

Bulletin Announcements

These Bulletin Announcements were written by Judy Swazey from the Diocese of San Jose. Ms. Swazey is the Liturgy Director at St. Martin of Tours Parish in San Jose, CA.

Sunday before Ash Wednesday

You're invited to participate in Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl

This Lent, our faith community will be joining millions of Catholics across the country by participating in CRS' Operation Rice Bowl. Your family is invited to pick up a Rice Bowl packet [when/where] and join in this simple yet powerful Lenten practice. Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl invites us to **pray** with our families and faith communities, **fast** in solidarity with those who are hungry, **learn** about our brothers and sisters around the world, and **give** sacrificial contributions to help those in need. Visit orb.crs.org for additional resources to use at home.

First Week of Lent

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: God's Covenant

In today's first reading, we hear about God's covenant with Noah, with his descendants and with all living creatures. During Lent, we are called to deepen and strengthen our baptismal and covenantal relationship with God, which includes our responsibility to care for God's creation. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about subsistence farmers in Madagascar. We **pray** for all who struggle to feed their families on depleted lands, and we **fast** in solidarity with those who hunger. We **give** so that CRS can help farmers improve their growing methods and act as good stewards of God's creation.

Second Week of Lent

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: Call and Response

In today's first reading, Abraham responds faithfully to God, and God bestows blessings on him and all of his descendants. During Lent, we are called to listen to God's voice in our lives and to respond in faith. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about adults and children in Vietnam who struggle with disabilities. We **pray** that we may recognize the inherent dignity in all of God's people, and we **fast** so that our sacrifices may bring new life to others. We **give** so that CRS can continue to help people with disabilities receive a quality education and find productive work.

Third Week of Lent

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: Rights and Responsibilities

In today's scriptures, we hear the commandments given to Moses after God brings the Israelites out of slavery. These commandments represent fundamental rights and responsibilities for all of God's people. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about communities in El Salvador that lack clean and safe water, which is a basic human right. We **pray** for those whose health is compromised by contaminated water, and we **fast** from wasting and polluting this precious resource. We **give** so that CRS can improve access to clean water in communities throughout the world.

Fourth Week of Lent

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: God's Mercy

In today's scriptures, we hear how the Israelites repeatedly break their covenant with God, and yet God continues to respond with merciful and abiding love. Our response to God's grace must be apparent in our works. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about our brothers and sisters in Zambia, who are unable to enter the marketplace and earn a living. We **pray** for all who struggle to find work, and we **fast** for those who cannot afford to feed their families. We **give** so that CRS can help marginalized people obtain loans in order to save money, start small businesses and work toward a brighter future.

Fifth Week of Lent

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: The New Covenant

In today's first reading, the prophet Jeremiah describes a new covenant – one which is written on our hearts. As Christians, we believe that this new covenant is fulfilled in Jesus. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about malnourished children and expectant mothers in India whose health has been compromised by their poverty. We **pray** that we may open our hearts to the needs of the poor and vulnerable. We **fast**, not merely from our excess, but from our very substance, so that new life may come to all who suffer from poverty, illness and injustice. We **give** so that CRS-trained health care workers can help improve the lives of women and children throughout the world.

Palm Sunday

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: The Passion

As we reflect on the passion of Christ, we remember that more than 44 million people in the United States are living in poverty. While 75% of our gifts to Operation Rice Bowl support Catholic Relief Services' programs around the world, 25% of our contributions remain in our diocese to support local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Your **prayers, fasting, learning, and almsgiving** through Operation Rice Bowl make a significant difference in the lives of people in our own community and in communities around the world.

Easter Sunday

Operation Rice Bowl Reflection: The Resurrection

Our celebration of the resurrection brings us new joy and hope! Throughout Lent, your support of Operation Rice Bowl has helped offer hope to millions of people around the world who benefit from the work of Catholic Relief Services. For six weeks you have prayed for the people of Madagascar, fasted in solidarity with the people of India, learned about the challenges in the lives of people in Vietnam and El Salvador, and given sacrificially to create economic opportunities in Zambia. Their struggles—and the efforts of CRS—are far from over, but you have made a difference.

Operation Rice Bowl Collection Announcement #1

Thank you for participating in CRS' Operation Rice Bowl!

Our faith community helped make a difference in the lives of millions of people around the world suffering from poverty and hunger. To ensure that Catholic Relief Services is able to continue providing life-saving work to these communities, **please return your Rice Bowl by [DATE]**. To help our community send a check more quickly, please count your contribution and make a check payable to [Parish/School Name]. Please write "Operation Rice Bowl" in the memo line of the check. Your contributions can be placed in [LOCATION]. Thank you for your generous support.

Operation Rice Bowl Collection Announcement #2

Thank you for your generosity this year!

Our faith community raised \$[TOTAL] for Catholic Relief Services. Your participation in Operation Rice Bowl will continue to make a difference throughout this year. If you have not yet returned your contribution, you may still do so by [INSERT INSTRUCTIONS].

If you would like to include Operation Rice Bowl logos or photos in your weekly bulletin, please visit orb.crs.org to access downloadable clip art.