



January 22, 2024

Dear Monsignor, Father, or Principal

During Lent, we focus in an intentional way on turning away from sin and toward God to grow in his love. The Lenten pillars of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving help us do this. CRS Rice Bowl—Catholic Relief Services’ Lenten faith-in-action program—invites us to encounter God and our global family by practicing these pillars while reflecting on how the Eucharist—the Bread of Life—compels us to share bread *for* life with all members of our human family.

Sixty percent of all Rice Bowl contributions support CRS’ humanitarian and development programs overseas, providing life-saving assistance and hope to our sisters and brothers around the world. The remaining forty percent stays in our diocese to support local hunger and poverty prevention programs. The 2023 contributions of your parishes and schools assisted over 25 organizations including food pantries and soup kitchens. Thank you for your generosity.

CRS Rice Bowl provides resources to bring Lenten spirituality to life for families, parishes and school communities while continuing to connect Catholics in our diocese with our global human family. I encourage you to order a CRS Rice Bowl poster to display in your communal space and enough Rice Bowls with Lenten calendars for each family in your community. These free materials are available in English and Spanish. You may also visit crsricebowl.org to find additional resources, including:

- Devotions, like the Stations of the Cross, and prayers.
- Lesson plans, videos and activity sheets for Catholic school teachers and religious educators.
- Ideas for in-person or virtual community gatherings and simple Lenten meal events.

Thank you for inviting families in your faith community to join us on an enriched journey through CRS Rice Bowl. Together, we can respond to Christ’s call to help those in need and ensure everyone reaches his or her God-given potential. Should you require any support in utilizing the resources, please contact Elizabeth Slaby, Director of the Office of Social Justice and Life at eslaby@ccincerie.org.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie

