



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

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Lent 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During Lent, we're invited to deepen our relationship and unite our hearts more fully with God and with one another. We can do this in an intentional way through the Catholic tradition of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. CRS Rice Bowl – Catholic Relief Services' Lenten faith-in-action program – invites us to encounter God and our global family by practicing these Lenten pillars.

This year, CRS Rice Bowl celebrates its 50th anniversary. This is the time for us to recommit to our global family as we learn about communities in Nigeria, Guatemala and Bangladesh. At this very moment, millions of our most vulnerable sisters and brothers are facing life-threatening levels of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. At the root of this crisis is a perfect storm of poverty, climate change, conflict and inequality. There is no one solution to breaking the cycle of hunger – but we can do our part through CRS Rice Bowl by answering Jesus' invitation us to share bread for life with our sisters and brothers during Lent – so all may live with dignity. **Seventy-five percent of alms collected through CRS Rice Bowl supports CRS programs around the world. Twenty-five percent stays here in our diocese to help fight hunger and poverty.**

Nearly 13,000 faith communities in 180 dioceses across the U.S. are committed to practicing the traditional Lenten pillars of spirituality to help our global family with CRS Rice Bowl. Please consider committing to supporting our sisters and brothers around the world while forming families and faith communities to be missionary disciples.

Thank you for inviting families in your faith community to join us for an enriching Lenten journey through CRS Rice Bowl. Together, we can respond to Christ's call to help people in need and ensure everyone reaches his or her God-given potential.

In Christ,

† Luis Rafael Zarama, J.C.L.
Bishop of Raleigh