

# PREPARING FOR LENT: A 10-MINUTE PRAYERFUL INTRODUCTION

Introduce students to CRS Rice Bowl with this short activity.

## SETUP:

Pass out Rice Bowls and give students time to assemble them. They should keep the enclosed **Lenten calendars** handy for this activity.

## LEADER

During Lent, Catholics do three things to grow closer to God: pray, fast and give alms. These are the three pillars of Lenten spirituality. The CRS Rice Bowl and calendar will be our guides as we reflect on our responsibility to accompany and help our human family in need—particularly people who experience hunger and malnutrition, which are made worse by climate change.

In Christ we are all family. How can we not take care of each other? During these 40 days, we are called to pay attention to the needs of our sisters and brothers, to feel compassion and to take action to support them. God asks us to live by serving others—seeing Jesus in every person—regardless of who they are or what they believe.

## READER 1

The first pillar of Lent is prayer. We pray to grow in our relationship with God and ask him for guidance on how to live according to his will. In our prayers, we thank God for the gifts we have been given. We also pray for people who experience need of any kind: physical, spiritual or emotional.

*Invite students to find the Lenten prayer on the side of their Rice Bowls and read it aloud together. Encourage them to read the daily reflections on their Lenten calendars at home with their families.*

## READER 2

The second pillar is fasting. Fasting means we give something up to better understand the challenges that confront our sisters and brothers who experience hunger around the world. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit, we recognize that their well-being is important and connected to our own.

*Invite students to try the meatless recipes on their Lenten calendars at home with their families. Explain to students that they can help others by putting the money their family saves by fasting and eating simple meals into their Rice Bowls.*

## READER 3

The third pillar is almsgiving. Almsgiving means giving money or goods like food and clothing to someone in need out of a feeling of compassion. When we give money—recognizing that some people do not have what is necessary to live—we honor Jesus' call to care for our neighbors by sharing with them the gifts we have received. This Lent, we will visit Honduras, the Philippines and Kenya to learn how families are transforming their lives with support from our sacrifices through CRS Rice Bowl.

*Invite students to look at the stories and pictures on their Lenten calendars. Encourage them to read these stories at home with their families.*

## LEADER

God of hope,

We pray that the prayers, recipes and stories from CRS Rice Bowl will help us recognize the face of Christ in our sisters and brothers around the world and, in doing so, that we may grow closer to God during this season of Lent. As we begin our 40-day journey, we ask God to walk with us and open our hearts to our one human family.

Amen