



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

Lent 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,


For 50 years, the CRS Rice Bowl program has been helping our brothers and sisters struggling with hunger. The program began with humble roots in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where Catholics organized ecumenical efforts to help families facing famine in Africa. Today, millions of people still face life-threatening levels of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, and the small cardboard box remains a sign of hope for them.

“During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind” (Spes non confundit, 10). This is the time for us to recommit to our global family. There is no one solution to breaking the cycle of hunger, but we can do our part through CRS Rice Bowl by answering Jesus’ invitation to share the bread for life with our sisters and brothers during Lent – so all may live with dignity.

In addition to helping our brothers and sisters around the world, 25% of donations to CRS Rice Bowl each year stay in West Michigan to support hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Last year, your donations supported pantries including the Bread of Life Food Pantry and Grandmother’s Cupboard Baby Pantry at St. Ann - St. Ignatius Parish in Baldwin, and the Mary’s Heart Food Pantry at St. Mary’s of the Immaculate Conception in Muskegon. It also provided assistance for those in need through the new St. Vincent de Paul Conference at St. Patrick Parish in Portland. Thank you for your generosity in supporting these local efforts!

“If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry” (Spes non confundit, 16). Please join me in giving alms to the CRS Rice Bowl program this year. Your support can change lives. To learn more, visit [crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids