



prayers and reflections for the journey

*A participant manual designed to accompany
Catholic Relief Services' Resources for Short Term,
International and Immersion Trips.*

NAME _____



faith. action. results.

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A guiding document on short-term mission and immersion trips from Catholic Relief Services

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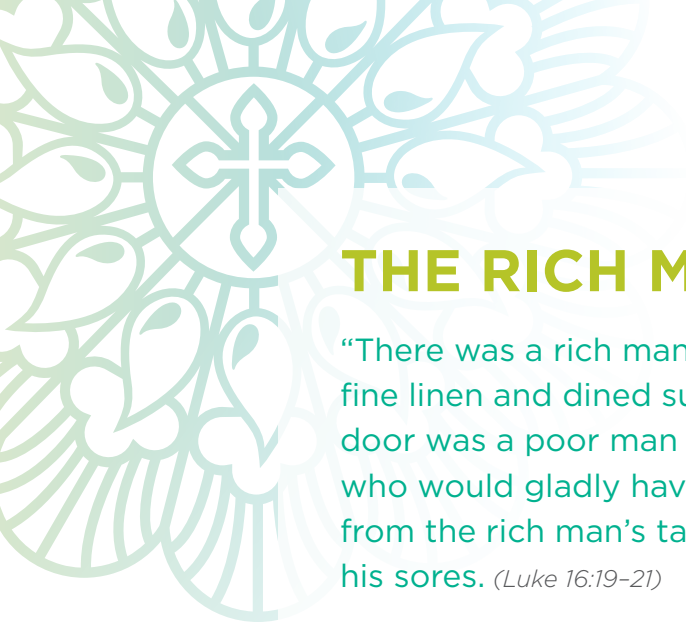
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THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

“There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. (Luke 16:19–21)

Each year, more than 1.6 million Christians in the United States pack up their passports and bug spray, and board planes to go on short-term service trips overseas. Many of these trip participants might describe their motivation this way: “I have so much, and there are others who have so little. I am going on a mission trip to give back and serve the poor.” The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus offers us a metaphor for their motivation. The parable paints a stark divide between the world’s rich and poor, warning of eternal anguish for those who do not respond compassionately to the poor at their doors.

Mission trips frequently engage participants in construction and other types of service projects. After they return home, many participants would like to make a meaningful difference beyond their experience, yet are not sure how to do it. Facing extreme poverty up close, especially for the first time, can be overwhelming. It tosses us out of our comfort zones and leads us into a spiritual and vocational journey we may not be prepared for. We may prefer to place our experiences in a box, on a high shelf, or in a back closet. And we prefer to leave it there, like old love letters or clothing that no longer fits. We don’t know what to do with the experience. We leave the United States to serve the poor overseas, but after a week or so we come home and resume our lives. The poor remain poor, and we remain divided.

The Lazarus parable teaches us that this division does not reflect God’s vision for humanity. Each of us—rich and poor—is created in God’s image to love and serve one another as one Body of Christ. Jesus was a healer during his public ministry. But he needed the healing love and presence of his companions as he suffered on the cross. Similarly, Lazarus was in need of healing—in the form of food and attention—but he was also a healer. His presence alone was healing: It manifested injustice and provided the rich man a lens to reflect on his own contribution to this injustice, and to change his life.

The Lazarus parable points to a humanity divided and in need. Yet we are all healers in need of healing. Each member of the human family has spiritual and material gifts to offer, and each of us needs these gifts as well. The Christian sojourner, in humility and vulnerability, encounters others in their giftedness and their neediness. She offers the same of herself. And she seeks to heal the divisions that distort the oneness of the Body of Christ.

This neediness and giftedness in everyone invites a new model for reflection upon mission experiences. Rather than focusing on what participants can give (service, action, time, donations), we reflect upon the giftedness of host communities and the neediness of participants—and ask how we can overcome divisions between the two. This requires a relationship-based approach that forges bonds between sending and receiving communities and leads participants to address the disease of poverty when they return home. The experience then becomes more than a short trip overseas. It is a first step in the larger Christian mission to heal divisions.



Photo by Jake Lyell for CRS

What does a relationship-based approach look like? CRS—with more than 70 years of encountering Christ in people who are poor—has developed guidelines, based in Catholic teaching, for working in partnership with local communities. These principles, which focus on relationship-based service grounded in mutuality, can help groups frame their trip as one of mutual healing.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH MEANS working with the host community to plan the trip.**

In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Lazarus voices his need—but the rich man does not hear. Even though we may be trying to help, we must resist the urge to identify a community’s needs for its people. If a work project is included, it should be designed according to the needs the local community articulates and it should be sustainable after the group leaves.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH IS ABOUT more than building and bringing “stuff.”**

If the exchange is based solely on resources, then those with few material resources are excluded from full and mutual participation. When the relationship itself is highly valued, it allows for mutual participation and transformation. We all have the ability to love, pray and be present to one another.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH DEEPENS OUR FAITH BY inviting us to experience the universality of the Catholic Church.**

We grow in a deeper recognition of our unity in Christ when we pray and worship with our host community. As we come to know brothers and sisters of faith from other cultures, we understand Scripture in new ways and see new models of parish communities. We concretely experience our oneness in Christ and are encouraged to enlarge our tent, expanding our sense of shared humanity with all God’s people.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH ASKS questions about the injustices facing the host community and our part in those injustices.**

Immersion trips can provide participants with a first glance at the challenges that people in a community face. It is important to pay attention to these issues and to analyze their causes. We should also reflect on how our daily decisions, including how we vote and what we buy, affect communities like our host community.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH MEANS we reflect on and pray about our experience.**

Sometimes the last thing we want to do after a tiring day or trip is to gather together to talk and pray about it. Groups should set aside time before, during and after a trip to reflect intentionally on how to contextualize their experience within our Scripture and Tradition, and on how it invites our personal healing as well as the healing of divisions within the Body of Christ.

■ **A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH MEANS the trip is only the beginning of the relationship.**

If you choose to enter into relationship with others during your immersion trip, something unusual will happen to you when you leave. The stories you hear and share will forever shape how you care for other people around the world, even those you will never meet.

St. John Paul II wrote, “[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.” (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, no. 38)

Many people return from international service immersion with a passion that eventually fades into a vague compassion and shallow distress for the masses. Although the initial passion is great, the challenge is deepening it into a real and lifelong love for Christ, who is present in everyone, especially in those who are most vulnerable.

When we enter into relationship with people who suffer beyond what we can imagine, our hearts open. The divide between Lazarus and the rich man begins to close. And we can no longer turn away when we hear about something that seems removed from our own lives, because we realize that our own woundedness and healing are bound up with the woundedness and healing of all members of the Body of Christ.

the tears of solidarity

*In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit ...*

God of Compassion,

*The Holy Father Pope Francis challenges us to learn how to cry
To brave that pain, and so enter into true solidarity
with your people.*

*For those who face hunger
For those who face war
For those who face exploitation
For those who face displacement
I stand in solidarity.*

*For those who face unjust discrimination
For those who face indifference
For those who face a lack of opportunity
For those who face a lack of health care
I stand in solidarity.*

*But in truth, I stand a little reluctantly
And I stand a little far off
Detached and apart from the great human drama,
Lingering in the orchestra, even as you call me
to the center stage.*

*Lord, help me to look again at
what has been done to your people
To their lives and to their dignity
So that slowly, and then more strongly,
I will allow myself to cry
For it is only in those tears that we truly become one
My trepidations fall away
And I step forward and stand anew.*

Teach me to cry.

Amen



because we are yours

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit ...

*"But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob,
and formed you, Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name: you are mine."* (Isaiah 43:1)

Loving God,

*I did not know you
But I was yours.*

*And they do not know me
And I do not know them
But they are mine
And I am theirs.*

*Let no chasm, no river, no drought or storm,
No war, no exodus, no border, natural or constructed,
No device of man nor devil
Come between us
Or halt the love that burns within me,
The grace that flows from you.*

*Let me think on no man unless
I think joyful thoughts of brotherhood,
Let me think on no woman unless
I think tender thoughts of sisterhood,
Friend and stranger,
Ally and enemy,
Brothers,
Sisters.*

*They are mine
And I am theirs,
Because we are yours
Amen*



seeing Lazarus

LEADER

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit ...

Christ Jesus,

As we reflect on with the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-25), may your words echo in our own lives.

READER ONE

There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day.

Lord, help us remember our relative riches compared with many around the world. We are grateful for the opportunity to take this trip, which is a privilege that many people will never have.

READER TWO

And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.

Help us to not only recognize Lazarus lying on our doorstep, but to not be afraid to look at, hold and befriend him—especially when it is inconvenient or uncomfortable.

READER THREE

When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

May we remember that the poor have a special place in your dwelling place, and that we will be judged at the end of our lives by how we treat the poorest and most vulnerable people.



READER FOUR

And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.' Abraham replied, 'My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.'

Generous God, you offered the rich man the chance to care for Lazarus—a chance for salvation and for the Rich Man's own healing and freedom. We ask that you help us always be mindful of what the poor offer us instead of focusing only on what we can give.

LEADER

We ask all of this in Jesus' name.

Amen

use us for your work

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit ...

God the Father,

We give you thanks for all the marvels you have created.

*We praise you and we bless you for the inestimable
grace of life that you give to us.*

*Transform us, make us better Christians,
living testimonies of your mercy and of your power.*

*Strip us, Lord, of all roots of bitterness,
of false pride and haughtiness of heart.*

*Make us meek and humble of heart
as was our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*and never let us wound with our words or actions
the dignity of any person.*

*Put in our hearts the ardent desire
to work earnestly for those who are poor and in need.*

*Show us the garment with which you clothed us
the day we received you as Lord and savior of our lives.*

*May we wear those garments at the service of
our neighbors and this community.*

Use us Lord, for your work.

Amen

Adapted from Ligia de Milla, El Salvador, *Prayer Without Borders*

SEEKING GOD IN THE POOR

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

reflect back on the day silently by first contemplating these questions, and then sharing:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta invites us to seek God in everything and everyone all the time: “Seeking the face of God in everything, everyone, all the time, and his hand in every happening; this is what it means to be contemplative in the heart of the world. Seeing and adoring the presence of Jesus, especially in the lowly appearance of bread, and in the distressing disguise of the poor.” (Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *In the Heart of the World: Thoughts, Stories and Prayers*)

Reverend Matt Malone, SJ, the editor of *America: The National Catholic Review*, reflected in a column: “People will tell me, for example: ‘I find God in all things. Like in nature. I find God in the sunset.’ Well, that is a beautiful thought, and I find God there too. The truth though is that just about anybody can find God in a sunset. It’s not that hard. You want hard? Try finding God in an execution, or in cancer, or in AIDS, or war. Now that’s hard. You want to find God in nature? Try finding God in a tsunami or a crop failure. That’s hard.”

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

discuss together

- In what people, places and situations have you found it easy to find God today?
- How does Father Malone’s quote resonate with or challenge you? When or where have you found it difficult to find God today? Why?
- What do you think it means to see Jesus in the “distressing disguise of the poor”? Have you experienced this at all on your trip? If so, when?
- Where might you be called to seek God in your everyday life back home?

closing prayer

*God who is always with us,
We pray that we will seek your face in all good things:
in the people we love
in the beauty of creation
in daily surprises that fill us with joy.
And may we seek you even more when you are harder to find—
in the devastation of war or disaster
in broken homes and communities
in the distressing disguise of the poor.
We ask that you make us contemplatives in the heart of the world:
in the heart of all beauty, and in the heart of all suffering.
Amen*



ACCOMPANIMENT

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

accompaniment

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

“As they continued their journey [Jesus] entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.’ The Lord said to her in reply, ‘Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.’” (Luke 10:38-42)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- Think of moments today when you felt like you weren't accomplishing anything or felt unable to help. How did you feel in those moments? Why do you think you felt that way?
- Do you feel more comfortable when you are doing something (like building a house) or spending time being with people (like talking or playing)? Why?
- What do you think it means that “Mary has chosen the better part”? What might Jesus' words mean for you on this trip?



closing prayer

*Christ Jesus,
We pray that you help us be present to you
by being present to others
especially those who are most in need.
In moments when we want to feel useful
when we can't accept that being with is doing enough
when we're anxious and worried about many things—
Help us remember
there is only need of one thing:
to love you
as we love each other.
In your name we pray.
Amen*

ENCOUNTER WITH OTHERS

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

“The Church must step outside herself. To go where? To the outskirts of existence, whatever they may be, but she must step out. Jesus tells us: ‘Go into all the world! Go! Preach! Bear witness to the Gospel!’ (cf. Mk 16:15) ... In this ‘stepping out’ it is important to be ready for encounter. For me this word is very important. Encounter with others. Why? Because faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others ... with our faith we must create a ‘culture of encounter,’ a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently, as well as those who hold other beliefs, who do not have the same faith. They all have something in common with us: they are images of God, they are children of God. Going out to meet everyone, without losing sight of our own position.” (Pope Francis, Address of the Holy Father on the Vigil of Pentecost with Ecclesial Movements, May 18, 2013)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- Who did you encounter today? Share a little bit about them.
- Were you at all hesitant to encounter others? If so, why? Did you overcome this?
- What obstacles to living a culture of encounter did you notice in this community? What obstacles exist in your own home community? Why do you think such obstacles exist?
- What do you think Pope Francis means by building a “culture of encounter”? And what does this have to do with our faith?
- How do you see yourself building a culture of encounter in your own community?



closing prayer

Loving God,

You invite us to go out to all the world—and in so doing to be ready for encounter with others in every moment.

We remember all those who we encountered today and we offer a prayer for them now:

Share the name of someone you encountered today and offer a prayer for him/her.

We offer all these prayers and those we hold in our hearts. In Jesus’ name we pray.

Amen

MERCY

mercy

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

"[A scholar of the law] said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?' He answered, 'The one who treated him with mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'" (Luke 10:29-37)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- Based on the parable of the Good Samaritan, what do you think mercy means?
- When is it most difficult for you to show mercy in this sense? How might God be calling you to step out of your comfort zone on this trip to show mercy?
- How did you see someone in the community you visited or in your group of travel companions perform a work of mercy today?



closing prayer

Merciful God,

We pray the words of Pope Francis:

"Let us be renewed by God's mercy ... and let us become agents of this mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish."

(Holy Father Pope Francis, Message for Easter Sunday, 2013)

We pause now in a moment of silence to reflect on how you are inviting us, O Lord, to be agents of your mercy while we're on this trip and beyond.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer.

In your name we pray.

Amen

SOLIDARITY

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

solidarity

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

“[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.” (Saint John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 38)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- How did you experience solidarity today?
- How is being in solidarity with someone different from being the same as them? How can you be in solidarity with people whose experience you will never truly share?
- Review the definition of solidarity you wrote before you left. Rewrite it based on your experience so far. How is your definition different? Why is it different?
- Do you think it's possible to live in solidarity with people you may never meet or may meet once but never see again? If so, how?



closing prayer

Loving God,

Turn my eyes to the other, that I may see each as you see me—with dignity that transcends appearances, circumstances, class, and all earthly status.

Turn my ears to the other, that I may hear their voice as you hear mine—with compassion, presence and tenderness in the midst of suffering.

Turn my mind to the other, that I may come to understand them as you understand me—struggling to find meaning in a world that's fragmented, and your light in a world that's dimmed.

Turn my feet to the other, that I may approach them across the gaps that divide us—gaps too often widened by illusions of family, tribe, creed, race ... even otherness itself.

Turn my hands to the other, that I may serve them as you serve me—with a humble touch that cleanses, that heals, that feeds, and that reassures.

Turn my heart to the other, that I may love them as you love me—steadfast, forgiving, ever merciful, with patience, seeing my joy in theirs.

Turn my life to the other, that I may live in solidarity with them, and thus with you, forever.

Amen

CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION

opening prayer

care for God's creation

Provided and led by a trip participant.

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

“There was a time when our grandparents were very careful not to throw away any left over food. Consumerism has induced us to be accustomed to excess and to the daily waste of food, whose value, which goes far beyond mere financial parameters, we are no longer able to judge correctly. Let us remember well, however, that whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor, from the hungry! I ask everyone to reflect on the problem of the loss and waste of food, to identify ways and approaches which, by seriously dealing with this problem, convey solidarity and sharing with the underprivileged.” (Pope Francis, General Audience, June 5, 2013)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- How have your eating habits on this trip been different from what you're used to? What have you enjoyed and what has been challenging?
- How are people you've met directly affected by, or dependent on, creation?
- How does this experience invite you to evaluate your own relationship with creation? What created things do you take for granted?



closing prayer

*God of all living things,
On the third day, you brought forth vegetation:
Every plant that bears seed
Every tree that bears fruit.
You saw that it was good
And it pleased you.
Make us worthy of this earth:
in what we sow and what we reap,
in what we plant and what we prune.
So that when that last harvest comes,
When we are called to stand before you,
It may once more be said of this people: "He saw that it was good."
Amen*

JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE

opening prayer

Provided and led by a trip participant.

reflect on the day silently by contemplating these questions, and then share responses:

- What specific experience are you grateful for?
- What experience surprised or challenged you, and why?

reading

“The great need today is for Christians who are active and critical, who don’t accept situations without analyzing them inwardly and deeply. We no longer want masses of people like those who have been trifled with for so long. We want persons like fruitful fig trees, who can say yes to justice and no to injustice and can make use of the precious gift of life, regardless of the circumstances.” (Blessed Oscar Romero, March 9, 1980)

Take a moment to silently reflect on the reading and the questions below.

for discussion

- How do the people you have met “say yes to justice and no to injustice”?
- Blessed Oscar Romero challenges us to ask questions that analyze why situations of injustice are the way they are. What questions do you have about the situations of poverty you’ve glimpsed?
- Which witnesses of faith inspire you to be an active and critical Christian?
- How can you say “no” to injustice within your own community?



closing prayer

*Christ Jesus,
We ask that like Blessed Oscar Romero we will not be afraid to risk
all that we have to follow you,
to stand with the poor and oppressed.
May you grant us the same courage you gave Blessed Oscar Romero:
That we will feel what we are afraid to feel
That we will not be overwhelmed by all that needs to be done—
but that we will follow you,
And trust that you will walk with us on our journey of discipleship,
wherever it may lead.
May our walk be one of true solidarity
As Blessed Oscar Romero’s was.
And in life and death
May we bear much fruit.
Amen*

why ARE YOU HERE?

■ What motivated you to sign up for this trip?

■ What do you hope to gain from this experience?

■ What about this experience do you feel nervous or unsure about?

■ What does taking this trip have to do with your faith?

global poverty OVERVIEW

ACCORDING TO THE WORLD BANK, IN 2011, 2.2 BILLION PEOPLE LIVED ON LESS THAN \$2 A DAY.

The number had decreased only slightly in 30 years: it was 2.59 billion in 1981. In some countries, there is also a widening gap between rich and poor, leading to even greater disparity between those who can and cannot access good schools, health care, safe water, electricity and other critical services. Natural disasters, economic shocks (such as the Great Recession), climate change and lack of food undermine progress.

CAUSES OF POVERTY

There are many underlying causes of poverty. Climate change, for example, is expected to hit developing countries the hardest. Higher temperatures and changes in precipitation patterns will lead to rising sea levels and more frequent weather-related disasters, posing risks for agriculture, food and water supplies. Natural disasters push already vulnerable people into poverty and make the poor even poorer. The world needs to produce at least 50 percent more food to feed a projected 9 billion people by 2050. But climate change could cut crop yields by more than 25 percent. Poverty is also linked to violence. Many places affected by poverty are either on the edge of or recovering from

violent conflict or war. Thus, addressing poverty also involves understanding and addressing the underlying causes of war, and seeking reconciliation in societies divided by race, ethnic origin or economic opportunity.

Disparity in economic opportunity—based on race, ethnic origin, social class or gender—is another cause of poverty. Economic opportunity ensures adequate livelihoods so that education, health care and basic necessities like food and shelter are available to all. Creating economic opportunity includes raising wages, increasing access to quality education and providing training in the skills needed for today's job market.

RESPONSES TO POVERTY

Poverty is a complex problem that must be addressed at all levels. CRS carries out the commitment of the bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas. We seek to promote human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies. CRS also strives to support and strengthen the work of Catholic overseas service and volunteer programs, with a goal to work collaboratively and reduce the number of poor and vulnerable worldwide.

CRS has developed a framework, integral human development, or IHD, which is based in Catholic teaching and designed to address poverty holistically. It promotes the good of every person and the whole person—cultural, economic, social, political and spiritual. The basic approach is to build resilience among poor and vulnerable people so they are less vulnerable to crises, to improve livelihoods so families can become self-sustaining, and to work to mitigate the effects of climate change and natural disasters. This can only happen when people work collaboratively across all sectors of civil society. IHD is a poverty-alleviation strategy that works.

CRS responds to emergencies around the world—providing food, water, shelter and clothing to people in desperate need immediately following a disaster. CRS continues to support communities in the long run by improving livelihoods and strengthening civil society so communities can better respond to future disasters. From the very beginning of a disaster, CRS works with affected communities with the ultimate goal of moving from relief through reconstruction. CRS also helps communities worldwide prevent future disasters through peacebuilding and disaster preparation.

The work of solidarity is not limited to large organizations like CRS or the World Bank. As members of one human family, each of us is touched by the suffering of others and we long to respond. Traveling to a country deeply affected by poverty will bring these statistics and programs to life. Later reflections will encourage you to commit to building solidarity and working for the common good.

SOURCES

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[The World Bank](#) (worldbank.org)

["Poverty Overview"](#)

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WHAT IS solidarity?

“[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”

Saint John Paul II, “Sollicitudo Rei Socialis,” No. 38



“If one member of Christ’s body suffers, all suffer. If one member is honored, all rejoice.”

1 Corinthians 12:12-26



“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

Matthew 25:35-40



“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta



■ Solidarity in your own words

Create your own definition of solidarity in 30 words or fewer.

“The solidarity which binds all [people] together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.”

Saint John XXIII, “Mater et Magistra,” No. 157



“Who is responsible for the blood of these brothers and sisters of ours? Nobody! That is our answer: It isn’t me; I don’t have anything to do with it; it must be someone else, but certainly not me. Yet God is asking each of us: ‘Where is the blood of your brother which cries out to me?’ Today no one in our world feels responsible; we have lost a sense of responsibility for our brothers and sisters. We have fallen into the hypocrisy of the priest and the Levite whom Jesus described in the parable of the Good Samaritan: we see our brother half dead on the side of the road, and perhaps we say to ourselves: ‘poor soul ... !’ and then go on our way. It’s not our responsibility, and with that we feel reassured, assuaged.”

Visit to Lampedusa, Homily of Holy Father
Pope Francis, July 8, 2013

GROUP **vision**

■ Is there anything about this trip that you're anxious or unsure about? If so, what?

■ Who or what do you think will be a source of support for you on this journey?

SOLIDARITY **pledge**

- What are some of your gifts and talents? How do you think you can offer them for charity and social justice?

- Which of the ideas mentioned do you feel most passionate about?

- Based on these reflections, list a few actions you can take in the coming months to live in solidarity with the poor overseas:

SOME IDEAS:

AS A CONSUMER, you can make a difference by purchasing items that help workers in other countries earn fair wages. Buying fair trade items helps skilled artisans and farmers maintain their craft and improve their families' lives. CRS Fair Trade offers items you use on a regular basis—like coffee, tea and olive oil—and gifts for special occasions. crsfairtrade.org

THROUGH LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY, you can contact your member of Congress and invite him or her to support policies that will protect the poor everywhere. Help confront the causes of global poverty—like hunger, disease, conflict and injustice—through Catholics Confront Global Poverty, or CCGP. CCGP, an initiative of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and CRS, provides email updates about policy issues that affect poor and vulnerable people worldwide. confrontglobalpoverty.org

DURING LENT, you can enrich your family's 40-day journey—and turn your fast into a feast for others. Prayerfully walk through the 40 days of Lent and learn about the lives of our poorest brothers and sisters through daily reflections, stories of hope and classic devotions. Simple, meatless recipes bring the flavors of distant countries into your kitchen each Friday—and invite you to put the money you save by eating simply into your CRS Rice Bowl. crsricebowl.org

Get involved as members of a high school, college or university, or parish!

Catholic high schools: ghs.crs.org or education.crs.org
Youth ministry: foodfast.org

Colleges and universities: university.crs.org
Parishes: crs.org/parishambassador



JOURNALING PAGES

