



## DIocese OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

### OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Lent, 2024

Dear Friends 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 and by reflecting on how the Eucharist – the Bread of Life – compels us to share bread for life with all members of our human family.

Through stories, videos and lesson plans, your community will learn about our Gospel call to care for our common home so we can respond to global issues such as hunger and malnutrition and push back on climate change.

CRS Rice Bowl provides resources to bring Lenten spirituality to life for families, parishes and school communities while continuing to connect Catholics in our diocese with our global human family. I encourage you to order a CRS Rice Bowl poster to display in your communal space and enough Rice Bowls with Lenten calendars for each family in your community. These free materials are available in English and Spanish. You may also visit [crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org) or [crsplatodearroz.org](http://crsplatodearroz.org) to find additional resources, including:

- Devotions, like the Stations of the Cross, and prayers.
- Lesson plans, videos and activity sheets for Catholic school teachers and religious educators.
- Ideas for community gatherings and simple Lenten meal events.

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.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki  
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

**PASTORS/PARISH LEADERS:** Please announce this special collection opportunity to your parishioners in your bulletins, website, or other social media platforms the weekend of **March 16/17, 2024**, and gather it on **Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024**. The proceeds gathered should be forwarded to our **Office for Finances** within thirty (30) days. Thank you!