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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

At the Angelus prayer on the Solemnity of Mary just a few short weeks ago, the Holy Father reminded “those who are victims of injustice and exploitation and see no way out” that, “Jesus opens the door of fraternity, where they can find welcoming faces, hearts and hands, where they can share bitterness and despair, and recover some dignity.” The Catholic Relief Services’ Rice Bowl initiative is the perfect way to put our faith in action and be those welcoming faces, hearts and hands, inspiring witness to all of those who surround us 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 brothers and sisters who are in need. Families, parishes, and school communities here in the Archdiocese of Chicago can bring Lenten spirituality to life. Through resources such as stories, videos, meatless recipes, and lesson plans we can include our brothers and sisters most in need around the world in our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

During the 2019 Lenten season, the generous donations of parishioners across the Archdiocese of Chicago provided \$97,800 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 2019 your generosity also provided for \$281,000 in international support. Proudly, the archdiocesan Annual Catholic Appeal also disbursed \$540,000 to Catholic Relief Services, resulting in an incredible impact.

Once again, this year 25% of the CRS Rice Bowl proceeds will support local programs. Your continued kindness will endure to make a global impact, with 75% of funds raised supporting CRS programs in Honduras, Vietnam, and Kenya in 2020. 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 archchicago.org/crs.

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

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago