

## ***Peace is ... sharing your “rice”***

*Deuteronomy 11:18 “Take these words of mine into your heart and soul.”*

*Matthew 7: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven...*

*...Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.”*

### **Reflection:**

***“Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps.”***<sup>1</sup> During Lent, we deny ourselves time doing other activities and devote time to prayer. *We feast on the Word of God, taking His words into our hearts and souls.* We fast from certain foods and give what we might have had to those who go without. *We feast on God’s providence.* We give alms by donating food, money, and clothes to the poor. *We feast on the joy of sharing.* We take up our cross each day, offering up our difficulties and struggles to God. *We feast on love, which gives us satisfaction in knowing that others can have what they need because we have offered up something on their behalf.* The cross teaches us that the real love is sacrificial. Love places the other first. We follow in the steps of Christ, who gave up everything to show His love and mercy to us. When we love, we do the will of God, which is love in action.

### ***Living our faith***

means embracing our brothers and sisters around the world. It means opening ourselves to seeing Christ present in all people. It means being compassionate to those who suffer from lack of sufficient nourishment. It is easy for us to take food for granted, as we are able to open the cupboard to find something to eat. Let us consider that there are 925 million people who are undernourished in the world today<sup>2</sup>, “which is 13.6 % of the estimated world population of 6.8 billion... As of 2008 (2005 statistics), the World Bank has estimated that there were [approximately] 1,345 million poor people in developing countries who live on \$1.25 a day or less.”<sup>3</sup> Catholic Relief Services (CRS) reports that every day 16, 000 children die from hunger. That is nearly one every 5 seconds.<sup>4</sup>

**Each year, Operation Rice Bowl invites us to pray with our families and faith communities; fast in solidarity with those who hunger; learn more about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas; and give sacrificial contributions to those in need.**

### **Action:**

- ***OUR CHALLENGE:*** choose one meal per week to eat a simple bowl of rice and a glass of water, as a way to fast in solidarity with those who hunger.
- *Use the cardboard rice bowl distributed in our churches today to contribute to those in need during this Lenten season. Place at least \$1.25 a day, which is the amount that you might make in a day if you lived in Sub-Saharan Africa or Southern Asia. [Place your total contribution in an envelope marked “Rice Bowl,” with your name & address, in the Palm Sunday collection basket.]*
- *Use the Lenten calendar provided by CRS/ Operation Rice Bowl to learn about our brothers and sisters who struggle with poverty and hunger. Each week focuses on a different country, and includes a recipe from that country. Follow the simple daily suggestions that keep us connected on our Lenten journey. It can also be downloaded at [www.orb.crs.org/resources](http://www.orb.crs.org/resources) (click on Individual and Family)*

***We lift our prayers to you, God of Love, on behalf of our brothers and sisters in need. As we learn about their struggles, our almsgiving comes to their aid; our fasting unites us in their hunger. You call us to be disciples for all nations. Bless us this Lenten season. Amen.***

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<http://www.sjbcatholicparish.org/peace-justice.php>

<sup>1</sup> Luke 9:23. <sup>2</sup> Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). <sup>3</sup> 2011 World Hunger and Poverty Facts and Statistics, found at [www.worldhunger.org/articles](http://www.worldhunger.org/articles). <sup>4</sup> [www.orb.crs.org](http://www.orb.crs.org) World Awareness Quiz, resource cited: Bread for the World.