

## WEEK 3: GUATEMALA

### OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

We are called to build a society in which the needs of people who are most poor and vulnerable are considered first. Jesus tells us that when we help our sisters and brothers in need, we do this for him.

#### STORIES OF HOPE

Ana Belén and José have four children and a baby on the way. They live in Santa María Chiquimula, a region of Guatemala where malnutrition affects over half of the population.

Almost five years ago, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, José lost his job. This created serious challenges for the family. Food prices went up and, often, Ana Belén didn't have enough money to buy even the basics. "Sometimes I would cry because I didn't have anything to give my children," she recalls.

Now the family participates in a Catholic Relief Services project that helps fight hunger. Through the project, Ana Belén goes to her children's school to receive food such as corn, beans, rice, vegetable oil and eggs. She also takes her children for health check-ups.

Having enough nutritious food is very important to help children grow healthy and gives them the energy they need to learn and play, just like Francisco, who loves playing ball with his cousins and at school.

#### FACTS TO CONSIDER

- The official language of Guatemala is Spanish, although it has 24 indigenous languages, including Quiché and Nahuatl. The name Guatemala means "land of many trees" in Nahuatl. The country, slightly smaller than Pennsylvania, is in Central America and shares a border with Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and Belize.
- CRS has been providing humanitarian assistance in Guatemala since 1963, supporting food security, nutrition, health, agriculture, education, disaster risk reduction and emergency response programs.



Photo by Oscar Leiva/Silverlight for CRS

- Guatemala has the highest population of all the countries in Central America, as well as the youngest—almost half of the population is under the age of 19.
- CRS in Guatemala works with YouthBuild, which provides employment, education and leadership opportunities to young people.



For downloadable photos, visit [crsricebowl.org/photos](https://crsricebowl.org/photos) and watch the video at [crsricebowl.org/week-3](https://crsricebowl.org/week-3).

# OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

45 MINUTES

## OBJECTIVE

Through the story of Ana Belén in Guatemala, students will learn about the Catholic social teaching principle of Option for the Poor and Vulnerable—our Christian duty to lift the voice of people who are unheard and to help people who are most vulnerable.

## MATERIALS

- Week 3 story and video, available at [crsricebowl.org/week-3](http://crsricebowl.org/week-3).
- A map of the world.
- Week 3 Activity Sheet: Grades 4-6.
- Pencils.

## DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

1. Locate Guatemala on the map.
2. Read the story from week 3. Use the video to supplement the story.
3. Reflect:
  - Who did we meet in this story?
  - What were some challenges Ana Belén and her family were facing?
  - Why is it important for people to get access to nutritious food?
  - Why do you think some countries or communities experience more hunger than others? What factors contribute to this issue?

## ACTIVITY (25 MINUTES)

1. Explain the principle of Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. Remind students that Jesus tells us to give special care to people who are most in need and that it is our Christian duty to stand up for others.
2. Have students complete the week 3 Activity Sheet: Grades 4-6.
3. If time permits, ask for volunteers to read their poems to the class.

## CLOSING PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

*Nurturing God,  
 We thank you for the food you provide us every day.  
 Teach us to share it with others and not to waste.  
 Help us to show them the compassion and kindness they deserve.  
 Amen*

## AT HOME

1. Tell the story of Ana Belén to your family and share your activity sheet with them.
2. As a family, read and discuss the daily reflection found in your **CRS Rice Bowl Lenten Calendar**.

## IF YOU ONLY HAVE



1. Read the week 3 story. Use the video to supplement the story.
2. Lead Discussion step 3.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Write an acrostic poem about the importance of proper nutrition for our human family around the world.

**N** \_\_\_\_\_

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**U** \_\_\_\_\_

**R** \_\_\_\_\_

**I** \_\_\_\_\_

**S** \_\_\_\_\_

**H** \_\_\_\_\_