

## What is Operation Rice Bowl?

**Operation Rice Bowl**, the official Lenten Program of Catholic Relief Services, began in 1975 in the diocese of Allentown, PA. The program originated as a means through which communities could join together and break bread, demonstrating that the nourishment we receive at the table of the Eucharist can be shared with all members of our human family through prayer, fasting, learning, and giving.

### **Operation Rice Bowl is...**

- **Prayer** – Using the Operation Rice Bowl materials, participants pray and reflect on the realities, challenges, and gifts of the poor around the world.
- **Fasting** – Operation Rice Bowl's recipes for simple meals and fasting suggestions help participants use this traditional Lenten practice to express solidarity with their brothers and sisters overseas.
- **Learning** – Through educational resources and activities incorporating stories and photos from Catholic Relief Services' work overseas, Operation Rice Bowl participants learn about the lives of neighbors they may never meet.
- **Giving** – Participants put their faith into action by giving of their time and resources in a thoughtful manner. Since 1975, Operation Rice Bowl participants have raised more than \$111 million.
- **Development** – Operation Rice Bowl funds support Catholic Relief Services' development projects overseas. These projects help individuals and communities use their own potential and capacity to improve their lives. By contributing to Operation Rice Bowl, participants give more than money: contributions help provide the resources and training that empower communities to create sustainable change.

### **Where Does the Money Go?**

75% of Operation Rice Bowl Funds support Catholic Relief Services development projects throughout the world. Operation Rice Bowl funded projects include:

- Small Enterprise Development, through which women and other marginalized groups receive access to credit, training in managing and using credit, and guidance in developing small businesses.
- Mother and Child Health projects, which promote and protect the health of these vulnerable members of poor communities through treatment and health education.
- Agricultural Training and Development projects, which provide farmers around the world with resources and training to improve and expand their production in environmentally sensitive ways.
- Water and Sanitation projects, which bring to communities the clean water and sanitation education essential to good health.
- Education projects, which help extend opportunities to groups often denied the chance to develop their intellectual potential.

25% of Operation Rice Bowl funds support hunger and poverty alleviation projects in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Last year 38 food pantries and shelters were given \$50,000 in grant monies.

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