Sample Email/Letter to Parishes

*Format this text and send it to parish leaders to invite their communities to participate in CRS Rice Bowl this Lent.*

This Lent, your parish community is invited to participate in CRS Rice Bowl as Catholic Relief Services celebrates 50 years of the program. CRS Rice Bowl started in Allentown, Pennsylvania, by parishioners to help families facing famine in The Sahel region of Africa. Shortly after, it was adopted by the United States bishops and made an official program of CRS.

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 for every community around the world—but we can do our part through CRS Rice Bowl by answering Jesus’ invitation to us to share bread for life with our sisters and brothers during Lent—so all may live with dignity.

Through CRS Rice Bowl, your parishoners will learn about families in Nigeria, Guatemala and Bangladesh who are building resilience in the face of adversity and helping their community live healthy lives. CRS Rice Bowl offers a variety of stories, videos and lesson plans so you can help your community discover how our faith calls us to serve our global family. Additionally, 25% of every donation collected stays in our diocese to fight hunger and poverty at home.

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.

Here are some easy ways to get started:

* Order FREE English or Spanish materials online at **crsricebowl.org/order** or by calling
**1-800-222-0025**. Order one rice bowl per household. These cardboard bowls are used to collect each family’s alms. Each rice bowl comes with a calendar with daily reflections that families can read together.
* Visit **crsricebowl.org/parishes** for resources to help integrate CRS Rice Bowl into your faith community, including:
	+ The “How to Kick off CRS Rice Bowl” video.
	+ An online giving platform that makes it easy to collect your parish’s gifts online.
	+ Bulletin and pulpit announcements and other tools to communicate about CRS Rice Bowl.
* **Plan a time to distribute rice bowls to each member of your parish community.** Your pastor can lead the Prayer to Begin Lent—found at **crsricebowl.org/parishes**—to help your community begin their journey.

If you have any questions about CRS Rice Bowl, please contact me at [insert information] or email crsricebowl@crs.org.

Thank you for inviting your parishioners to encounter God and our global family this Lent through CRS Rice Bowl!

**[Signature]**