

# 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 Rice Bowls to pass out after the prayer—and recruit volunteers to hand one to each family.

### Introduction and Opening Prayer

Lent is a time for reflection and preparation during which we seek to turn away from sin and toward God. The Lenten pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving help us do this. In prayer, we grow closer to God and reach out to our family, friends and neighbors near and far. When we fast, we make more room for God in our lives and unite with Christ's suffering. And in giving, we share with others so that all might have what they need to live.

As we look ahead to our Lenten journey, may our prayers be a reflection of humble and grateful hearts, our fasting a hunger for justice and our alms an offering of peace. We ask the Holy Spirit to accompany us as we reflect that loving means serving. May our prayers and Lenten sacrifices help us draw closer to our Lord and neighbors and support those experiencing poverty. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen

### Reading

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew 6:1-6 and 6:16-21.

### Weekly Prayer Intentions

Pray for people in need around the world and in our own community. See the Weekly Prayer Intentions on [crsricebowl.org/parishes](https://crsricebowl.org/parishes).

### Prayer to Begin CRS Rice Bowl

Our Father,

As we begin Lent, let our hearts be filled with your Spirit so that we may grow deeper in your love.

May our prayer lead us to a sincere desire to be close to you.

May fasting help us rely on you and transform us into better people.

May our almsgiving be a chance to serve our one human family around the world.

May our Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl enable us to follow you more faithfully and love our neighbor more fully. Guide us throughout these 40 days so that we may be joined more closely to you when we arrive at the joyful celebration of Easter.

Amen



Photo by Karen Kasmauski for CRS

# OFFERTORY PRAYER TO END THE LENTEN JOURNEY

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

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for leading us closer to you during these 40 days. We experienced your love for us by loving our sisters and brothers. As we end our Lenten journey, we pray that our sacrifices may give glory to you by helping communities access nutritious food and other resources necessary to flourish.

Help us continue what we started this Lent—caring for our global family and addressing the injustices that prevent people from thriving. You promise hope and life through your Son's resurrection. May we be instruments of your peace and share this hope with the world by working together to end hunger. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Photo by Lauren Carroll/CRS