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FACE THE FAST



Photo by David Snyder for CRS

How to Coordinate a Successful CRS Food Fast

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Visit foodfast.org for videos, presentations and other resources to use during your Food Fast.

Special thanks to Dr. Jane Deren from the Archdiocese of Washington for her contributions to the writing of these resources.

Planning your first Food Fast Retreat

If this is your first time organizing Food Fast, here is some information to keep in mind before you get started.

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FACE THE FAST

Theme

Food Fast invites youth to learn about the realities of people living in poverty and the reasons that they struggle to secure food for themselves and for their families. It also is one way youth can respond to the needs of the poor in our world.

It's easiest to understand food security when focusing on a particular aspect of the issue. This year, Food Fast examines agriculture as a way to secure food. As part of this theme, Food Fast will challenge youth to consider their relationship with food. Where does our food come from, how does it get to us, and what access do we have to a variety of foods? And how does our relationship with food relate to and impact the poor in our communities and around the world?

Catholic Social Teaching

The Gospel calls us to assist those most in need and to reach out to the most vulnerable members of society. The *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable* reminds us that as Catholics we have a responsibility to ensure that every person has access to food. This year, Food Fast will ask youth to reflect on this principle of Catholic social teaching.

Planning

Start planning 8 weeks before your Food Fast. Use the *How to Organize a Food Fast Retreat* timeline to help you plan your Food Fast. You can also use the *Guide to Organizing Food Fast Activities* to schedule sessions throughout the Food Fast. The guide is a suggested flow of activities.

Don't plan alone. Invite adult volunteers and/or youth leaders to help you plan the Food Fast. Organize volunteers into various teams that are responsible for logistics, marketing and fundraising.

Some groups choose to invite another parish or school to participate with them. By holding a joint Food Fast, you increase the number of participants and share the responsibility for organizing the retreat.

Promoting

Tell your faith community. It's important to announce to the youth group first that a Food Fast is scheduled and they are invited to attend. Use *Bulletin Announcements*, the Food Fast *Flier* and Food Fast *Posters* to invite youth participants to Face the Fast. You should also announce to your parish or school community that the youth group will be fasting for 24 hours in solidarity with the poor. Use the *Bulletin Announcements* or invite a participant to give an announcement at the end of mass asking for prayers and donations.

Tell your local community. Use the Food Fast *Press Release* to let your local community know about your Food Fast and how youth in your area are assisting the poor around the world. CRS can help you work with your local and diocesan newspaper. Email us at foodfast@crs.org.

Fundraising

Set a Goal. If your group wants to support the work of Catholic Relief Services, ask participants to set a goal and then decide how they will ask for donations. Use the CRS Food Fast personal fundraiser online and design a page for your group which can be emailed to family and friends asking for their support.

Need more help?

As you begin preparing your Food Fast, Catholic Relief Services staff is available to assist you. Please email us at foodfast@crs.org or call 1-866-608-5978 to ask questions, to learn about best practices or to find out more about Food Fast.

How to Organize a Food Fast Retreat

Use this timeline to help organize your Food Fast.

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FACE THE FAST

Eight Weeks before Food Fast:

Set a date and select a place to hold your Food Fast.

Form a Food Fast planning team of youth, parents, and teachers from the parish, school, or different groups in the diocese.

- Recruit adult chaperones to assist you. One adult per ten participants is recommended.

Seven Weeks before Food Fast:

Invite youth to participate in Food Fast.

- Hang Food Fast *Posters* with the date and time of your retreat in prominent places in the parish or school. (Order posters at foodfast.org.)
- Download the Food Fast *Flier* to distribute to and recruit participants.
- Use the *Bulletin Announcements* to invite youth to participate in the Food Fast.

Six Weeks before Food Fast:

Plan the schedule for Food Fast.

- Review the Food Fast retreat schedule and select the activities that will work best with your group. The *Guide to Organizing Food Fast Activities* offers a suggested order of activities.

Five Weeks before Food Fast:

Invite a CRS Global Fellow to speak at Food Fast.

- Invite a Catholic Relief Services Global Fellow to your Food Fast to share the message about our gospel call to global solidarity. Global Fellows have witnessed firsthand how the work of CRS helps bring joy and assistance to those in need around the world. To invite a Global Fellow to a parish or school, contact Catholic Relief Services at 1-866-608-5978 or globalfellows@crs.org.

Four Weeks before Food Fast:

Inform parents about Food Fast.

- Send a copy of the *Parental Consent Form* to the parent or guardian of each participant, and set a deadline for forms to be returned.

Three Weeks before Food Fast:

Promote Food Fast to your community.

- Send the Food Fast *Press Release* to local media to inform them about your retreat. If you need assistance in securing media coverage, contact CRS (foodfast@crs.org) for help.
- Email foodfast@crs.org so that we can include your group on the Food Fast website's *Fasts in the United States* and invite other youth groups to pray with you during your retreat.

Two Weeks before Food Fast:

Announce to your community why youth are holding a Food Fast.

- Ask your pastor or principal if participants may make an announcement to the entire community about the upcoming Food Fast.
- Make sure all *Parental Consent Forms* have been returned.

One Week before Food Fast:

Make final preparations.

- Gather materials for the retreat. Review the *Materials Needed Check-list* and *Setting up the Food Fast Space*.
- Remind participants to bring donations that they collected to the Food Fast.

How to Organize a Food Fast Retreat

Use this timeline to help organize your Food Fast.

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FACE THE FAST

Hold Your Food Fast!

One Week After Food Fast:

Tell CRS about your Food Fast.

- Collect remaining donations from participants and send to CRS.
- Complete the Food Fast *Coordinator Evaluation* at foodfast.org.
- Send photos from your Food Fast to Catholic Relief Services. Be sure to include signed *Parental Consent Forms* so we can use the photos online or in future materials.
- Thank your planning team, volunteers and participants for making Food Fast a success!

Stay Involved with Catholic Relief Services

- For more ideas on staying involved after your Food Fast, visit foodfast.org/stay-involved.
- Join Catholic Relief Services' Food Fast Facebook fan page for the latest information about CRS' work around the world.

Sample Retreat Schedules

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Use or modify the following schedules to structure your retreat. You may select sessions from the various categories for each time period in the schedule in order to develop a retreat that will work best with the dynamics of your group. Feel free to rearrange the order of the sessions so they work best for you.

24-Hour Retreat Schedule

Day 1

5:00 p.m. Arrival/Welcome
5:30 p.m. Icebreaker
5:45 p.m. Opening Prayer
6:15 p.m. Activity
7:15 p.m. Break
7:30 p.m. Reflection
8:15 p.m. Icebreaker
8:30 p.m. Free time
9:15 p.m. Activity
10:15 p.m. Icebreaker
10:30 p.m. Activity
11:30 p.m. Prayer
11:45 p.m.–8:00 a.m. Sleep

Day 2

8:00 a.m. Wake up
8:15 a.m. Icebreaker
8:30 a.m. Prayer
9:00 a.m. Activity
10:00 a.m. Reflection
11:00 a.m. Free Time
12:00 p.m. Icebreaker
12:15 p.m. Activity
1:15 p.m. Reflection
2:15 p.m. Free time
2:45 p.m. Activity
3:15 p.m. Reflection
4:00 p.m. Break the Fast/Clean-up
4:15 p.m. Commissioning Prayer
4:45 p.m. Clean-up/Closing

Sample Retreat Schedules

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10-Hour Retreat Schedule

8:00 a.m. Arrival/Welcome
8:30 a.m. Icebreaker
8:45 a.m. Opening Prayer
9:15 a.m. Activity
10:15 a.m. Break
10:30 a.m. Reflection
11:15 a.m. Activity
12:15 p.m. Free Time
12:45 p.m. Icebreaker
1:00 p.m. Activity
2:15 p.m. Prayer
2:45 p.m. Activity
3:45 p.m. Break
4:00 p.m. Reflection
4:30 p.m. Commissioning Prayer
5:30 p.m. Break the Fast/Clean-up
6:00 p.m. End

8-Hour Retreat Schedule

9:00 a.m. Arrival/Welcome
9:30 a.m. Icebreaker
9:45 a.m. Opening Prayer
10:30 a.m. Activity
11:15 a.m. Break
11:30 a.m. Reflection
12:15 p.m. Icebreaker
12:30 p.m. Break
12:45 p.m. Activity
2:15 p.m. Break
2:30 p.m. Reflection
3:00 p.m. Activity
3:45 p.m. Commissioning Prayer
4:45 p.m. Break the Fast/Clean-up
5:00 p.m. End

Food Fast in Schools

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While Food Fast is designed as a 24-hour retreat, schools can easily modify the schedule to fit within a school day as a school-wide retreat. The entire school can participate, and activities can be woven into every class period. Rather than fasting, your school might choose to provide a simple meal at lunch.

Suggested Schedule

Opening Assembly: Opening Prayer
1st Period: Activity
2nd Period: Reflection
3rd Period: Activity
4th Period: Activity
Lunch: Prayer
5th Period: Reflection
6th Period: Activity
Closing Assembly: Commissioning Prayer

An alternative to a school-wide Food Fast is to provide individual students the option to participate throughout an entire day and share with the school why they are fasting. Learning activities and prayers can be used prior to the scheduled date of the Fast or incorporated into the school day for the participants.

Suggested Schedule

Pre-Food Fast

Reflection
Learning Activity

Food Fast

Before School: Opening Prayer
Lunch: Presentations to the entire school
about global poverty and hunger
After School: Commissioning Prayer

Post-Food Fast

Determine how to involve the entire school in service and justice work.

Guide to Organizing Food Fast Activities

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This is one way you can schedule activities during your 24-hour Food Fast schedule. Examples have been pulled from this year's materials as well as from past years' materials available for download at foodfast.org.

Day 1:

Welcome, Introductions and Retreat Schedule Overview

Icebreaker: Acrostic

Opening Prayer: Preparing the Fast, Preparing the Table

Activity: Understanding the Fast

Reflection: Lighting the Way

Icebreaker: Get-to-know-you Bingo

Activity: Solidarity: A Vision of One Human Family

Icebreaker: The Egg Race

Prayer: Unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need

Day 2:

Icebreaker: Telephone Charades

Prayer: Prayer for Farmers

Activity: On the Move to Build Solidarity Game

Activity: Food for Thought

Reflection: 5 Facts about Hunger

Icebreaker: Hum Singer

Activity: Go Eat Ethically

Activity: Food Around the World

Reflection: Eating is a Moral Act

Commissioning Prayer: Go forth as a beacon of light

Break the Fast by celebrating the Eucharist or by sharing a simple meal.

Materials Needed Check-list

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Listed below are all of the materials you will need during the entire Food Fast. Not all materials are needed for each activity.

Equipment

- Music (download at foodfast.org)
- Music Player
- DVD player
- Speakers
- Projector
- Screen
- Computer

Activities

- Copies of handouts listed in each prayer, reflection or activity
- Fair Trade Giveaway Items (order at foodfast.org)
- Cross
- Candles (votive or electric votive)
- Large Basket
- Decorations (e.g., pictures, plants, cloths, maps)
- Chairs
- Tables
- Flipchart paper
- Foam or Poster Board
- Plain Paper
- Construction Paper
- Index Cards
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Markers
- Pens/Pencils
- Masking Tape
- Glue
- Art Supplies
- 6-sided die
- Safety Pins
- Spoons
- Eggs

Other

- Cups
- Juice/Water
- Simple meal for breaking the fast (for suggestions, visit orb.crs.org/resources/recipes)

Setting up the Food Fast Space

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How you arrange the Food Fast retreat space is important to setting the tone of the retreat. Whether you have a large or small space, multiple locations or one room, there are several steps you can take to ensure that your space contributes to a successful Food Fast.

Once you've chosen the location, here are some ideas about preparing your space.

Space Set-up

- Designate space for prayer and reflection, large group activities and small group sessions.
- Have chairs for large group activities and discussions. Chairs are more comfortable and encourage attentiveness. Separate this area from the other spaces with tables, chairs or plants.
- If you only have one large space to use, make sure there is enough room for small group sessions. Small groups are most effective when distractions are minimized.
- If you choose to have audio/visual equipment, ensure it is ready before the retreat begins. And make sure that the space is dark enough for presentations and videos to be viewed by the entire group.
- Designate a space for breaks where participants can get a drink, be loud, and relax between activities.

Atmosphere

- Decorate the space with items from around the world. You can use cloths, maps, pictures (see: *Faces of the Fast* presentation) to give your retreat space an international dimension.
- Have a prayer table with a cross, bible, candles and other items you'll use during prayer. Consider adding various items to the prayer table throughout the retreat, to represent the journey youth are taking during the Food Fast. There are suggestions for items in the *Prayers* and *Reflections* at foodfast.org.

Option

Involve youth in preparing the Food Fast space. When participants arrive, ask them to write a prayer, decorate a picture, or add to a collage. This activity will begin to set the tone of the Food Fast while keeping participants busy before the retreat begins. The decorations they provide can be placed in a central location and referred to during prayer, reflection or other activities.

Materials Needed

- Chairs
- Tables
- Music
- Music Player
- Speakers
- Projector
- Screen
- Computer
- DVD player
- Decorations (e.g., pictures, plants, cloths, maps)
- Markers
- Paper
- Tape

Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child has expressed interest in participating in *Food Fast*, Catholic Relief Services' hunger awareness retreat. This is a ___-hour event, which includes fasting, prayer, activities, and discussion on the issues of hunger and poverty in the world.

Our *Food Fast* will be held on _____ at _____.
date/time *location*

During *Food Fast*, your child will:

- fast for _____ hours and miss _____ main meal(s);
- consume only juice and water during the fast; and
- solicit sponsorship pledges to raise money for Catholic Relief Services.

In the Bible, the practice of fasting is connected with the ideas of personal and communal growth and conversion. By fasting, praying, and sharing conversation together, we gain a connection with the people in the world who suffer from hunger involuntarily. If there are medical reasons that prevent your child from being physically capable to participate in a 24-hour fast, your child can still participate in the event in a modified way. Please contact me if you would like to discuss other options. The purpose of the fast is to create an awareness of the impact of poverty and inequity in a world of plenty and to give your child ideas about how to make positive changes in the world.

Please complete the form below and return it to me by _____. Thank you for supporting your child's participation in Catholic Relief Services' *Food Fast*.
date

Sincerely,

Youth Director/Campus Minister

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. *Food Fast* is an educational retreat focusing on issues in the developing world. Students participate in a series of planned activities, and with the supervision of their youth minister or teacher, fast for the duration of the retreat. Anyone fasting must drink water and replace solid food with juices (fruit or vegetable) or other non-caffeinated drinks (such as herbal teas) throughout the Food Fast. Anyone with a cold or flu, liver or kidney problems, or a serious illness such as diabetes, heart disease, or ulcers, should not take part in the fast. If you are in doubt of your child's ability to participate, please consult your doctor. For most people, fasting is safe and can be beneficial; however, there are some people who should NEVER fast without professional supervision. (For example, persons who are too thin or emaciated; persons who have experienced anorexia, bulimia, or other eating or behavioral disorders; persons who suffer weakness or anemia; persons who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer from hypoglycemia or any other blood sugar problem.) Fasting should only be done in a limited and controlled environment.

My child, _____ has my permission to participate in *Food Fast*.
name of participant

I give permission for photos to be taken of my child during this event, and for those photos to be published in parish newsletters, parish website and Catholic Relief Services' website and publications.

Signature of parent/guardian



Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS
US1147
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Deepening your *faith* *shouldn't* have to feel like an *act of penance*.

SIGN UP FOR FOOD FAST!

Together we'll spend time with friends and make a difference in the fight against global hunger.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

For more details contact: _____



Food Fast is Catholic Relief Services' hunger awareness retreat for Catholic youth in the United States. foodfast.org

Bulletin Announcements

Bulletin Announcements are a great way to let your community know about Food Fast and why youth are participating. Consider using the announcements to invite your community to pray for you and join you in breaking the Fast.

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Use this Bulletin Announcement to invite youth to participate in Food Fast.

Take action and help end global hunger. Participate in Catholic Relief Services' Food Fast with the youth group. Food Fast is a 24-hour retreat focusing on global poverty and hunger. We'll journey with the poor and hungry as a way of living out our Catholic faith.

To sign-up, please contact [NAME and PHONE].

Use this Bulletin Announcement to let your community know about your upcoming Food Fast.

On [DATE], the youth group will be participating in Catholic Relief Services' Food Fast. During our 24-hour retreat, we'll be fasting in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world who struggle with poverty and hunger. We ask that you pray for us as we journey with the poor around the world.

Please join us in breaking our fast at [TIME AND DATE] and to learn a little about our retreat experience. We'll also be collecting donations to support the work of Catholic Relief Services.

Use this Bulletin Announcement to share the results of your Food Fast experience with your community.

Thank you for praying for participants during our Food Fast. We learned about the realities faced by people around the world who live in poverty, and we took action to help end global hunger. We also raised \$[donation amount] to support the work of Catholic Relief Services. Thank you for your generosity.

Fundraising

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Collecting Donations

One way to act in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in need is to use Food Fast as an opportunity to raise money to assist the poor through the work of Catholic Relief Services.

Here are some fundraising best practices.

- 1 Set a goal.
- 2 Customize an online fundraising page (foodfast.org/fundraise) and e-mail it to family and friends inviting them to support your Food Fast by donating online to Catholic Relief Services.
- 3 Invite members of your community to help you break the fast with a simple meal. Suggest a donation of \$3 per person.
- 4 Collect donations after each Mass the weekend before your Food Fast.
- 5 Use the *Bulletin Announcements* to ask people in your community to make a donation in support of your Food Fast.
- 6 What have been successful fundraisers in the past? Could one of these activities be incorporated into your Food Fast?
- 7 Thank your donors.

After your Food Fast, send your donations to:

Catholic Relief Services
Food Fast
P.O. Box 17090
Baltimore, MD 21203-7090

Online Giving

Support Catholic Relief Services through your Food Fast!

Design an online fundraising page that you can customize with a photo, information about your Food Fast and your fundraising goal, and then e-mail the link to family and friends asking for their support.

To get started designing your personal page, visit foodfast.org/fundraise.



Food Fast Coordinator Evaluation

Thank you for participating in CRS' Food Fast! We would like your feedback to help us assess the effectiveness of the Food Fast program. Please send the evaluation to Catholic Relief Services, 228 W. Lexington St, Baltimore, MD 21201.

To complete an online evaluation of Food Fast, visit foodfast.org.

1 How easy was Food Fast to:

	NOT EASY					VERY EASY				
Plan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Promote	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recruit Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Implement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Fundraise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

2 Please rate how helpful each of the following resources were in planning, promoting and implementing your Food Fast?

	NOT HELPFUL					VERY HELPFUL				
How to Coordinate a Food Fast	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Icebreakers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Prayers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Reflections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Supplemental Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3 How well do participants understand global poverty and hunger issues?

	NOT AT ALL					VERY WELL				
Before your Food Fast	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
After your Food Fast	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

4 What activities or resources would you like to have for future Food Fast?

5 Will you plan a Food Fast next year? Why or why not?

6 Share your best practices with us! What specific and creative ideas made your Food Fast event a success?

7 Additional comments or suggestions:

Name: _____

Church/School: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Number of Food Fast participants _____

Date of your Food Fast _____

Total amount raised \$ _____

Thank you for participating in CRS' Food Fast and for taking the time to complete this evaluation!

Food Fast Participation Evaluation

1 On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 as excellent, how would you rate our Food Fast?

	POOR		EXCELLENT		
Prayers	1	2	3	4	5
Reflections	1	2	3	4	5
Activities	1	2	3	4	5
Overall	1	2	3	4	5

2 What did you like best about Food Fast? Please explain.

3 What did you not like? Please explain.

4 What did you learn during Food Fast?

5 Why did you want to participate in Food Fast?

6 Would you participate in a Food Fast again? Why or why not?

7 Other comments or suggestions?

Thank you!

Icebreaker: Acrostic

(20 minutes)

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FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity, participants will describe themselves using the letters in their name and then introduce themselves to other participants.

Materials Needed

- paper
- markers
- tape
- pens/pencils

Procedure

Give a piece of paper and a pen or pencil to each participant. Have them write their names vertically along the left side of the paper. Next to each letter, they should write a word or phrase that describes them using that letter. Encourage participants to decorate their papers.

When everyone is finished, ask participants to stand up and introduce themselves and share one or two words they used to describe themselves. If you have a large group, divide into smaller groups and have participants share within that group.

After everyone has been introduced, hang each person's acrostic around the retreat space.

Note: This icebreaker is a good opening activity.

Example

Fun

Opportunity

Offering

Dynamic

Faith

Active

Solidarity with the poor

Teach my community about global issues

Icebreaker: Get-to-know-you Bingo

(15 minutes)

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FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity, participants will learn about each other by playing Bingo.

Materials Needed

- one *Bingo card* for each participant
- pens/pencils

Procedure

Distribute a Bingo card and pen or pencil to each participant. Ask each participant to fill in the blank space with an interesting fact about him/herself. *Option:* The center space may be left blank as a free space.

Collect all the cards, mix them up and redistribute them so that no one has the card with his/her fact on it.

Invite participants to move around the space asking other participants sign in the box that matches a fact about them. This fact can be the one the participant wrote or another one on the card. Participants can only sign one fact per card. Unlike regular Bingo, all spaces on the card should be filled.

In boxes marked “share,” participants should share more information related to that fact. For instance, for “Has traveled to another country,” the participant should say to which other country he or she has traveled.

Whoever completes the card first, wins.

Icebreaker: Get-to-know-you Bingo

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Bingo Card

Plays an instrument <i>(share)</i>	Has a dog	Likes soccer	Is wearing something green	Is learning another language <i>(share)</i>
Is the youngest child	Has a driver's license	Has traveled to another country <i>(share)</i>	Has ridden a train	Has a cat
Has red hair	Born in October		Plays a sport <i>(share)</i>	Is the oldest child
Has a six-letter name	Likes winter	Is an only child	Goes by their middle name	Was born in another state <i>(share)</i>
Likes to cook	Has applied to college <i>(share)</i>	Born in February	Knows what profession he or she wants to do <i>(share)</i>	Likes to sing

Icebreaker: The Egg Race

(20 minutes)

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Objective

Through this activity, participants will work together on teams to move an egg as quickly as possible without dropping it.

Materials Needed

- large spoons, enough so that each team has 2 spoons
- eggs, enough so that each team has 1 egg (*Note:* have extra eggs in case some are broken)
- masking tape

Preparation

In a large space, place a long piece of tape at one end. Place another long piece of tape about 10 feet from the other piece of tape. Make sure that there is enough room for participants to line up on one side of the tape.

Option: Take this activity outside.

Procedure

Divide participants into teams with an equal number of people. Teams should have no more than 10 members. If a team has fewer people, explain that one of their members will have to go an additional time so that no team has an unfair advantage.

Invite the teams to line up behind one of the taped lines, single file. Give each team 2 spoons and an egg. The first person in line will have a spoon with the egg on it. The second person in line will have a spoon that is empty.

Tell the teams that each member must take the egg to the end of the line and back without dropping it. The egg must stay on the spoon and cannot be touched by hands.

After making the trip down and back, the first person will transfer the egg from his or her spoon to the next person in line who is holding an empty spoon. The egg is passed to the next person in line without using hands. The first team member will hand his or her spoon to the next person in line.

The second person takes the egg to the end of the line and back and then passes it to the next person holding a spoon. This goes on until every person has carried the egg without dropping it.

If the egg is dropped, the team must start over from the person who dropped the egg.

The first team to complete the race wins.

Option: Add a challenge to the race by placing obstacles in the path of each team.

**Prayer:
Unite us in the
hunger of our
brothers and
sisters in need**

(20 minutes)

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FACE THE FAST

Materials Needed

- copy of *Unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need* for each participant
- music: *In This Place* and *Come to the Lord* (download at foodfast.org)
- music player

Procedure

Ask 8 participants to be readers. Provide readers with a copy of the prayer ahead of time and highlight the part you would like each of them to read.

Invite participants into the prayer space and distribute *Unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need*.

Prayer: Unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need

Handout

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FACE THE FAST

Gathering Song

In This Place by Trevor Thomson and Victoria Thomson

Leader Our Catholic tradition provides us with rich social teachings about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. In this prayer we will read some key principles of our Catholic social tradition, and reflect upon how these principles guide us in our response to the needs of the poor.

Reader 1 Sacredness of Life and Dignity of the Human Person—Created in the image of God, all human life is sacred and possesses a dignity that comes directly from our Creator—not from any action of our own. The right to life includes the right to enough food and nutrition to sustain life.

Reader 2 That we may be mindful of attitudes that lead us to take food, the most basic necessity, for granted, when so many people face empty tables each day, we pray:

All Lord, through our fasting unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need.

(Pause)

Reader 3 Option for the Poor—In every economic, political and social decision, a weighted concern must be given to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. When we do this, we strengthen the entire community, because the powerlessness of any one member wounds the rest of society.

Reader 4 That we may examine and work to change the systems that provide abundant food choices for some, but leave millions of people hungry, we pray:

All Lord, through our fasting unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need.

(Pause)

Reader 5 Care for Creation There is inherent integrity to all of creation. We are called to be good stewards of our resources, ensuring that we use and distribute them justly and equitably and preserve them for future generations.

Reader 6 That we may be mindful of the impacts that farming techniques, food processing and food transportation have on God's creation, we pray:

All Lord, through our fasting unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need.

(Pause)

Reader 7 Solidarity—We are all part of one human family, whatever our national, racial, religious, economic or ideological differences. In an increasingly interconnected world, loving our neighbor has global dimensions.

Reader 8 That we may eliminate the waste of food in our own lives: in our homes, school cafeterias, and restaurants, we pray:

All Lord, through our fasting unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need.

(Pause to allow a few minutes of reflection)

Prayer:
**Unite us in the
hunger of our
brothers and
sisters in need**

Handout
2 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Leader Let us close by praying together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All **God of Love, as we lift our prayers to you, may our awareness of the struggles of the poor, who are Your children, inspire our actions and decisions. Through our fasting, unite us in the hunger of our brothers and sisters in need. We pray this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Closing Song

Come to the Lord by Steve Angrisano and Tom Tomaszek

Prayer: Prayer for Farmers

(25 minutes)

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Materials Needed

- copy of *Prayer for Farmers* for each participant

Procedure

Ask 7 participants to be readers. Consider giving them a copy of the prayer ahead of time and highlight the part they should read.

Distribute a copy of *Prayer for Farmers*. Invite participants to spread out in the prayer space. Consider projecting one of the Food Fast presentations, *Faces of the Fast* or *Food around the World*, during this prayer.

Begin by asking participants to silently reflect on food:

- Where does our food come from?
- Who prepares it?
- How we use food to celebrate and be in community?
- Do we have a responsibility to people who provide us food?

After a few moments, ask the first reader to begin. Each reader should allow some time for quiet reflection on the question listed before reading the next section.

When participants have had time to contemplate the last questions, ask if anyone wants to share something that came to mind during the prayer.

Close with an Our Father.

Prayer: Prayer for Farmers

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Reader 1 Lord Jesus,
In images of farming and rural life
You announced your gospel to the poor.

What images of farming and rural life come to mind?

Reader 2 We pray for rural men and women,
Especially for those who work hard in the fields.

Have you ever worked in a field? What might that be like?

Reader 3 Give us the strength of your Spirit to be witnesses
And collaborators of the creative providence.

How can we be witnesses to the work of farmers?

Reader 4 May we always sow in ourselves and in our families
The holiness and hope of Christian life,
With the same zeal with which we cultivate our land.

How are we called, as Catholics, to be mindful of the importance of farming?

Reader 5 Bless the daily efforts of farmers and farm workers.
Let all recognize the dignity of their labor.

How might we recognize the dignity of farmers' work?

Reader 6 Raise from among us men and women
At the services of the gospel,
Sisters and brothers to announce unceasingly
Your love for this world that is your own field and farm.

How can we be of service to people who farm, both in the U.S. and around the world?

Reader 7 We give you glory forever and ever.

How do we offer God glory through our respect of farming?

“Prayer for Farmers” by Fr. Ermolao Portella in *Prayer Without Borders*, ©2004, Catholic Relief Services.

Commissioning Prayer: Go forth as a beacon of light

(30 minutes)

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Materials Needed

- music player
- music: *Christ, Be Our Light* and *Lead Me, Lord* (download at foodfast.org)
- copy of *Go forth as a beacon of light* for each participant
- table
- candles
- cross
- commissioning necklaces
- bowl for commissioning necklaces
- list of names of all Food Fast participants

Procedure

Prepare the prayer space by placing the table in the center of the space. Put the bowl of commissioning necklaces on the table. Consider decorating the table with candles and a cross.

Ask 9 participants to be readers. Provide readers with a copy of the prayer ahead of time and highlight the part you would like each of them to read.

Commissioning Prayer: Go forth as a beacon of light

Handout

1 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Gathering Song

Christ, Be Our Light by Bernadette Farrell

Leader As our time together comes to a close, let us pray for the wisdom and grace to go forth into the world and share our stories. May we have the strength to work for justice and the faith to act with conviction. And may we be a beacon of light for a world in need. Let us conclude our fast by praying and reflecting on the Beatitudes.

Reader 1 **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** May we praise and thank God for the blessings in our lives, and may we always respect the dignity of each and every human being.

All Gracious God, hear our prayers.

Reader 2 **Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.** May we pray in solidarity with those who suffer because they lack the most basic necessities, including access to sufficient food and clear water.

All Compassionate God, hear our prayers.

Reader 3 **Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.** May we act each and every day with humility, and may we be good stewards of the creation that has been entrusted to us.

All Gentle God, hear our prayers.

Reader 4 **Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.** May we hunger and thirst for justice on behalf of our brothers and sisters in need around the world.

All Righteous God, hear our prayers.

Reader 5 **Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.** May we open our hearts to the transformative power of love and forgiveness, that we might create a more peaceful and just world.

All Merciful God, hear our prayers.

Reader 6 **Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.** May our hearts and minds be renewed by the presence of God in our lives, and may we always strive to see the face of God in every person we meet.

All Ever-present God, hear our prayers.

Reader 7 **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.** May we work to protect the most vulnerable members of our society, especially children, that they might know a peaceful and loving world instead of a hostile one.

All: Loving God, hear our prayers.

Reader 8 **Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** May we have the courage to make a preferential option for the poor and put the needs of our brothers and sisters first.

All Steadfast God, hear our prayers.

Reader 9 **Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me.** May our voices carry Your message of justice for the poor, even as others seek to drown them out.

All Just God, hear our prayers.

Commissioning Prayer: Go forth as a beacon of light

Handout

2 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Leader It is now time to close our Food Fast by commissioning one another. Each person's name will be read. The person called will step forward, and we will all raise our hands in a blessing, saying the person's first name and "Go forth into the world as a beacon of light."

After your name has been called and you have received a blessing, please take a necklace from the bowl to wear as a sign of your commitment.

Each participant is called by name and blessed.

Leader A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 5:14-16)

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

Leader Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, Our God.
Shine your light before others,
that you may be a beacon in the darkness,
that you may be a messenger of light.

All Amen.

Sending Forth Song

Lead Me, Lord by John Becker (OCP)

Reflection: Lighting the Way

(45 minutes)

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will:

- reflect on their reasons for participating in this Food Fast;
- consider how their fasting will make a difference in the lives of the poor around the world; and
- make a pledge to “light the way” for a world that is often darkened by ignorance.

Activity Summary

Through music, reflection, and journaling participants will connect their own lives with the lives of our brothers and sisters in need around the world. They will identify how they can each “light the way” for a world that is often darkened by ignorance.

Materials Needed

- copy of *Lighting the Way* for each participant
- copy of *Tune of Ignorance* for each participant
- *Tune of Ignorance* by Greg Walton (download at foodfast.org)
- music player
- pencils/pens
- index cards
- large basket
- brightly-colored cloth
- cross
- one electric tea light candle for each participant (optional)

Preparation

Ask 4 participants to be readers and provide them with a copy of the reflection ahead of time. Highlight the part you would like each of them to read.

Distribute pen/pencil and one index card to each participant.

Set the large basket on a table in the center of the prayer space. Consider decorating the table with a brightly-colored cloth and a cross.

Procedure

Invite participants into the prayer and reflection space and provide each with a copy of *Lighting the Way* and *Tune of Ignorance*.

Option: Distribute one electric tea light candle to each participant.

Begin the reflection with the opening reading and then play *Tune of Ignorance*.

Invite the readers to read their sections and allow 5 minutes between each reading for participants to reflect silently on the corresponding questions. Instruct participants that the index cards will be used at the end of the reflection.

At the end of the reflection, play the *Tune of Ignorance* again. During the song, invite participants to come up to the center table and put their cards in the basket.

Option: Participants can also place their electric tea lights around the edge of the table, symbolizing the light they strive to bring to the world.

Debrief

At the end of the reflection, explain to participants that their pledges will remain inside the basket throughout the remainder of the Food Fast. The candles will remain lighted, as a reminder of the pledges they have each made to bring light to a darkened world.

Reflection: Lighting the Way

Handout

1 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Leader Gracious God, each day You have given to us is a precious gift. The food we eat, the clean water we drink and the homes that shelter us are all priceless gifts which too often we take for granted. In the midst of our busy lives, between classes and jobs, practices and rehearsals, how often do we take a moment to thank You for these blessings? And how aware are we of our brothers and sisters around the world who struggle to provide these basic necessities for their families? Do we live our lives to the tune of ignorance?

Listen to the Tune of Ignorance.

Reader 1 Every morning I go running out my door,
Step into the car and put the pedal to the floor
I have no time for all the sick and all the poor,
It seems enough just getting through my day.
When I get home I put my feet into my bed,
Pull the sheets up to my chin and comfy pillow to my head
But I cannot sleep, I hear the streets were crying in their dread
I can hear them say...

When the world falls asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?

Reader 2 A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 25:34-40)

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 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.'

Consider your decision to participate in this Food Fast. How can our fast today help those who are poor and hungry in our world?

Reflection: Lighting the Way

Handout
2 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Reader 1 I've heard it said, "God is a lamp unto our feet."
But he won't serve the purpose well until we step out in the street and
Spread out love to every one we meet
In what we do more than in what we say.
And as the world goes round the world religions fight
Over who is in the wrong and who is in the right.
Our children singing "All are precious in his sight."
While we look the other way.

When the world falls asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?

Reader 3 A reading of the Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen

Consider your decision to participate in this Food Fast. Through your fasting, how can you become an instrument of peace, love, pardon, faith, hope, light or joy in our world?

Reflection: Lighting the Way

Handout
3 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Reader 1 The problem seems so big and we feel so small,
It's hard to imagine making any difference at all
But helping one life at a time and being faithful to the call,
We'll be a world that is wide awake.

No we won't fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, because who will light the way?

Reader 4 A reading from Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* #1

Charity in truth, to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. Love — caritas — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace. It is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth. Each person finds his good by adherence to God's plan for him, in order to realize it fully: in this plan, he finds his truth, and through adherence to this truth he becomes free (cf. Jn 8:32). To defend the truth, to articulate it with humility and conviction, and to bear witness to it in life are therefore exacting and indispensable forms of charity.

Consider your decision to participate in this Food Fast. How can our fast today bear witness to charity in truth or what Pope Benedict calls the “driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity?”

Leader Gracious God, we thank You for the blessings in our lives and we hope that the experiences we share during our Food Fast will help us to find new ways to share those blessings with others. Today, we pledge ourselves to “light the way” for a world that is often darkened by ignorance.

Reflect for a few minutes on this statement. Write the phrase, “Today, I pledge to light the way for the world by” on your card, and then complete the phrase with your own statement. As the Tune of Ignorance plays, you may come up to the center table and put your pledge in the basket.

Reflection: Lighting the Way

Tune of Ignorance

Handout

FACE THE EAST

Tune of Ignorance by Greg Walton

Verse 1

Every mornin' I go runnin' out my door,
Step into the car and put the pedal to the floor
I have no time for all the sick and all the poor,
It seems enough just getting' through my day.
When I get home I put my feet into my bed,
Pull the sheets up to my chin and comfy pillow to my head
But I cannot sleep I hear the streets were cryin' in their dread
Yeah I can hear them say...

Chorus

When the world falls asleep
When the world falls asleep,
When we all fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?

Verse 2

I've heard it said, "God is a lamp unto our feet."
But he won't serve the purpose well until we step out in the street and...
Spread out love to every one we meet
In what we do more than in what we say.
And as the world goes round the world religions fight
Over who is in the wrong and who is in the right.
Our children singin' "All are precious in his sight."
While we look the other way.

Chorus

And the world falls asleep
And the world falls asleep,
And we all fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?
When the world falls asleep,
When the world falls asleep,
When we all fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?
So wake up in the North. Wake up in the South.
Wake up in the West. Wake up in the East.
Wake up for the hungry. Wake up for the homeless.
Wake up for the thirsty. Wake up for the least of these.
Wake up! Wake up!

Verse 3

The problem seems so big and we feel so small,
It's hard to imagine makin' any difference at all
But helpin' one life at a time and being faithful to the call,
We'll be a world that is wide awake.

Chorus

And we won't fall asleep,
No we won't fall asleep,
No we won't fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, 'cause who will light the way,
When the world falls asleep,
When the world falls asleep,
When we all fall asleep to the tune of ignorance, who will light the way?

Reflection: 5 Facts about Hunger

(45 Minutes)

1 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will:

- reflect on facts about hunger;
- write prayer intentions to add to the prayer space; and
- consider their role in reducing global hunger

Activity Summary

Through this activity participants will reflect on several facts about global hunger. In pairs, participants will discuss these hunger facts and write prayer intentions to share with the large group. Groups will also develop a sign board describing how, through Food Fast, they are helping to address global hunger.

Materials Needed

- markers
- index cards
- foam or poster board

Procedure

Divide participants into pairs and provide each group with markers and 5 index cards. Through a guided reflection, participants will learn five hunger facts one by one. Pairs will reflect upon the facts and together write a prayer intention inspired by the facts onto their index cards.

Leader Pope Benedict XVI stated during the 2009 U.N. World Summit on Food Security in Rome, *Hunger is the most cruel and concrete sign of poverty. Opulence and waste are no longer acceptable when the tragedy of hunger is assuming ever greater proportions.*

Throughout this reflection, you will hear five different facts about hunger in our world today. I'll give you a few minutes to consider each fact in your pairs, and you will write a prayer intention inspired by your reflections. Your intention should take the form "We pray that..." At the end of the reflection, we'll process to our prayer space to share our intentions.

Hunger Fact #1: More than one billion people, or over one sixth of the planet's population, are suffering from hunger. This number is greater than the populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union combined.

(Pause 5 minutes to allow pairs to reflect and write their intention. During this time you may want to ask a few questions to help focus the reflection, such as: Why do you think so many people go hungry? What are the barriers to people having enough food?)

Hunger Fact #2: Malnutrition and diseases related to hunger cause about six in ten childhood deaths in developing countries, or approximately five million deaths per year.

(Pause 5 minutes to allow pairs to reflect and write their intention. During this time you may want to ask a few questions to help focus the reflection, such as: How can we reduce the number of children who die from preventable causes?)

Hunger Fact #3: The Millennium Development Goals are efforts agreed upon by countries and development organizations to meet the needs of the world's poorest people. The first Millennium Development Goal targets the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, with the aim of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015, but progress has been very slow towards achieving this goal.

Reflection: 5 Facts about Hunger

(45 Minutes)

2 of 2

FACE THE FAST

(Pause 5 minutes to allow pairs to reflect and write their intention. During this time you may want to ask a few questions to help focus the reflection, such as: How can countries work together to reduce global hunger? What role can the United States play?)

Hunger Fact #4: Enough food is produced globally to feed everyone, but many people are hungry because they lack land to grow food or money to purchase it.

(Pause 5 minutes to allow pairs to reflect and write their intention. During this time you may want to ask a few questions to help focus the reflection, such as: What factors limit people's ability to access food?)

Hunger Fact #5: Vitamin and mineral deficiencies have been termed "hidden hunger" which affects health, growth, developmental and educational outcomes.

(Pause 5 minutes to allow pairs to reflect and write their intention. During this time you may want to ask a few questions to help focus the reflection, such as: How might the nutritional value of food be improved?)

Distribute a piece of foam or poster board to each pair and ask them to write a statement about how their participation in Food Fast helps address global hunger. Encourage pairs to think beyond raising money, and consider other ways they are addressing global hunger and poverty. Pairs may decorate their posters with drawings to depict their statements.

When everyone has finished their statements, invite each pair to stand up and explain how they are working to address global hunger and poverty. When the last pair has shared, walk in silence as a large group to the prayer space. Ask each pair to lay their board around the prayer space one at a time. Have the leader read each hunger fact and have the pairs share their intentions with the large group after each fact is read.

Once each pair has shared their intentions allow for a few minutes of quiet reflection.

Close by reading:

The kindly man will be blessed, for he gives of his sustenance to the poor.
Proverbs 22:9

Reflection: Eating is a Moral Act*

(60 minutes)

1 of 2

*Eating is a Moral Act is an initiative sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Visit ncrlc.com to learn more about their work and to access additional resources.

FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will:

- reflect on different ways we receive nourishment and where that nourishment comes from; and
- reflect on how our Catholic faith calls us to feed the hungry

Activity Summary

Use this activity towards the beginning of the Food Fast to help participants begin to think about their relationship with food and how we, as Catholics, are called to feed the hungry.

Materials Needed

- flipchart paper
- markers
- tape
- copy of *What I Ate Today* for each participant
- copy of *Eating is a Moral Act: Table Talk* for each participant
- pens/pencils
- basket

Preparation

Before the Food Fast, distribute a copy of *What I Ate Today* to each participant. Ask participants to write down what they eat in a typical day on the handout. Let participants know that they will use this information during the Food Fast as a way to reflect on food, but they will not be judged by what they eat.

Procedure

Part I – 20 Minutes

Start this activity with the entire group together.

Leader We are going to reflect on our relationship with food. We are not going to judge or question the amount of food we eat. Rather we are going to reflect on how we enjoy food in our lives, and on our traditions with food.

I would like us to think a little about where food is important in our lives. Are there times in the day, week or year that food plays a special importance?

Invite participants to share and write down their answers on the flipchart paper. Some examples include: holidays, Sunday dinners, or evening meals with family or friends.

Looking at our *What I Ate Today* handouts, please share a little about the meals you ate. What meals did you eat? What did you eat at those meals? Who was with you when you ate? Where did you eat?

Invite participants to share and record their answers on the flipchart paper. Highlight similarities in eating behavior among the group to highlight how the group relates to food.

I would like us to think a little about where our food comes from. Do we know where our food is grown or raised?

Invite participants to share and record their answers on the flipchart paper. Some examples include: local farms, corporate farms, personal gardens.

What does our relationship with food tell us about ourselves? Do we share meals with others? Do we have many options of where we can purchase or obtain food?

What other reflections would you like to share about food?

When the large group is finished sharing, divide the group into small groups with no more than 5 people per group.

Reflection: Eating is a Moral Act*

(60 minutes)

2 of 2

*Eating is a Moral Act is an initiative sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Visit ncrlc.com to learn more about their work and to access additional resources.

FACE THE FAST

Part II – 20 Minutes

Tell participants that they are going to take a deeper look at their relationship with food in a small group reflection. Distribute a copy of *Eating is a Moral Act: Table Talk* to each participant, pens or pencils, markers, and flipchart paper.

Participants should spend 15 minutes briefly discussing the questions on the handout. They don't have to respond to every question. Have each group write on flipchart paper responses to the questions:

What similarities exist between our family's table and the Eucharistic table?

- How does our faith encourage us to invite the hungry to our table?

When groups have finished talking, invite each group to share their answers. Allow time for other groups to respond and ask questions.

Part III – 20 Minutes

Leader Now that we have discussed our personal relationships with food, I'd like us to think about the members of our local and global communities who go hungry. What do you think their relationship with food is?

Let's consider:

- Do they have regular access to food?
- How do the poor get food?
- What are barriers do the poor face in accessing food?
- Can they access the same variety of food that we do?
- The poor in our local community, where does their food come from?
- The poor in our global community, where does their food come from?

Write responses on flipchart paper.

As Catholics, we have a responsibility to ensure that every person has access to basic material necessities, including food. This value is the *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable*.

How can we help the poor access food? How do we help them access a greater variety of food?

Throughout our Food Fast we will come back to our relationship to food and how this might differ from the relationship of the poor to food.

On the back of your *What I Ate Today* handout, I would like you to write a pledge about how you'll use this Food Fast as an opportunity to act on behalf of people all over the world who do not have equal and reliable access to food.

When you are finished with your pledge, please place it in the basket and return to your seat.

Allow participants time to write their pledge and place them in the basket. When everyone has returned to their seat, read the following:

We believe that feeding people is an honorable and socially just endeavor; that farming is a noble vocation that gives great pride to those involved in it.

We believe that we are responsible to promote justice in our own lives, in our community and in the world. We do this for the sake of our neighbors, future generations, and all of God's glorious creation.

We believe that all our actions have an effect on the common good of creation; that we must carefully consider the choices we make.

Amen.

This prayer comes from the National Catholic Rural Life's Ethics of Eating cards. Learn more at ncrlc.com.

Reflection: Eating is a Moral Act*

What I Ate Today

Handout

*Eating is a Moral Act is an initiative sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Visit ncrlc.com to learn more about their work and to access additional resources.

FACE THE FAST

Write down what you eat on an average day. This information will be used during our Food Fast as a way to reflect on the kinds of foods we enjoy.

Day:

Breakfast:

What did you eat?

Where did you eat?

Lunch:

What did you eat?

Where did you eat?

Dinner:

What did you eat?

Where did you eat?

General:

Who do you eat meals with?

Do you know where your food comes from?

Who prepares your food?

Reflection: Eating is a Moral Act*

Table Talk

Handout

*Eating is a Moral Act is an initiative sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Visit ncrlc.com to learn more about their work and to access additional resources.

FACE THE FAST

Reflect on your Family's Table

- Is everyone called to the table? Is everyone's presence expected at the table?
- Do you express gratitude or pray before you eat?
- Do you remember the many hands involved in bringing food to your table?
 - The hand of God
 - The hands of farmers, transporters, processors, grocers, preparers
- How is food distributed or shared at your table?
- Are you expected to try everything?
- What is your family's attitude towards throwing out food?

Think about the Eucharistic Table

- Who is called to Christ's table?
- Does Christ have any expectations of his disciples when they gather at his table?
- How are disciples expected to treat one another?

On flipchart paper, respond to these questions:

- What similarities exist between your family's table and the Eucharistic table?
- How does our faith encourage us to invite the hungry to our table?

Activity: On the Move to Build Solidarity Game

(90 minutes)

1 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Objectives

Through this activity participants will:

- engage in a play activity while learning about Catholic social teaching through seeing, reflection and action as they consider the ethics of eating.
- understand Catholic Church teachings about farming and the social justice issues related to food production and distribution.
- learn that on every level, from the individual to the global community, people are moving forward in solidarity to make choices related to food based on a faith perspective.

Activity Summary

This activity will allow participants to engage in a life-size board game. Through the moves on the board, each team will collect a letter that will help them to “build” solidarity. The participants will learn about issues related to farming, the importance of ethical eating from a faith perspective, and ways to develop solidarity through actions which contribute to social justice.

Materials Needed

- large space
- 36 sections of newspaper
- marker
- 6-sided die
- copy of *See, Reflect and Act Cards*
- 4 copies of *Letter Cards*
- 8 pieces of 8 ½ x 11 paper
- 16 pins
- tape

Procedure

Preparation

Use the newspaper sections to make the squares for the game board (10 squares x 10 squares). Following the diagram provided, designate 10 squares as “See”, 7 squares as “Reflect”, and 11 squares as “Act” by writing each word on a newspaper square with a marker. Label one square as “start”, and keep 7 squares blank.

Identify Teams

Divide your group into four teams. Have each team decide on a name and choose one team member who will move around the board as the “game piece.” Distribute 2 pieces of the 8½ x 11 sheets to each team. Have the teams make 2 simple signs with the name of their team that will be pinned on the back and front of the person who is that team’s “game piece.”

Play

Introduce the game by reading the following explanation.

We are now going to play a game that is based on the “See, Reflect and Act” model of learning. The game will help us see some injustices which exist in current food production and distribution systems.

The game will also ask us to reflect on perspectives from people of faith on these injustices; if your marker lands on a “Reflect” square, at least one member of the team needs to answer a reflection question if you want to collect the reward for that square.

Finally, the game helps you focus on some actions you can take to develop ethical eating habits and help ensure food security in the future.

Activity: On the Move to Build Solidarity Game

(90 minutes)

2 of 3

FACE THE FAST

As your team moves around the board, you will have opportunities to collect letters to spell the word SOLIDARITY. As you collect letters, your team will tape the letters up on a wall so everyone can see how you are building “Solidarity” with all those who desire social justice for farmers, agricultural workers, consumers and all those who do not have food security. (Note: if you land on a blank square, you receive no letters because we cannot build Solidarity through passivity.)

Each team’s “game piece” should go to the start square on the playing board. The “game piece” will move around the board collecting letters to “build” solidarity.

When each of the four “game pieces” is at “start”, tell them they can move in either direction after the first roll of the die; after that, they must stay in the direction they have chosen. There is no advantage to going one way or another.

Team members can take turns throwing the die for their “game piece.” As the “game piece” advances and lands on a numbered square, game cards will be read out loud.

- If it is a *See Card*, have a team member read a card aloud. The “game piece” then collects a letter.
- If it is a *Reflect Card*, have a team member read the card aloud. Each of these cards has a question; any team member can answer. After the question is answered in some way, then the team collects a letter.
- If it is an *Act Card*, have a team member read the card aloud. Ask the team how the suggested action would help to build solidarity. After the team answers, reward the team with a letter.
- If the game piece lands on a blank square, invite participants to consider that if no one sees, reflects, or acts, no one benefits. No letters are given to build Solidarity.

NOTE: After each move, the team should tape the newly added letter to the wall so the entire group can see how the team is building Solidarity.

When each team collects all the letters to “build” Solidarity, they should gather and decide on one thing that they will commit to doing that will help build solidarity with the hungry in our world.

The game is over when each team presents their commitment to the entire group.

Debrief

Take some time at the end of the game to ask participants:

- 1 Why is it important to see and reflect as well as act when considering ethical eating?
- 2 What was the most interesting thing you learned as you played the game?
- 3 How can we begin to eat more ethically: what actions can we take to be in solidarity with all those who hunger for justice?
- 4 How can we share what we have learned with our friends, families, communities?

Activity: On the Move to Build Solidarity Game

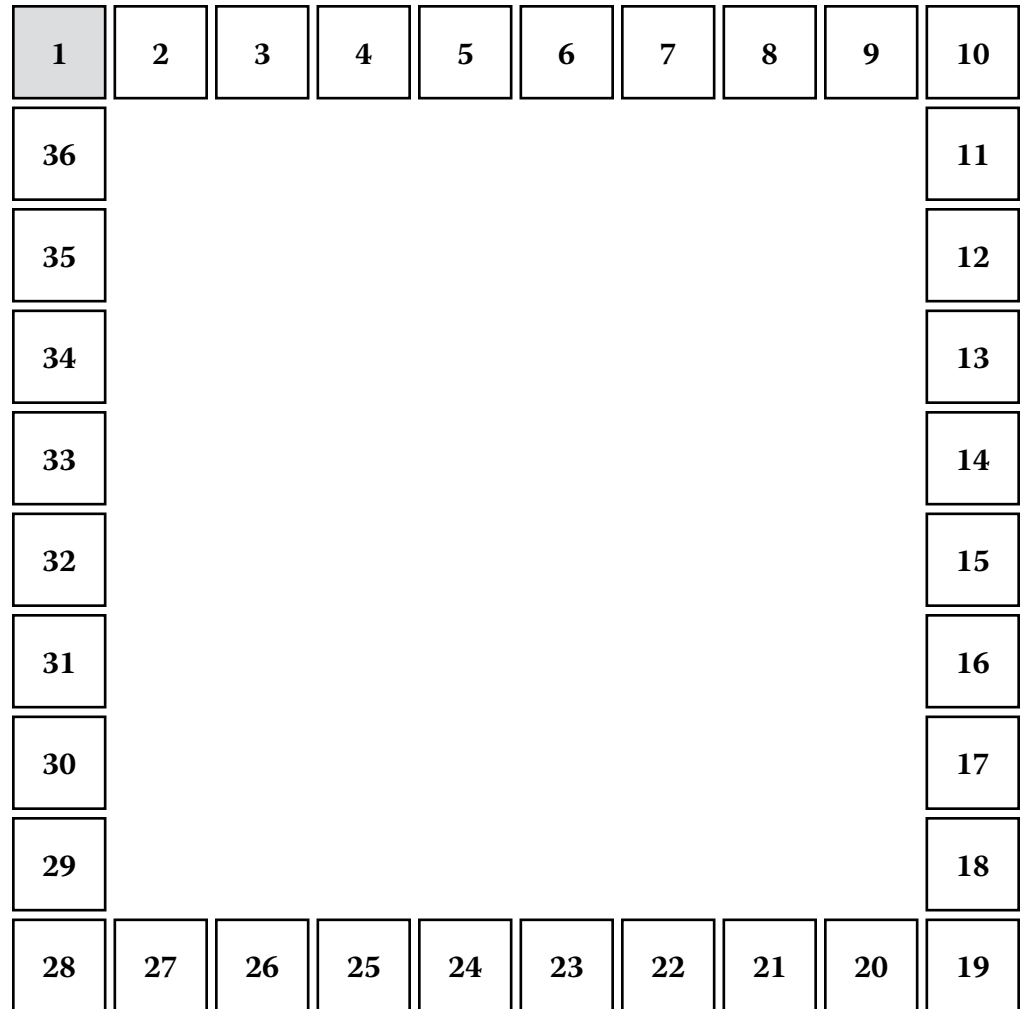
(90 minutes)

3 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Board Diagram

- | | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| 1 Start | 13 Blank | 25 Act |
| 2 See | 14 Act | 26 See |
| 3 Reflect | 15 See | 27 Blank |
| 4 Act | 16 Act | 28 Act |
| 5 Blank | 17 Reflect | 29 Reflect |
| 6 Blank | 18 Act | 30 See |
| 7 See | 19 See | 31 Blank |
| 8 Act | 20 Blank | 32 Reflect |
| 9 Reflect | 21 Act | 33 Act |
| 10 Blank | 22 See | 34 See |
| 11 Act | 23 See | 35 Act |
| 12 See | 24 Reflect | 36 Reflect |



See

Many small family farms are going out of business because they have trouble competing with corporate farms that are able to produce more food at a lower cost.

See

Catholic Relief Services works in many isolated, remote areas with harsh climates and fragile, degraded ecosystems. These areas were not farmed in the past because of undependable, hostile climates and poor natural resources, but are farmed now because the poor have no other option.

See

The corporate farming sector (large factory farms) is able to produce food on a large scale and produce more food than ever as farming technology improves. However, with this growth comes an increase in soil and water contamination.

See

Enough food is produced globally to feed everyone, but many people are hungry because they lack land to grow food or money to purchase it.

See

Agricultural workers are low wage earners. The seasonal nature of their work and the inadequacy of the minimum wage keep most living in poverty.

See

Catholic Relief Services is the largest private distributor of U.S. food aid, second only to the UN's World Food Program. CRS uses food aid for emergency situations like natural disasters and famines, and to foster food security through long-term development programs.

See

Community gardens in neighborhoods and on working farms close to cities and towns are helpful for children and families seeking to learn about agriculture. Families can produce fresh foods for themselves or purchase it from local growers. These community-based food projects create a more diverse and healthy food supply – one that helps individuals improve the quality of the food they eat and builds connections between urban and rural communities.

Reflect

REFLECT
Pope Benedict XVI wrote: "We cannot remain indifferent to what is happening around us, for the deterioration of any one part of the planet affects us all." **Why, as Catholics, can we not remain indifferent to what happens to the Earth?**

See

Small family farms in the tropics face increasing difficulties such as the effects of climate change, increased competition for limited resources (land, water, etc.), natural disasters, and wars, as well as the negative impacts from more complicated issues such as biotechnology, geopolitics, the information age, and global marketplaces.

Reflect

The first measure of both a healthy food system and a responsible society is the capacity to provide for the basic nutritional needs of all members of society. **How do the United States and the world measure up?**

Reflect

Pope Benedict declared in 2009 that “food is to be considered a universal right without distinction or discrimination,” and that members of the global community must develop a “sense of solidarity” if this right is to be respected. **Why is building solidarity so crucial to ensuring the right to food?**

Reflect

While large corporate farms limit production to one or two crops, small farms contribute to biological diversity with multiple crop systems, which is better for the soil. Catholic Bishops in Indiana have declared that “small family farms promote the variety of forms of God’s Creation—biodiversity—which is a gift of the Creator we must cherish.” **What are ways Catholics can honor the gifts of the Creator through the food they eat?**

Reflect

In a statement on World Hunger in 1996, the Church’s Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* voiced its concern that over-farming land and constantly pushing for higher and higher farm yields through chemical interventions is damaging the soil and the environment. **How is the concern for the environment tied to sustainable (long-term) production of food for all?**

Reflect

Pope Benedict XVI said, “*Hunger is the most cruel and concrete sign of poverty. Opulence and waste are no longer acceptable when the tragedy of hunger is assuming ever greater proportions.*” **How can we work to end hunger in our world?**

Reflect

In the Old Testament book of Exodus, the Israelites were given manna, bread from heaven, to sustain them on their journey. They were told that each day “the people shall go out and gather *enough* for that day.” In the New Testament, Jesus provides *enough* food for a large crowd to share. **How do we determine what is “enough” food for ourselves and for others?**

Act

You **learn** about farmers in other countries through stories from Catholic Relief Services and how you can help make a difference.

Reflect

Since the first Catholic social teaching encyclical in 1891, the Church has declared that food is a right that everyone has because we are all created in the image of God. The U.S Bishops declared in 2003: “Providing food for all is a Gospel imperative, not an economic venture.” **If we really believe that food is a basic human right, should food be treated as any other commodity?**

Act

You are beginning to learn about your local farm environments, including what is grown locally, and you are buying **locally grown foods** that are in season in your region at farmers markets.

Reflect

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference has declared that consumers have rights that our food system and policy makers must respect: “The right to food means the right to safe, nutritious food.” **Do you have access to safe, nutritious food? Do the poor in our community and around the world have the same access?**

Act

To protect the environment, and people, from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, you buy **organically grown** food whenever possible; you cut down on food that is not healthy and use the savings to buy healthy organic food.

Act

You **identify** a community-supported agriculture program in your area and **receive** fresh vegetables and fruits throughout the growing seasons from a regional small farmers group.

Act

You **extend your concern** for all of God's creatures by supporting farms and food producers who treat animals humanely.

Act

You ask your family, friends and faith communities to send letters to local supermarket managers, **advocating** that they stock more locally produced food in season and more organic foods at lower prices.

Act

You **research** where your school gets the food it provides, learn about the growing "farm-to-school" movement which has spread to hundreds of schools and colleges, and **organize** to bring food from local family farms into the school cafeteria.

Act

You **advocate** for changes in farming policies that impact farmers in the United States and around the world.

Act

You buy **Fair Trade** coffee, chocolate, and other items to support small farmers in other countries.

Act

You **support** "urban farming" efforts on empty lots transformed into gardens, efforts that are helping people in poverty grow some of their own food.

Act

You **support the rights** of agricultural workers through groups such as the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

Act

You **plant** a vegetable garden with your school, church, or neighborhood community and share the harvests with groups that provide food for the hungry.

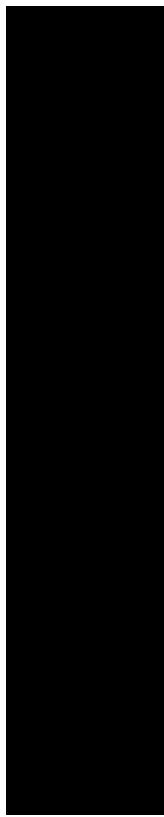
Act

You remember to **reflect and pray** before eating, to give thanks for the food you do have, to remember all the workers who have contributed to this food and to pray for all those who do not have enough healthy food.

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Activity: Food around the World

(2 hours)

1 of 3

FACE THE EAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will:

- learn about food in different countries
- learn how Catholic Relief Services helps people to access food
- examine access to food in different parts of the world and reflect on our own access to food

Activity Summary

This activity begins with a discussion about food that is eaten in different countries around the world and how food security plays a role in the foods people eat. Participants will discuss ways to help people become more food secure, using the work of Catholic Relief Services as an example. Finally, using a case study, participants will prepare presentations about global access to food, reasons why people experience chronic hunger and propose potential solutions.

Note: This activity contains two parts. Each part can stand alone.

Materials Needed

- *Food around the World* PowerPoint
- computer
- projector
- screen or wall to project presentation
- copy of *Barriers to Food Security Cards*
- copy of *Solutions to Food Insecurity Cards*
- *Case Studies*, one per small group
- images of different foods (see: *Suggested Images of Food*)
- pens/pencils
- markers
- magazines
- newspapers
- construction paper
- art supplies
- glue

Procedure

Part I – Food around the World (30 minutes)

Set up a computer and projector to show the *Food around the World* PowerPoint presentation. If you are unable to project the presentation, provide copies for participants. Make sure to print a copy of the presentation with the notes for yourself. These notes will help you to explain to participants what they are seeing in each slide.

While viewing each slide, ask participants the following questions:

- What food do you see? Are you familiar with this food?
- Are you surprised by anything you see? (e.g., how food is prepared, how food is eaten)

Having studied images of food from around the world, lead the participants in a discussion about food security and how Catholic Relief Services helps communities around the world access food on a regular basis to reduce hunger.

Begin this section by defining food security.

Food security means that people have access to sufficient food to lead an active and healthy life at all times. When a person does not consume a sufficient quantity (or quality) of food, we say they are food insecure.

Activity: Food around the World

(2 hours)

2 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Invite participants to share some reasons why people might not be food secure. Examples include: natural disasters, conflict, access to markets, poor harvests. Encourage participants to refer to the images of food they saw in the presentation as well as the way the food was distributed and prepared. (*Option:* Invite participants to read information from the *Barriers to Food Security Cards*) Can participants think of other barriers to food security?

Explain to participants:

Catholic Relief Services, the international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the U.S., works in more than 100 countries to help the poor and vulnerable access nutritious food on a regular basis.

Invite participants to share ways that CRS helps communities become food secure. Examples include: education, microfinance, agriculture programs, peacebuilding. (*Option:* Invite participants to read information from the *Solutions to Food Insecurity Cards*) Can participants think of other solutions to food insecurity?

Part II –Case Studies (90 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups of 5-7 people and give each group a *Case Study*. Each *Case Study* contains information about a family and what kind of food they eat. The *Case Study* also presents challenges the family faces in remaining food secure.

Note: More than one small group may use a case study if you have a very large group.

Ask groups to read through their case study and briefly discuss:

- How is this food different from what we eat? How is it similar?
- What do the similarities and differences tell us?
- How are the lives of the people in the story different from our lives?

Each group should prepare a presentation about the family and country they have studied. The presentation can include a collage, story boards, a book or a skit.

Each presentation should:

- Describe the family
- Explain why the family is not food secure
- Propose a solution to their food insecurity

Distribute magazines, newspapers, images of food (see: *Suggested Images of Food*), markers, glue and other supplies to help groups prepare their presentations.

Allow each group 5-10 minutes to present their story.

Debrief

When all groups have presented, invite the large group to discuss the following questions:

- What have you learned about access to food?
- How does our access to food differ from that of the poor?
- What are the similarities and differences in the varieties of food available to people in various communities around the world?
- As Catholics, what are our responsibilities to assist others in securing a reliable access to food?

Activity: Food around the World

(2 hours)

3 of 3

FACE THE FAST

Suggested Images of Food

Use images from the *Food around the World* PowerPoint or find some examples online, download and print pictures of the following foods for participants to use in their presentations.

- Cassava
- Okra
- Potato
- Beans
- Peanuts
- Lentils
- Sesame Seeds
- Sorghum
- Barley
- Millet
- Rice
- Corn
- Fish
- Goat
- Chicken
- Guinea fowl
- Oil
- Bulgur Wheat
- Tortillas
- Mango
- Papaya
- Banana
- Plantain

Activity: Food around the World

Barriers to Food Security Cards

FACE THE FAST

Barriers to Food Security

Natural Disasters

Natural disasters cause hunger by:

- Destroying crops (e.g., floods, drought)
- Forcing people from their homes and causing them to move to populated areas which puts a strain on food supplies
- Preventing food from getting to people or preventing people from getting to markets to buy food

Barriers to Food Security

Conflict

Conflict causes uncertainty for communities. Members of the same community sometimes fight against one another, preventing some from accessing already limited resources. An outside force can disrupt a community already suffering from poverty. Oftentimes, people are displaced during conflict, which puts a strain on limited resources in the areas where they relocate. Conflict reduces people's access to food and other resources they need to live.

Barriers to Food Security

Failed Harvests

Subsistence farmers grow the food their family will need for an entire year. Any disruption to their harvests means that a family will not have enough food to feed themselves. In addition, they will not have any surplus to generate income. Without income, children cannot go to school and families cannot save money to purchase their basic necessities.

Barriers to Food Security

Access to Markets

In the developing world, people do not always have access to markets where they can sell their surplus food or other goods. Sometimes, infrastructure does not exist to take goods from a community to a market for sale. Other times, farmers are unable to bargain for fair prices for their goods, which reduces their ability to generate an income.

Activity: Food around the World

Solutions to Food Insecurity Cards

FACE THE FAST

Solutions to Food Insecurity

Education

Education improves people's ability to secure food. Farmers receive training to improve their crop yields and to bargain for fairer prices at the market where they sell their surplus crops. Education also raises the potential that children will develop skills to help them earn higher incomes as adults.

Solutions to Food Insecurity

Microfinance

Microfinance helps poorer members of a community start their own businesses by providing access to credit. Many of the people who benefit from microfinance are women who traditionally have fewer opportunities. A new business, backed by a community loan, can increase the income potential for a family and can supplement their other income-generating activities. A family with more income can purchase food when crops fail, send their children to school, and buy necessities including medicine.

Solutions to Food Insecurity

Agriculture Programs

Helping farmers improve their agricultural techniques allows farming families to become more food secure and brings more food into markets. Training farmers to diversify their crops and livestock helps to reduce the shock to their farm if one crop fails.

Solutions to Food Insecurity

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding projects respond to the root causes of conflict. When conflict no longer exists, members of a community can focus on their lives and ways to support their families. Communities can jointly address how to provide access to limited resources.

Activity: Food around the World

Case Studies

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Case Study: Niger

Family:

Habsu Boubacar and her husband live in Toudoun Jaka, a village in Niger, with their 4 children.

Food:

Millet or sorghum dishes prepared as porridge and covered with a vegetable sauce that occasionally contains small pieces of meat.



Photo by Lane Hartill/CRS

Situation:

Habsu Boubacar has learned how to mix water and millet husks—the stuff she normally feeds the goats and sheep—to make a sludgy drink. She has learned how to gulp the brown, gritty stuff beverage so the bitterness doesn't sit too long on her tongue. She has gotten used to the feel of it in her stomach; it takes up space, so she can feed the real food to her 4 children.

What she hasn't gotten used to is *anza*. It's famine food. The plant's fruit is so bitter and tough she must boil it several times to get the bitterness out of it. Then she adds tobacco to soften it. But she eats it, like most people do, when there's nothing else.

The rain never came to Toudoun Jaka last year, and the land withered and cracked. Habsu's millet crops shriveled and died. She wasn't able to harvest grain for herself or her 4 children.

She and her husband grappled with a single question: Do we stay or leave Toudoun Jaka? Habsu's husband, along with other men in the village, decided to go to the capital, Niamey, where they could work as part-time livestock butchers. The little cash Habsu's husband could send home would partially cover the grocery bill. God, they figured, would take care of the rest.

Habsu sold off 3 goats and 3 cows—all listless and skeletal—in order to pay for food. Only 2 goats remain.

Habsu's children eat nothing but millet mixed with water, a chalky-tasting porridge with little nutritional value. Habsu can't remember the last time she served them anything else. No fruit, meat or vegetables. Just millet porridge for every meal.

The millet Habsu planted has withered and is covered over by blowing sand. Perhaps the rain will come and soak the ground, and the millet will grow. But even then, nothing will be ready to harvest for another couple of months. So Habsu has a backup plan: the stack of dishes near her sagging four-poster bed. She will sell them to buy food.

Activity: Food around the World

Case Studies

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Case Study: Afghanistan

Family:

Gulpasha and Munir live with their 2 children in Farah, a village in Afghanistan.

Food:

Maize, barley or rice served with yogurt, nuts or vegetables.

Situation:

Gulpasha and Munir's son, Sadiqullah, became weaker and weaker because there was no food to feed him.

They traveled 185 miles from their village to the city to seek help because their village has no medicine or doctor. They had to leave their 3-year-old daughter, also weak and malnourished, back at home.

With less means to afford basic necessities, more families are selling their valuable livestock just to pay for bread. Over the past several months, Gulpasha and Munir were forced to sell their livestock to pay for food. Employment options are scarce in Farah. A drought wiped out this season's crops, leaving Gulpasha and Munir's wheat farm—and their pockets—empty. One by one, Munir began selling his animals at a fraction of their value.

"We are not growing enough food and we cannot afford food; the result is our sick children. Many other families—hundreds of children like this—are in our villages," says Munir.

With no wheat or livestock left to sell, Munir is considering going to Iran to find work, most likely as a construction worker. It would be a risk.

Migration within Afghanistan—from country to city—is also seen as a threat by some people in Herat City. They fear the newcomers may deplete more of the waning local food stocks. People who were recently subsistence farmers are now working the streets; they are coming up to car windows and asking strangers for help.



Photo by Agustinus Wibowo for CRS

Activity: Food around the World

Case Studies

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Case Study: Democratic Republic of Congo

Family:

Jolie is 22 and lives in the Walikale province of Congo with her mother and siblings.

Food:

Fufu (a thick paste made from potatoes, cassava, or other starchy food) served with sweet potatoes, perch, bananas, plantains or other vegetables or fruits in season.



Photo by Lane Hartill/CRS

Situation

Jolie's mother is in the hospital with stomach cysts.

Jolie has another problem. There is a bag of flour sitting in the dirt outside her house. Jolie walked 2 hours down the road to buy it. She paid about \$8 and turned around and hiked back with it on her head. Now it's sitting in the sun, and nobody is buying it. But even if it is sold, the 5-cent profit on each cup she sells doesn't go far.

"If people don't buy," she says, "we don't eat."

Or pay for school fees. The principal at her junior high kicked her out of school because she is behind a few months in tuition. But that's not unusual. She's getting used to it. It happened in 2002, 2004 and 2007.

But she always found a way to go back. It doesn't bother her that she's 22 years old and only in her sophomore year of high school. Staying in school is what's important. And taking care of her siblings. But this time, it's going to be harder than usual.

"When I run out of money, I'm really going to be in a bind," she says. "I might have to marry." She knows former classmates who accepted the money and the man, and are now stuck in a life they detest.

Jolie's life mirrors that of hundreds of thousands of young people across the Democratic Republic of the Congo who can't pay school fees. It's especially bad here, in this part of Walikale province. Close to 90,000 displaced families live near Ndjingala where they can find work in mines. Entire villages picked up and moved here from surrounding areas after militias rolled in and destroyed their homes. Almost all of the displaced people are poor and struggle to pay school fees.

Half the children who start school in Congo don't finish their studies.

Activity: Food around the World

Case Studies

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Case Study: Bangladesh

Family:

Khalam, his wife and 4 sons.

Food:

Rice served with lentils, known as dal.
Meals sometimes include fish.



Photo by Debashish Shom for CRS

Situation:

When Bengali fisherman Khalam saw the remains of his boat along the sand the morning after Cyclone Sidr, only one thought crossed his mind: he wished he were dead.

These coastal and predominantly fishing communities were the hardest hit by the cyclone due to the tidal surge that violently rushed a mile inland, tearing apart generations of people's work. For Khalam, that means that, when he looks out at the empty coast line, he sees nothing he can call his own — no source of food to feed his family that night; no way to earn a living the next day; no sense of calm for his anxiety about keeping his family afloat.

Like many fishermen, Khalam, 45, never went to school; his four sons (the oldest is 19 years old) have never sat in a classroom. "If I send my children to school, who will help me with the work on my boat?" he asks. Instead, they are masters of the water, their lives centered entirely on currents and the fishing potential in a bay that is just a minute's walk from where they sleep. Fishing is a dignified way of life and Khalam and his family used to earn enough — an average of \$2 a day — to get by.

"Before the cyclone, we had no problem. I caught fish, sold it, [and] my living was going on in such a way. Until we go [fishing] I don't know how to live or survive," he says.

Without a boat, and with only sand where his house once stood, Khalam feels like he's sinking. A new boat, even modest in size at 30 feet long by 4 feet wide, will cost as much as \$520. Fishing nets are the real blow, given the expensive imported materials. One net costs as much as \$1,000. Khalam already owed \$75 for his previous boat, and without any savings, his debt is likely to skyrocket.

"I have four children — sons — and a wife. I am considering a loan, but it will be on the high interest. The loan sharks ask for payment in fish and pay at the bottom rate," he says.

"Without a boat, how will we live? This is our only profession," he says. "With our boat broken, our life is broken."

Activity: Food around the World

Case Studies

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Case Study: Guatemala

Family:

Eleven-month-old Brandon Sandoval and his parents

Food:

Corn tortillas served with rice and beans.



Photo by Robyn Fieser/CRS

Situation:

Brandon weighs just 9.5 pounds. Eleven days ago he was admitted to the National Hospital Nicolasa Cruz in the department of Jalapa. He is one of 16 children currently being treated for malnutrition and related illnesses at the hospital.

Since May 2009, Guatemala's East Central Pacific departments—an area known as the *Corredor Seco* (dry corridor)—have experienced irregular rainfall and drought. At least 25 children in the area have died of malnutrition and thousands of families, their crops devastated by the drought, run the risk of going hungry.

According to local reports, families in the departments of Baja Verapaz, Chiquimula, El Progreso, Jalapa, Jutiapa, Santa Rosa and Zacapa have lost between 50 and 80 percent of their yearly bean and maize crops. Many attribute this year's erratic rainfall and excessively hot, dry conditions in Guatemala to an "El Niño" phenomenon intensified by global climate change.

"This current crisis highlights how poor farmers are unable to grow sufficient food due to shifting weather patterns and the deforestation of their land. Their families, especially the children, suffer. In addition to providing critical food assistance in this time of need, we must also support farmers in recovering from the failed harvest and reducing their vulnerability in the future," says Karen Latham, head of CRS programs in Guatemala.

Activity: Food for Thought

(60 minutes)

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Objectives

Through this activity participants will:

- realize that the Catholic social teaching principle *Option for the Poor* challenges us to be aware of the hunger, food insecurity, malnutrition and poor nutrition that the poor face every day.
- learn how different communities have a stake in and make a contribution to food security issues around the world.
- explore ways that Food Fast participants can begin to think about ethical eating as they work to promote the common good in their own communities.

Activity Summary

Through role play, participants will learn about the responsibilities and perspectives of various community groups and organizations that must work together to resolve issues related to food security.

Materials Needed

- copy of *Role Play Cards*
- copy of *Food Situation: What's your response?* for each group

Procedure

Divide the large group into 6 small groups. Give each group a one *Role Play Card* and *Food Situation: What's your response?*. Each small group will assume the role identified on their card. They should read the description and think about how their role in the larger community (both local and global) relates to the general population's ability to access food.

Give groups 20 minutes to read about their role, ask clarifying questions, and consider how their role relates to the food situation. Each group should also come up with a response to the situation. Each group should identify a representative to speak for them.

Bring all groups together and read aloud *Food Situation: What's your response?*. Invite each group representative to explain his/her group's position related to the situation.

After each representative has presented, have the groups work together to come to a common decision to resolve the situation.

- What actions or factors need to change in each role so that all people have more reliable access to nutritious food?
- What behaviors should continue or change in each role?
- How can a preferential option for the poor be a guide for change?

Remind participants that, in the real world, groups must often compromise with one another, but encourage them not to compromise so that the poor suffer. Allow the discussion to continue for 30 minutes. Moderate as necessary.

Activity: Food for Thought

Role Play Cards

1 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Urban Farmer

You are young adult members of an urban parish, and you have developed a program that plants vegetable gardens in abandoned lots where row houses have been demolished. The neighborhood has high poverty and crime rates and no place to buy healthy food—there are no supermarkets in the area, only local stores with canned and packaged foods. Fresh vegetables and fruits are a real luxury here. Your group teaches local children to be “farmers” and to grow food that they will eat together as a “farm” community. They are also able to take extra food home to their families. You teach sustainable methods of growing produce and taking care of the soil. You have recently received a grant for a greenhouse, and you plan to diversify and expand your plant growth. You also connect ecological and liturgical seasons, so you celebrate holidays and feast days with awareness of the gifts of growing food and the abundance of the earth.

Community Gardener

You have always loved to garden, and you have decided, with other members of your parish, to locate a large area of land for a community garden. You invite both young people and retired adults to have plots of land in your large planting space. This multi-generational group fosters community as participants share seeds, tools, responsibilities and conversations. Older adults receive access to fresh food, companionship, and help with their gardening efforts. Youth and young adults learn gardening skills, healthy eating habits, and lessons and wisdom from a wide range of adults.

Commercial Farmer

You are a farmer who owns, operates and manages a large, commercial farm. In an increasingly industrialized and integrated food production market, you are one link in the chain of crop cultivation, food processing and product distribution. You understand that global trade can affect the price of food, and you are concerned that imports will impact the value of your crops. You also understand that the export of your crops to other countries likewise affects foreign, local markets. However, in order to support your family you must sell your crops for the highest price possible. Your crop yields are still subject to unpredictable weather patterns and unfavorable growing seasons; although you have invested in agricultural technologies that help to reduce the impact of these events.

Activity: Food for Thought

Role Play Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Parish Youth Group Member

You are a member of your parish's youth group, and you regularly volunteer with a soup kitchen. You understand the importance of helping people who are homeless and hungry gain access to regular, nutritious meals, and you practice this commitment by serving those in your local community. You are also concerned about poverty and hunger in developing countries around the world. You want your faith community to respond to the needs of the poor both in the United States and around the world.

Catholic Relief Services Staff

You are an agriculture expert at Catholic Relief Services. You help farmers around the world improve their crop yields through alternative farming methods, improved seed choices and better access to markets. You have seen firsthand how helping farmers change the way they cultivate crops increases the amount of food they can produce. Using new methods, farmers are able to increase their income and ensure that their families eat nutritious foods on a regular basis.

Subsistence Farmer

You are a subsistence farmer, and you are only able to feed your family when you make a good harvest. In productive years, you have a surplus of crops, which you bring to a local market as a way to earn an income. The income allows you to buy necessities for your families, send your children to school and save money for the future. But you are also vulnerable to changes in the weather, to delicate socio-economic-political relations in your country, and to a variety of other external factors. If any one factor disrupts this fragile equilibrium, you will not have enough food or income to support your family.

Activity: Food for Thought

Handout:

Food Situation:

What's your response?

FACE THE FAST

Food Situation

Nearly **one billion** people, or about one sixth of the planet's population, are suffering from hunger. Lack of employment, minimal access to markets, limited agricultural technologies and expertise, poor water sanitation and health, illiteracy, soil infertility, environmental degradation, droughts, floods, and harsh weather conditions are some of the factors that contribute to food insecurity issues around the world.

Oftentimes, poor families must consume less nutritious foods in order to survive; otherwise, they will not have any food at all. As food prices continue to increase, the poor will have to make more difficult choices about what they can eat.

What's your response?

Reflect on the role your group has been given and consider how your role is impacted by the availability of food. Select a speaker to represent your group. Develop your response to the following questions:

- How are you bringing food to a community?
- What role do you have in ensuring people have access to food?
- Are you guided by a preferential option for the poor? Why or why not?
- Who are your partners in your work?
- How can your group improve people's access to food in your local and global communities?

Preferential Option for the Poor

The Gospel calls us to assist those most in need and to reach out to the most vulnerable members of society. The *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable* reminds us that as Catholics we have a responsibility to ensure that every person has access to basic material necessities, including food.

Activity: Go Eat Ethically: A Card Game

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Objectives

Through this activity participants will:

- learn about the practice of ethical eating.
- consider how our daily choices can support ethical eating, contribute to the proper use of Creation, and build solidarity with those working for justice in the food sector and those suffering from food insecurity.

Activity Summary

This activity is based on *Old Maid* and *Go Fish*, the children's card games. The object is to gather suits of 4 similar cards, avoiding the one negative card (in this case, *Hunger*), until all of the player's cards are gone. (The suits include: descriptions of healthy foods and products, goods from small local farms, and activities that promote environmental sustainability and justice for farmers and agricultural workers.)

Materials Needed

- decks of "Go Eat Ethically" cards, made by photocopying the sheets provided and cutting out cards from cover stock or heavy paper

Procedure

Divide participants into groups of 4. If you have an odd number of participants, groups may contain 5 members.

Introduce the card game.

Each deck has 33 cards, including 8 suits of four and one *Hunger* card. (Note: Each card in the suit is not identical, so players must pay attention to the suit title on each card.)

Each player should receive 5 cards; the remaining cards should be piled in the middle of the players. Players will try to assemble suits of four.

If any player receives 4 cards of the same suit in his/her first hand, the suit should be laid down. If the player does not have 4 cards of the same suit, he/she should ask if other players have any cards from that suit.

If another player has a desired card, he/she must give it to the player who requested it. The receiving player then has another turn.

If the other players do not have a match, they say: "Go Eat Ethically." The requesting player must pick up a card from the deck.

Players cannot ask for cards from suits they are not holding.

Players should read all card contents when laying them down.

The game is played until all the suits are down and one person is left holding the odd card out, *Hunger*. The player holding this card has lost the game.

Debrief

When each group has finished the game, group members should reflect on the statements on their cards. Ask the participants to discuss what they found interesting as they played this game and what they learned about eating ethically.

When all groups have finished, ask a member from each group to share highlights from their discussion. Invite participants to ask any questions they may have about the concept of eating ethically.

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

You are What You Choose

Choose to learn about the causes
of hunger

You are What You Choose

Choose to learn about how you can act
to end hunger

You are What You Choose

Choose to eat locally-grown, healthy food

You are What You Choose

Choose to support justice for small
farmers and agricultural workers

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Reflective Food Shopping

Avoid buying processed, over-packaged foods as much as possible

Reflective Food Shopping

Support farmers' markets and food co-ops

Reflective Food Shopping

Join a local group that pre-pays farmers to deliver fresh-picked foods to members on a weekly basis

Reflective Food Shopping

Support food stores that support just working conditions

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Reflective Eating

Eat mindfully – find out where your
food comes from

Reflective Eating

Plan meals carefully, aware of the
ethics of eating

Reflective Eating

Pray after meals to bless all who those
grew, picked, and distributed your food

Reflective Eating

Pray before meals to give thanks
for the food

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Fair Trade Food: The Taste of Justice
Fair Trade jam and jelly

Fair Trade Food: The Taste of Justice
Fair Trade Chocolate

Fair Trade Food: The Taste of Justice
Fair Trade nuts

Fair Trade Food: The Taste of Justice
Fair Trade Coffee

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

The Fruit of the Vine: Helping Farmers
Farmers in developing countries
receive high quality seeds that yield
better harvests

The Fruit of the Vine: Helping Farmers
Buying from local farmers helps
your community

The Fruit of the Vine: Helping Farmers
Organizations like Catholic Relief Services
teach farmers new techniques to
improve their farms

The Fruit of the Vine: Helping Farmers
Diversifying crops ensures a farmer will
have a crop to both eat and sell, however
many farmers don't have this option

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

School Lunches in Developing Countries

School feeding programs are often the only source of healthy food for children in poor communities

School Lunches in Developing Countries

School lunches, provided by organizations like Catholic Relief Services, reduce childhood malnutrition

School Lunches in Developing Countries

Communities in developing countries come together to ensure children receive meals at school

School Lunches in Developing Countries

Girls who attend schools with feeding programs receive food to take home as a reward for attendance

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

More Land for Growing Staple Foods

Grains

More Land for Growing Staple Foods

Beans

More Land for Growing Staple Foods

Vegetables

More Land for Growing Staple Foods

Rice

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Sharing the Bounty: Foods to Donate
Organic canned goods

Sharing the Bounty: Foods to Donate
Fresh vegetables

Sharing the Bounty: Foods to Donate
Whole grain pasta, breads

Sharing the Bounty: Foods to Donate
Fresh fruits

Activity:
Go Eat Ethically:
Playing Cards

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FACE THE FAST

Hunger

Hunger

Hunger

Hunger

World Hunger and Poverty Data

Use this data to set the context of your Food Fast. This data is also available in a PowerPoint at foodfast.org.

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FACE THE FAST

The state of world hunger and poverty in 2011:

- Today our world houses nearly 6.9 billion people.
- 25.2% of the world's population lives in extreme poverty, meaning they live on less than \$1.25 per day. In the developing world, 1.4 billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day.
- Approximately 48% of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day.

Hunger

- 925 million people worldwide are hungry.
- Nearly 16,000 children die of hunger-related causes each day.
- 25% of children under 5 are undernourished.

Water & Sanitation

- 13% of the world's population does not have access to clean water.
- Worldwide, 40% of the population, or more than 2.6 billion people, lack one of life's most basic needs: an adequate sanitation facility – defined as one that hygienically prevents human contact with sewage.

Education

- 11.5% of children are not enrolled in school.
- 101 million primary school-aged children are not enrolled in school. *United Nations*
- Of children not enrolled in school, 53% are girls. *United Nations*

HIV and AIDS

- 33.4 million people are living with HIV, of whom 22.4 million live in sub-Saharan Africa. *United Nations*
- An estimated 17.5 million children (under age 18) lost one or both parents to AIDS in 2008. 14.1 million of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa. *United Nations*

Unless otherwise noted, data comes from Our Common Interest: Ending Hunger and Malnutrition, 2011 Hunger Report, Bread for the World. Available at www.hungerreport.org.

Justice and Solidarity Quotes

Use these quotes to decorate the retreat space or during quiet, reflection time. The quotes are also available in a PowerPoint presentation at foodfast.org.

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FACE THE FAST

No one may claim the name of Christian and be comfortable in the face of hunger, homelessness, insecurity, and injustice found in this country and the world.

—*Economic Justice for All* #27, U.S. Bishops, 1986

Our mission demands that we should courageously denounce injustice, with charity, prudence and firmness.

—*Justice in the World* #57, World Synod of Catholic Bishops, 1971

A consistent theme of Catholic social teaching is the option or love of preference for the poor. Today, this preference has to be expressed in worldwide dimensions, embracing the immense numbers of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care, and those without hope.

—*On Social Concern* [Solicitududo Rei Socialis] #42, Pope John Paul II, 1987

Love for others, and especially for the poor, is made concrete by promoting justice.

—*The Hundredth Year* [Centesimus Annus] #58, Pope John Paul II, 1991

The way society responds to the needs of the poor through its public policies is the litmus test of its justice or injustice.

—*Economic Justice for All* #123, U.S. Bishops, 1986

I see in my neighbor the person of Jesus Christ.

—*Saint Gerard Majella*

It is to those who have the most need of us that we ought to show our love more especially.

—*Saint Francis de Sales*

Actions speak louder than words; let your words teach and your actions speak.

—*Saint Anthony of Padua*

We must love our neighbor as being made in the image of God and as an object of His love.

—*Saint Vincent de Paul*

Let me sow and another eat, and let my crops be uprooted.

—*Job* 31:8

The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.

—*2 Timothy* 2:6

Open your mouth, decree what is just, defend the needy and the poor!

—*Proverbs* 31:9

... God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

—*2 Corinthians* 9:7-9

Story of the Fair Trade Giveaway Item

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FACE THE FAST

This year's Food Fast giveaway item is a soapstone pendant made by artisans working with Nyabigena Soapstone Carvers Cooperative in Kenya. The pendant is fairly traded, meaning that the artisans earn a fair price for their products, receive access to credit and training, and maintain long-term relationships with CRS' partner, SERRV.

Kisii, a city in western Kenya, is surrounded by soapstone quarries and is well-known both for the quality of its soapstone and the skill of its carvers. Nyamarambe, a small village near Kisii, is the home of the 120-member Nyabigena Soapstone Carvers Cooperative. This civic-minded group has been providing work for its members while also giving back to its community.

A source of great pride for the cooperative is the Nyabigena Mixed Day Academy, an elementary school which opened in January 2007. Using the proceeds from the sale of soapstone crafts, the school can now educate 150 students.



Photo courtesy of SERRV

The cooperative has also sponsored a women's literacy program, a project which supports school dropouts. In addition, the group set up two wells which are providing clean water and saving women from making long walks to gather water.

"I am very happy for the work I get, especially from SERRV. The steady work and prompt payments helped me to improve the living standards of my family. I hope to receive more work, so my life and the lives of my children will change even more and more for the better." —Patrick Ombui, soapstone carver and father of five

Online Resources

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FACE THE FAST

- Visit the **CRS Food Fast website** (foodfast.org) for additional resources, activities, and tips on planning your Food Fast.
- **Become a Fan of Catholic Relief Services' Food Fast on Facebook.** Post pictures, videos and best practices from your Food Fast on the fan page, receive updates from CRS, and connect with other Food Fast coordinators and participants from around the country.
- Visit the **Catholic Relief Services YouTube Channel** (youtube.com/user/CatholicRelief) for short videos about the work of Catholic Relief Services around the world. Select Food Fast from the right side menu for videos specific to this year's program.

Music

This year, in collaboration with Oregon Catholic Press' Spirit and Song, CRS is providing a Food Fast soundtrack. Visit foodfast.org to download music from some of your favorite Catholic musicians.

Additional Online Resources

Use resources from CRS and CRS' partners to enhance your Food Fast or as a way to continue integrating global issues into your ministry.

- **Catholic Relief Services** (crs.org) Information on CRS' work, stories about the people CRS serves, and opportunities to get involved in CRS activities in the United States.
- **CRS Education: Going Global with Youth** (education.crs.org) is a gateway to lesson plans, simulation activities, prayer services, and other resources that explore global issues through the lens of solidarity and Catholic social teaching.
- **Catholics Confront Global Poverty** (crs.org/globalpoverty) Advocate to end hunger, disease, conflict, and other issues that affect the lives of our brothers and sisters worldwide.
- **National Catholic Rural Life Conference** (ncrlc.com) Provides resources on domestic agriculture and the ethics of eating.
- **National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry** (nfcym.org) Offers resources, training opportunities, conferences and updates for those who work in the Catholic youth ministry community.
- **Education for Justice** (educationforjustice.org) at the Center of Concern offers a wide range of resources to help promote Catholic social teaching and social justice issues through interactive group activities and discussions.
- **JusticeWalking** (justfaith.org) is JustFaith Ministries program for older teenagers. This 12-session experiential process brings adults and Catholic teenagers into small communities to experiment with living both the Gospel message and the practical implications of Catholic social teaching.