late for the love of God to triumph.

Our father has blessed this world with abundance. And yet too many fields are parched, too many stomachs, empty. Be with those who hunger. Help us to join with your people in peril. To share our food, to share our knowledge of cultivation, to abate periods of dryness. And to forsake the ways that created an unjust world where God’s bounty is for some, but not others.

Amen

ADVOCACY PREPARATION DIRECTIONS

Prepare for the advocacy component of your Simple Supper for Global Hunger as necessary, depending on your choice out of the below options.

Option 1 - Online Letters: Instruct participants to sign the online letter, which can be navigated to in 3 ways:

- At this link: <https://support.crs.org/act/CRSU-Hunger>.
- By navigating to <https://university.crs.org/global-hunger> and selecting the “Advocate to Congress” button.
- By texting “CRSU Hunger” to 306-44. Participants will receive a direct link to the letter in response.

In all cases, please recommend that participants personalize their letters to members of Congress for greater impact.

Option 2 – Handwritten Letters

- **HOW-TO:** Use this template and how-to guide: https://university.crs.org/sites/default/files/University%20Reference_Letter%20Writing.pdf.
- **CONTENT:** For the content of the letter, use information from the most recent action alert, which you can find here: <https://support.crs.org/act/CRSU-Hunger>.
- **DELIVERY:** Decide how you will share these letters with your members of Congress.
 - Your letters will have the most impact if they are hand delivered to the local offices. Check out these tips on how to set up a “Voice Your Values” meeting with your members of Congress: <https://university.crs.org/content/voice-your-values-meet-members-congress>. If you select this option, you will want to make sure all participants write their letters using their local address in the district of the university.
 - Mail the letters to their offices. If you select this option, participants can write their letters using their local address in the district of the university or their permanent home address. Be sure you send the correct letters to the correct members of Congress.