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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Holy Father reminds us that "Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid." The Catholic Relief Services' Rice Bowl initiative is a way to put our faith in action and respond to those cries, particularly as we continue to support those affected by the pandemic during this Lenten season.

Through CRS Rice Bowl, faith communities in every diocese throughout the United States put their faith into action through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. CRS Rice Bowl provides support to both our local and international sisters and brothers in need. This year, families, parishes and school communities here in the Archdiocese of Chicago can bring Lenten spirituality to life in a safe and creative ways. Through resources such as stories, videos, meatless recipes, and lesson plans we can connect with those most in need around the world in our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

During the 2020 Lenten season, the generous donations of parishioners across the Archdiocese of Chicago provided \$33,000 in local CRS Rice Bowl grants to parishes and organizations working on non-violence and peacemaking efforts, hunger relief, and environmental justice critical support. In 2020, your generosity also provided \$88,000 in international support.

Once again, this year 25% of the CRS Rice Bowl proceeds will support local programs here in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Your continued kindness and support will make a global impact, with 75% of the funds raised supporting CRS programs in Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor-Leste in 2021. To learn more about the CRS Rice Bowl program, the work of Catholic Relief Services, and the CRS Rice Bowl grant program, I encourage you to visit www.archchicago.org/crs.

It is my prayer that participation in the CRS Rice Bowl will continue to grow this Lenten season and enrich your own Lenten journey with both prayer and action. With every good wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago