

FOOD SECURITY 
& economic justice
A Faith-Based Study Guide on Poverty & Hunger

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL LIFE CONFERENCE



The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, founded in 1923, is a faith-based membership organization focused on agriculture, food, and the land. Our mission is to apply the teachings of Jesus Christ for the social, economic, and spiritual development of rural America. Our program activities provide spiritual, educational, and advocacy initiatives for rural people to lead lives of dignity and piety.

This Study Guide is a reflection on hunger and poverty, and a call to action and justice.

It begins with an observation of the world as we know it: A world with resources and knowledge to produce ample food for all, and yet too many people have little to eat and few resources to lift themselves out of poverty.

The content of this study guide delves into a critical reflection on how we relate the current world situation to the Story and Vision of our Catholic faith.

The guide concludes with the possibilities for action by individuals and groups. The hopeful result is a change in attitudes and behaviors accomplished in a spirit of solidarity with the poor and the care of God's creation.



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*“If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the afflicted,
Light shall rise for you in the darkness and your gloom shall be
as the noonday.
Then the Lord will guide you always,
And give you plenty even on the parched land.”*

(Isaiah 58:10-11)

For I was Hungry

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me....”
(Mt. 25:35)

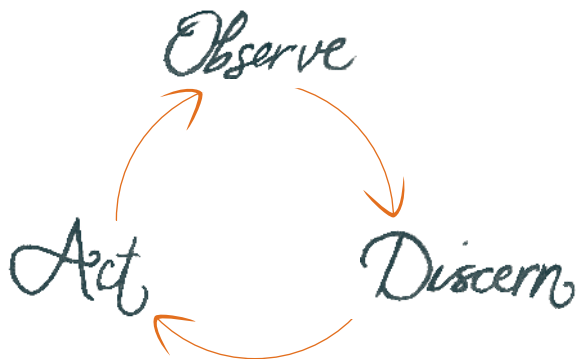
“‘Feed the hungry’ (cf. Mt 25: 35, 37, 42) is an ethical imperative for the universal Church as she responds to the teachings of her Founder, the Lord Jesus, concerning solidarity and the sharing of goods. Moreover, the elimination of world hunger has also, in the global era, become a requirement for safeguarding the peace and stability of the planet.”
Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009, no.27)

The title of this study guide – *Food Security and Economic Justice* – is really about poverty and hunger. Not only do we want to present the painful reality of how one-sixth of the world’s population lives – and dies – but how we can begin to create a world of economic justice and food for all. This faith-based study guide is meant to serve as a prophetic voice for a just and secure world. It is also an act of hope.

We take inspiration from the work of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, most impressively their pastoral letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. economy, *Economic Justice for All* (1986). Even after 25 years, this reflection still speaks to us. Notably, the Bishops selected economic concerns that still burden us today: employment, poverty, food and agriculture, and the United States’ relationship with developing nations. Then as now, the Bishops call us to understand, to decide and to act. We use this same approach in our study guide on food security for all.

This guide uses the three-part method of Catholic social justice:

- I. **Observe** – Seeing, hearing, and experiencing the lived reality of individuals and communities. This begins with intentionally examining the primary data of the situation. What is happening to people and how do they respond? How are the rest of us responding? This moves us towards a social analysis: Obtaining a more complete picture of the social situation by exploring its historical and structural relationships. In this critical step, we attempt to make sense of the reality that we observe. Why are things this way? What are the root causes?
- II. **Discern** – Analyzing the experience in the light of scripture and the Catholic social tradition. This means a theological reflection on biblical values and the principles of Catholic social teaching to help us see the reality of a situation in a different way. How do they serve as a measuring stick for this experience?
- III. **Act** – Planning and carrying out actions aimed at transforming the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice.



It is important to remember that this is a process. It is a cycle that is continually repeated. After attempting actions as suggested in the “Act” phase, participants should return to the “Observe” phase – which is to say observe new realities, then make new discernments and find new ways to act. This process is suitable for individuals, but is really intended for groups or individuals working collectively. The group process allows for a richer reflection, a deeper understanding, and a more creative search for effective action.

The bottom line is that *more* must be done to eradicate hunger and poverty in the world. And it must be done *better* than it has up to now. Whereas charity and food assistance confront the immediate needs of hunger, justice requires us to establish new foundations of food production and economic development.

“More and better” is a call for nations, including the United States, to increase their amount of funds and resources for international assistance and to target that assistance to those who are closest to the poor and hungry of the world. By some estimates, there are 3 billion small-scale food producers worldwide – and they are the ones producing the food that feeds most of the world, because their food goes to their own impoverished communities.

Policies supporting small-scale producers and transferring better resources have a tremendous potential to help create sustainable communities endowed not only with adequate food, but also vibrant economies, human well-being and the possibility to plan for a long-term future.

“Who feeds the world? My answer is very different to that given by most people. It is women and small farmers working with biodiversity who are the primary food providers in the Third World.”

– Vandana Shiva

Important Terms to Know

Food Security: *The availability of food and an individual's or family's access to it. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum (1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and (2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).*

Economic Justice: *A distinctive concern for the poorest members of society. The Church teaches that through prayers and deeds one must show solidarity and compassion for the poor. The moral test of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation; public policy decisions must be evaluated in terms of how they affect the poor.*

Chronic Hunger: *Famine and hunger are rooted in food insecurity. Food insecurity can be categorized as either chronic or transitory. Chronic food insecurity translates into a high degree of vulnerability to famine and hunger; chronic hunger is not famine, but is related to poverty and is similar to undernourishment.*

Malnutrition: *The condition that results from an unbalanced diet in which certain nutrients are lacking or in the wrong proportions. The World Health Organization cites malnutrition as the gravest single threat to the world's public health. Improving nutrition is widely regarded as the most effective form of aid.*

Persistent Poverty: *Not simply the lack of money or income, but the lack of basic human needs such as clean water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter. (Relative poverty is the condition of having fewer resources or less income than others within a society or country.) Persistent poverty is long term and usually continues from one generation to the next.*

Food Assistance: *Within the United States, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically and commonly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a federal-assistance program that provides assistance to low-income people and families. International food assistance, or food aid, is provided to countries in urgent need of food supplies, especially after a natural disaster. Besides shipping food to a nation in need, food aid programs can purchase locally available food supplies and distribute at no cost to those in need.*

Climate Change: *A change of climate attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere. This change is in addition to natural climate variability and takes place over comparable time periods. Scientists warn that climate change will disrupt rain and temperature patterns, causing severe problems for agriculture and food production in many parts of the world.*

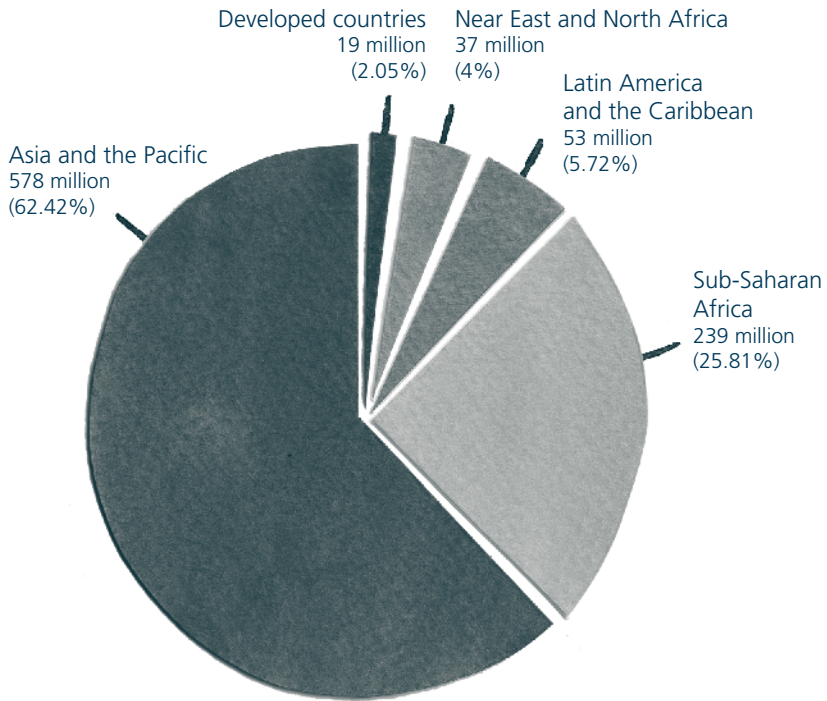
Free Trade: *A system of trade policy that allows companies and corporations to trade across national boundaries without interference from respective governments. According to the law of comparative advantage, partner nations benefit from mutual gains in the trade of goods and services of higher quality and/or lower cost. "Fair trade" is the counter position that government regulations must be in place to protect labor rights and environmental standards.*

Supply Chain: *An organized system of people, activities, information and resources that move a product from producer to consumer. For agricultural products and foods, the supply chain stretches from farm field to plate. A global supply chain brings food from around the world; a short supply chain moves food from local farmers or gardens to area households.*

Land Grabbing: *The buying or leasing of large pieces of land in developing countries by domestic and transnational companies. Although often supported and encouraged by central governments, this is a contentious issue because the land is mainly used for the production and export of food or biofuels.*

Global Hunger

BY REGION AS OF 2010



All figures are rounded.
Source: FAO

I: Examining the Situation

Voices from the United Nations to the Vatican make it clear: More than 1 billion people – one sixth of the world’s population – suffer from chronic hunger. The lack of adequate food over a prolonged period of time has serious social and economic consequences, both for the families who live in hunger and the societies who must bear large numbers of hungry people. Hunger and poverty are usually found together: those who cannot find work or sufficient income consequently suffer in meeting basic daily nutrition. Poor and hungry people are found throughout the world, in our cities and rural areas, even where food and crops are readily produced.

Hunger is more than pangs in the stomach. Malnutrition and undernutrition leads to physical impairment; a person who hungers on a daily basis can no longer maintain natural bodily capacities. For children, this means impairment to growth and learning abilities. For women, hunger affects pregnancy and lactation; for men, physical work. For all people, the lack of food leads to various diseases and prevents the ability to recover quickly, if at all.

What is the scale and impact of the international food crisis?

According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, most of the world’s undernourished people live in developing countries. Sixty-five percent of the world’s hungry live in seven countries: India, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia. The hardest hit

continents are Asia (including areas of the Pacific) and Africa. Africa itself is home to 16 of the 17 countries where over 35 percent of the population is experiencing food insecurity. Seventy percent of the world's hungry live in rural areas, which can be isolated, hard to reach, or rugged areas that make it difficult to quickly improve their situation.

Learn more about global hunger at these websites:

World Hunger Atlas: www.worldhungeratlas.com

World Food Programme: www.wfp.org/hunger

U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization: www.fao.org/hunger/en/

What impact has the global economic crisis had on the food crisis?

The world financial and economic crisis continues to push people into poverty and hunger, and then hold them there. Recent food price crises – 2007-08 and happening again now – illustrate the types of disruptions many nations could experience more often in the future. The steep rise in food prices affect families everywhere, including the United States, but it is most devastating for developing countries where hundreds of millions fall into extreme poverty and hunger.

Local and national governments in both developed and developing countries have dwindling funds to invest in social protection programs to prevent people from falling into the poverty-hunger trap. The U.S. State Department is leading a worldwide effort called the Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative to reverse the decrease in agricultural assistance to the developing world.

Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative:

www.state.gov/s/globalfoodsecurity

Facts & Realities

Each year, more than 3.5 million children die from lack of food and adequate nutrition.

Hunger robs the poor of a healthy and productive life and stunts the mental and physical development of the next generation.

Under-nutrition costs developing countries up to three percent of their annual gross domestic product and places individuals at risk of losing more than 10 percent of their lifetime earning potential.

Reducing chronic hunger is essential to building a foundation for development investments in health, education, and economic growth.

In the future, ensuring food security will only become more challenging.

Food supplies are facing increasing threats from climate change, water scarcity, environmental degradation, and competition for scarce energy resources.

Meeting this demand in a sustainable way will require doing more with less – less water, fewer natural resources, less energy.

Source: Feed the Future, U.S. State Department

Feed the Future (www.feedthefuture.gov) is the name given to the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, our nation's commitment to invest in reducing hunger and poverty. The goal is to meet the need for a reliable source of quality food and sufficient resources for individuals and families to access and purchase.

Seeking the Right Course of Action

In the past, people suffered hunger due to crop failures and natural calamities. But just as common today is the inability to buy or obtain sufficient amounts of food that may be available in the market. As prices rise, people without adequate incomes slip into hunger. In rural areas, people may not have the productive resources to grow enough food or buy what they need. The inequitable distribution of arable land and other necessary resources are common causes of hunger and malnutrition for rural populations.

When the lack of food and prevalence of hunger spreads and intensifies, this can lead to civil and political unrest. A question of justice is soon raised: How can there be abundant supplies of food in the world, but many hungry people? As a basic human right, food must be available and secure to everyone on a daily basis. It becomes obvious that new policies and practices are needed to allow greater access to productive resources for all and incomes sufficient to feed families and children everywhere.

Current Course of Action:

Increase food production and allow free trade

Food production throughout the 20th century has increased substantially as improved technology, machinery, fertilizers and seed traits have progressed in step with an expanding world population. International bodies like the United Nations and the World Bank tell us that global food supplies must increase by an estimated 50 percent to meet expected demand in the next 20 years – by the 2040's, when children today will have their own children. It is often stated in major world forums that we need to increase food production through current practices of industrial agriculture and that nations must liberalize their trade – open their borders and lower restrictions – to allow more food imports.


Dominant agribusiness corporations make this claim in the name of “feeding the world” – that high-tech productivity and global collaboration among large-scale commercial

farmers will feed the growing world population. They say it is critical that farmers across the globe must have access to this high-end technology, high-cost inputs, and high-tech (genetically modified) seeds that will help them produce more food for the world market. From there, free and open global markets will allow foods and other goods to flow efficiently to supermarkets and food outlet chains, and then into the hands and mouths of the world's growing population.

The Church has questioned some of these underlying assumptions since the 1980s. In Economic Justice for All (1986), the U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote:

“On the one hand, trade can bring about good in our world, allowing the fruits of human labor to multiply and bring just rewards. An exchange between parties, if fair, can be of mutual benefit and increase human well-being, enabling people to support their families in dignity. Yet too often trade fails to reduce poverty. When trade between parties takes place on unequal terms, the proper nature and goal of human activity and exchange are distorted. Such distorted activity can damage integral human development, create and expand inequities, and lead to violence, conflict and environmental destruction.”

The transnational corporate type of food supply chain may sound like a rational business model, but it runs the risk of tying farmers into a global food system controlled by giant agribusiness corporations. Such a system may produce sufficient supplies for the paying market, but large-scale market forces often turn a blind eye to the human face of poverty and hunger. Governments and civil society are called upon to address these concerns as best they can. Fortunately, there is a prophetic call for an alternative production system that meets the needs of community welfare and poverty reduction in depressed and vulnerable areas of the world.

Alternative Course of Action: 
*Improve local capabilities and build regional
food systems*

Rather than try to meet the demands of a corporate and global supply chain, local groups are seeking a way to make our food and agriculture systems more resilient and secure while improving the food and nutritional security of all people.

There is an alternative course of action to the dominant model. There is a growing recognition to refocus efforts and investments in agriculture towards sustainable and diversified agriculture that directly fits local needs. This means focused attention on small-scale farmers – both women and men – in order to achieve food security and poverty reduction in the world.

“Sustainable” agriculture is the name given to the kind of food production that not only increases the availability of food, but improves the incomes of the many small-scale producers who abound in rural areas and provides safe and affordable food for consumers. It will not matter how much food is produced unless people have the ability to buy or gain access to the food themselves. For the rural poor, the main cause of their poverty is unequal distribution of resources. Therefore, the alternative course of action calls for greater access to economic opportunities and greater participation in local and regional food systems.

As a direct counter to a dependency on global supply chains, policy makers and community stakeholders are focusing on the need to reinvest in farm-to-market infrastructure at domestic levels in all regions. From all continents around the world, there is a renewed interest in short supply chains for a combination of economic, health, environment, and energy-related reasons. At risk populations for food insecurity, hunger and chronic disease has been the target of programs promoting healthy food access. Improved market access for small and medium sized producers and the supply of healthy

local food are becoming essential to food security strategies in developing and developed countries.

There is also an urgent and crucial need to recognize that women farmers have the potential and the solution to bring their families out of poverty. They should be at the forefront of agriculture. Women will be a pivotal force behind achieving a food secure world. In most developing countries, they produce between 60 and 80 percent of the food (International Food Policy Research Institute, www.ifpri.org). When gains in income are controlled by women, they are more likely to be spent on food and children's needs. By investing more in women, we amplify benefits across families and generations.

Unleashing the proven potential of small-scale agricultural producers, while encouraging the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources, will reduce hunger and create a more resilient global food supply for everyone.

It is time to create food security, built on economic justice, in our resource-constrained world:

- Increase the productivity, self-reliance and economic opportunity of small-scale farmers, especially women.
- Increase farmers' access to natural resources like water, and ownership over resources like fertile land.
- Increase farmers' preparedness in the face of more frequent and extreme weather events: storms and floods for some; prolonged heat waves and droughts for others.

The United States maintains the size and power to set the tone for the future of food production and innovation. The challenge in agriculture today is to produce more with less. To do so, we need a progressive approach to policymaking that respects the dignity of human life and advocates for a fair and just system. Farmers around the world are capable of producing enough food in a sustainable way, but there needs to be committed and courageous leadership to pave the way.

Questions & Discussion

The information and points above will take time to process and fully understand. This study guide can only provide so much in a few pages. If possible, watch a documentary on hunger. The following organizations offer online videos or other resources that will help you learn more:

Catholic Relief Services: www.crs.org
CARE: www.care.org/features/index.asp
Oxfam America: www.oxfamamerica.org/multimedia/video
World Food Programme: www.wfp.org/hunger
Bread for the World: www.bread.org
Food First: www.foodfirst.org
World Food Day USA: www.worldfooddayusa.org

Another possibility is to invite someone with the expertise or familiarity with hunger and poverty issues to present to your group. Again, the organizations and websites above offer resources and contacts. See “Additional Resources” at the end of this guide for more possibilities.

Following a presentation or video documentary on hunger and poverty, participants can begin to discuss some important questions.

Consider the following:

1. What is your reaction when you hear that people suffer chronic hunger and even starve to death? Do you wonder how it is possible that there is literally no food for them?
2. Why do women especially suffer from malnourishment? Are you surprised that women around the world produce most of the food for their families?

3. It is commonly thought that the U.S. gives a great deal of foreign aid. In reality, such assistance is only about 0.1 percent – one-tenth of one percent – of our budget. (You may hear different numbers; this depends on how aid is counted. But it is clear that the percentage is extremely small.) Where do these misconceptions come from, and how can they be stopped or challenged?

4. We often think of foreign assistance as shipments of food aid. But what if existing and appropriate technologies could help farm producers in developing countries triple their yield and change the lives of their families? What can you do to help producers have access to the technologies?

5. When you hear that there are 31 million hungry in the United States, what does that mean to you? What does it mean to you that one in five children in America go to bed hungry?

6. Why is hunger in the United States less visible than the scenes of hunger overseas?

7. Do you think “urban farming” (intensive gardening within city limits) is possible in your community or locality? Besides providing food for local residents, what other benefits are possible from urban farming?

NOTES

II: Reflecting and Discerning

As part of understanding the causes of poverty and hunger in our world, it is necessary to stand back and reflect on these age-old problems in the light of sacred scriptures and Catholic social teachings. A theological reflection helps us to see the reality of the world in a different way than contemporary and popular opinions. A faith-based reflection is meant to lead to prudent discernment – a way to determine what we are called to do by a just and merciful Creator. This process is not meant to point a finger or lay blame, but to guide us in offering our hands in support and laying a foundation for a new way of living and expressing solidarity with the poor and vulnerable of the world.

As a people of faith, we believe we are called to see the human face of our economy, to feel the hurts and hopes of people, and to feel the pain of those who are poor, hungry, and living in despair. As the U.S. Bishops tell us in the opening passage of *Economic Justice for All*: “The poor and vulnerable are on our doorsteps, in our parishes, and in our service agencies. It is clear to see that there is too much hunger and injustice, too much suffering and despair, both in our country and around the world.” (viii)

“As Catholics, we are heirs of a long tradition of thought and action on the moral dimensions of economic activity. The life and words of Jesus and the teaching of his Church call us to serve those in need and to work actively for social and economic justice. As a community of believers, we know that our faith is tested by the quality of justice among us, that we can best measure our life together by how the poor and the vulnerable are treated.” (*Economic Justice for All*, n.8)

A. Biblical Scripture

Take the time to look up and review the selected biblical passages below regarding commandments or injunctions to feed the hungry. Read them silently and reflect for a moment. Then in small groups discuss the questions that follow:

Matthew 25:31-46

In this passage Jesus says those who feed the hungry will be with him in heaven, while those who don't won't be. Some spiritualize this reading saying it is talking of spiritual hunger and feeding. What kind of needs do you think Matthew 25 addresses and why?

Mark 14:7

When the woman anointed Jesus' feet with expensive oil and the disciples reprimanded her, Jesus corrected them saying: "The poor you'll always have with you." People often stop with that, saying that Jesus said the poor would always be around so it is a helpless cause. Rather, Jesus is saying that "the poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want." Have you ever heard this used as an excuse that the problem is too big to tackle? What can you say?

Jeremiah 22:16

This passage describes a good and worthy king: "'He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?' declares the Lord." We can extend this passage to say, "We do not really know Jesus until we know the poor." Do you think that is true or not true?

1 Samuel 2:1-10

The phrase "hunger no more" is used in 1 Samuel 2 when Hannah praises God for the gift of her son, born after barrenness. Note the line in the passage that says: "The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts." How is this a useful reminder that any one of us could have been born into situations throughout the world where we experience hunger and poverty daily?

Additional scriptural passages

Again, have participants break into small groups (3-5 people) and discuss the following scriptures:

Matthew 14:15-21 (*feeding the 5,000*)

Luke 16:9-31 (*rich man and Lazarus*)

2 Kings 4:42-44 (*feeding the 100*)

Exodus 16:13-18 (*manna and quail*)

John 2:1-11 (*water turned into wine*)

Genesis 41:47-57 (*preparing for famine*)

Psalm 145:14-16 (*God gives food*)

Ask the groups to consider these questions for each scripture:

1. What does this scripture tell us about God's generosity?
2. How does this scripture show that it is in God's nature to provide abundantly?
3. Ask each group to share with all participants what they discovered.

Open Question: How do people excuse themselves or make rationalizations about these clear spiritual instructions?

WE OFTEN HEAR: *What would Jesus do?*

RATHER ASK THIS: *What would Jesus have us do?*

B. Reflections from the Holy See

Caritas in Veritate

Passages from 2009 encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI

“Charity is at the heart of the Church’s social doctrine.” (2)

“Truth is the light that gives meaning and value to charity.” (3)

“Truth needs to be sought, found, and expressed within the ‘economy’ of charity, but charity in its turn needs to be understood, confirmed and practiced in the light of truth.” (2)

Truth and Charity are and must always be inexorably linked. Charity in truth keeps people on course. It helps us to understand that adhering to transcendent values like respect for human dignity, justice and the common good “is not merely useful but essential for building a good human society and for true integral human development.” (4)

“Charity demands **justice**: recognition and respect for the legitimate rights of individuals and peoples. It strives to build the earthly city according to law and justice. On the other hand, charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving.” (6)

“To love someone is to desire that person’s good and to take effective steps to secure it. Besides the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the **common good**.... To desire the common good and strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity.” (7)

“Life in many poor countries is extremely insecure as a consequence of food shortages, and the situation could become worse: hunger still claims enormous numbers of victims among those, who like Lazarus, are not permitted to take their place at the rich man’s table.” (27)

In *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI makes it clear that the international community has the resources to feed all of the world's people. Instead, poverty coexists with abundance. He has pointed to the "race for consumption," unbridled speculation and the arms race that diverts resources away from human development as some of the causes.

World Summit on Food Security (Rome, November 2009)

Passages from the address by Pope Benedict XVI

At this world summit, the UN Secretary General reported that 17,000 children die of hunger every day. The number of hungry people in the world has gone from 800,000 five years ago to over 1 billion today. To underscore his concern for the poor, Pope Benedict addressed this Special Summit of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and made an urgent call for action to combat world hunger, to protect the environment and to rethink lifestyle choices in the West.

"Sufficient food is produced on a global scale to satisfy both the current demands and those in the foreseeable future."

"Opulence and waste are no longer acceptable when the tragedy of hunger is assuming ever greater proportions."

"Acknowledgment of the transcendental worth of every man and every woman is still the first step towards the conversion of heart that underpins the commitment to eradicate deprivation, hunger and poverty in all their forms."

"The fundamental rights of the individual must not be forgotten, which include, of course, the right to sufficient, healthy and nutritious food, and likewise water. These rights take on an important role in the realization of others, beginning with the primary one, the right to life. It is necessary, then, to cultivate 'a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination.'"

“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. The Catholic Church will always be concerned for efforts to defeat hunger; the Church is committed to support, by word and deed, the action taken in solidarity – planned, responsible and regulated – to which all members of the international community are called to contribute.”

“I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality. As it is written, ‘He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack’ (2 Cor 8:13-15).”

“In order to combat hunger and promote integral human development, it is necessary to understand the needs of the rural world, and likewise to ensure that any decline in donor support does not create uncertainties in the financing of activities of cooperation: any tendency towards a short-sighted view of the rural world as a thing of secondary importance must be avoided.”

“The links between environmental security and the disturbing phenomenon of climate change need to be explored further, focusing on the central importance of the human person, and especially of the populations most at risk from both phenomena. Norms, legislation, development plans and investments are not enough, however: *what is needed is a change in the lifestyles of individuals and communities, in habits of consumption and in perceptions of what is genuinely needed. Most of all, there is a moral duty to distinguish between good and evil in human action, so as to rediscover the bond of communion that unites the human person and creation.*”

C. Reflections from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

The U.S. Catholic Bishops are not hesitant to state their perspective when it comes to critical situations concerning the poor and vulnerable. During rising food prices of 2008-09, the USCCB issued a statement and call for action on behalf of American Catholics:

Our response to the present situation should reflect a sensitivity to that moral significance, a determination that the United States will play its appropriate role in meeting global food needs, and a commitment to bequeath to future generations an enhanced natural environment and the same ready access to the necessities of life that most of us enjoy today. To all those who are suffering because of the food crisis, we promise our solidarity, prayers, counseling and the other spiritual resources of our Catholic faith. (USCCB Statement, February 2009)

“The human being is the author, center and goal of all economic and social life. The decisive point of the social question is that goods created by God for everyone should in fact reach everyone in accordance with justice and with the help of charity.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2459)

The U.S. Bishops also called to mind their historic reflection on the economy, which rightly included a section on food and agriculture. In recognition of its 25th commemoration, we offer significant passages in the section “Essential Economic Sectors: Food & Agriculture” from *Economic Justice for All* (USCCB, 1986):

The fundamental test of an economy is its ability to meet the essential human needs of this generation and future generations in an equitable fashion. Food, water and energy are essential to life; their abundance in the United States has tended to make us complacent. But these goods – the

foundation of God's gift of life – are too crucial to be taken for granted. God reminded the people of Israel that “the land is mine; for you are strangers and guests with me” (Lv 25:23, RSV). (EJfA, n.216)

Our Christian faith calls us to contemplate God's creative and sustaining action and to measure our own collaboration with the Creator in using the earth's resources to meet human needs. While Catholic social teaching on the care of the environment and the management of natural resources is still in the process of development, a Christian moral perspective clearly gives weight and urgency to their use in meeting human needs. (EJfA, n.216)

No aspect of this concern is more pressing than the nation's food system. The Church is concerned about the stark reality of world hunger in spite of food surpluses. Our food production system is clearly in need of evaluation and reform. (EJfA, n.217)

A nation's food system is an integral part of the larger economy of a nation and the world. As such this integral role necessitates the cooperation of rural and urban interests – those who steward the land and those who give thanks for their daily bread – in resolving the challenges and problems facing food and agriculture. The food necessary for life, the land and water resources needed to produce that food, and the way of life of the people who make the land productive are at risk. Catholic social and ethical traditions attribute moral significance to each of these. (EJfA, n.250)

III. Responding and Acting in Faith

“The pursuit of economic justice takes believers into the public arena, testing the policies of government by the principles of our teaching. We ask you to become more informed and active citizens, using your voices and votes to speak for the voiceless, to defend the poor and the vulnerable and to advance the common good. We are called to shape a constituency of conscience, measuring every policy by how it touches the least, the lost, and the left out among us. This calls us to conversion and common action, to new forms of stewardship, service and citizenship.” USCCB, Economic Justice for All (#27, p.xv)

In September 2008, the 63rd session of the U.N. General Assembly was considering the Millennium Development Goals. These are eight international development goals that all 192 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. They include eradicating extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, fighting disease epidemics such as AIDS, and developing a global partnership for development.

One other Millennium Development goal is to significantly reduce world hunger by 2015. With just a few years to go, much progress still needs to be made to reduce the global number of people battling hunger. Many hard-won achievements since the turn of the century in 2000 have been undone by current global economic, food, and fuel crises.

So during the session in 2008, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Holy See permanent observer to the United Nations in New York, asked the assembly how the world is able to find funds to save financial systems in industrialized countries of the North, but cannot find the resources necessary to invest in the “most destitute” nations of the South. The archbishop declared that he believed the Millennium Development Goals could still be achieved “if their attainment becomes a priority for all States.”

To do so, he continued, “we need to foment a new culture of human relations marked by a fraternal vision of the world, a culture based upon the moral imperative of recognizing the unity of humankind and the practical imperative of giving a contribution to peace and the well-being of all.”

The comments by Archbishop Migliore present us with a pressing question: How are well-off nations of the industrialized North able to find funds to save a broken financial system yet remain unable to find the resources necessary to invest in the development of all regions of the Global South, beginning with the most destitute? The enormous proportions of funds to rescue failed banks and governments amounts to many times the whole of international aid.

There is a crucial moral obligation of the international community to return to global solidarity. With a coordinated global response – and an investment in small-scale farmers around the world – ending hunger is still possible. We have heard the voice of the Church and know our Gospel teachings. Now we must respond in faith and deed.

Study Questions

1. Are you surprised to learn how many people are hungry in the world and where they live? What do you find most interesting about the trends in world hunger at this time?
2. Do you agree that major new efforts to combat hunger and food insecurity are needed? If so, what form should these efforts take? Should taxpayer dollars be used? Or only charitable donations?
3. Do individuals or families in your community suffer food insecurity? If so, how does your church support them? How do other churches and faith groups in the community help those who are food insecure?
4. How does the story of the Emmaus meal echo the feeding of the multitude and the Last Supper?

Emmaus meal (Luke 24:30)

While he was at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it in pieces, and gave it to them.

Feeding the Multitude (Luke 9:16)

While he was at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it in pieces, and gave it to them.

The Last Supper (Luke 22:19)

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

5. If we were, in the words of St. Vincent DePaul, “to serve others as we would serve Jesus Christ – always seeing our Lord in those who need us,” what practical differences would this make in our ministry to the poor and hungry?

6. Compare Psalm 146 with Jesus’ warning that the nations (or peoples) will be judged to be either sheep or goats (Matthew 25:31-46). What similarities and differences do you notice?

Psalm 146:3-8

*Put no trust in princes, in mere mortals powerless to save.
When they breathe their last, they return to the earth;
that day all their planning comes to nothing.
Happy those whose help is Jacob’s God, whose hope is in
the Lord, their God,
the maker of heaven and earth, the seas and all that is
in them,
Who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets prisoners free; the Lord gives sight to the blind.
The Lord raises up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves
the righteous.*

Matthew 25:44-45

They also will answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?” He will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”

Nine Actions to Fight Hunger and Injustice

(Adapted from the Society of St. Andrew, www.endhunger.org)

“The preferential option for the poor flows from our understanding of Jesus himself, who became poor himself so that we might be rich in him.” (Pope Benedict XVI)

Since we are called by our faith to be like Jesus, we too should identify with the hungry, the poor and those who thirst for justice. With that in mind, we are called to do something about hunger. While we may not be called to do the same thing, each of us is called to do something.

Because of the global scope of hunger and poverty, many people feel there is nothing one person can do. People often think the tragedy is too massive for one person’s action to be effective. That is not the case. Each of us can make an impact on behalf of our hungry brothers and sisters.

- 1) **Pray:** We pray for those of our human family who do not have sufficient food and income. But we can also pray for wisdom in discovering what to do to help those who suffer chronic hunger and persistent poverty.
- 2) **Become Informed:** Learn more about hunger and why people cannot escape their poverty. Read and study books, magazine articles, and newspaper stories dealing with hunger and poverty issues. Learn about hunger and poverty in your own community.
- 3) **Discuss the tragedy of hunger with your family:** It is important to help our families realize the scope of hunger and why some families have little or no income. Take time to discuss the issues raised by living in a hungry world with those nearest you.
- 4) **Raise awareness of others:** When you share what you learn about hunger with others, you will find out that you are not alone in your concern for the hungry. Many of your friends and neighbors are also looking for ways to help.

- 5) **Form a local hunger action group:** Help interested people in your church and/or community to organize on behalf of the hungry. Working together provides inspiration and support to tackle hunger head-on.
- 6) **Contribute to a hunger ministry:** Most hunger ministries provide high service return. Many spend every dollar donated on hunger relief.
- 7) **Work toward a more responsible life style:** Most of us can consume less of the world's resources than we now use. We certainly can be less wasteful and more mindful of the needs of our hungry and impoverished world.
- 8) **Become an advocate for the hungry:** Speak on behalf of the hungry and the poor. They have little or no voice, but you can support public policies that help the hungry around the world, as well as around the corner.
- 9) **Volunteer:** Most hunger relief organizations need the help of volunteers. Become involved in ministering directly to the needs of others by helping at a soup kitchen or food pantry. Check with grocery stores to collect food items that would otherwise be thrown out.

Start now! There is no better time to begin than right now. Take the first step by visiting these websites for ways to become involved and engaged:

Catholics Confront Global Poverty
www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/globalpoverty/

Faith and Hunger Network
www.hungeractionnys.org/fhn/resources.htm

Presbyterian Hunger Program
<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/hunger/what-we-do/>

Catholic Relief Services
<http://crs.org/food-security/>

Bread for the World
www.bread.org

Advocacy Actions

Create change and educate your community on real solutions to the food crisis.

Vote with your voice – and your fork. Voting on election days for the right representatives to make the necessary laws and policies for food security and justice is essential. But “voting” can happen every day when you raise your fork: making ethical food choices can help shape an agricultural system built on economic justice. The foods we choose to eat should be grown or produced in a way that is fair to farmers, farm workers and food process workers, whether in the United States or elsewhere in the world.

Write an op-ed or letter to the editor. Draw on your own experiences to talk about the injustices of the food crisis and the real solutions.

Contact your other elected representatives. You have more direct access to your local, state and congressional representatives than to the President. Ask them what they are doing to address the food crisis. Use the ideas from the Call to Action and other materials on the above website to tell them what policies they need to support.



Learn more about “voting with your fork” by visiting the NCRLC website. We have produced a series of cards that are a handy way to bring attention to the issues of food production and why *eating is a moral act*. On our homepage at www.ncrlc.com, you will see sections on Food Security and the Ethics of Eating. This is where you will find more information on food security, as well as the sets of cards that will help you promote the advocacy actions above. Here you will also find language to help with writing an op-ed piece or a letter to a news editor. You may also want to send the cards to your elected officials and let them know you stand by these principles of economic justice for our agriculture and food system.

What can the U.S. Government do?

The United States plays a crucial role in assuring food security for the world. The U.S. is the biggest donor of food aid commodities, but it is also a major source of the food speculation and bio-fuel production that contributes to steep price rises. The U.S. Government should:

1. Maintain and increase funding for emergency and development programs; maintain the “safe box” that protects development food assistance and the stipulation that up to 25 percent of funds be used for local purchase.
2. Provide emergency funding to help low-income people in the United States who are adversely affected by rising food prices.
3. Review farm subsidy programs to eliminate practices that do not comply with international trade obligations and that disadvantage poor farmers in other countries.
4. Properly balance economic incentives for biofuel production with the priority for sufficient nutritious foods, both domestically and internationally.
5. Greatly strengthen U.S. support to developing countries to help them increase their investments in agricultural research, extension, rural infrastructure and market access for poor small farmers.
6. Ensure that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission protects the basic need to the right for food for all, and prudently regulates the speculation of food commodities.

For more information visit:

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/agric.shtml>

Domestic Food & Nutrition issue brief: <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/Food-and-Nutrition-Backgrounder-2011.pdf>

Reforms to International Assistance Programs

In the Church's vision, economic life should be guided by a moral framework that respects the life and dignity of every person. To that end, a functional economy would ensure nourishing foods for individuals and families on a daily basis. When the economy fails to do so, then a just society must provide food assistance until economic conditions are corrected.

In the face of hunger and poverty at the global level, international assistance is an urgent and persistent need. Many faith groups urge the U.S. to make the following reforms to our nation's international assistance program:

Make human development the fundamental goal of U.S. international assistance. Our assistance should focus on reducing poverty, increasing the participation of poor people in development, and helping local governments and civil society develop plans to reduce poverty.

Create a development strategy that focuses on poverty reduction and human development. This strategy should, through coordination at the highest levels of government:

Address both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development assistance, and balance broad global priorities in sectors such as health, agriculture, nutrition, water and sanitation, and education, with country specific needs.

Identify opportunities for more effective coordination with global actors to confront global challenges, such as climate change and soaring food and commodity prices, which are best addressed on a global level, and to reduce program duplication which places unnecessary burdens on recipients.

Prioritize the poorest. At least half to two thirds of all U.S. international assistance should be allocated to poor countries and communities.

Provide assistance to failed or failing states and those emerging from conflict. This will enhance global stability and our own national security. We should help these governments serve their people, respect human rights, and strengthen civil society (civic and social organizations that are not part of government).

Give development a status and structure that places it alongside diplomacy and defense as the “third leg” of U.S. foreign policy. Civilian agencies such as USAID should be in leadership and control of development efforts. This will help ensure that long-term development goals do not become subordinated to short-term security and political concerns.

Increase our commitment to poverty reduction by ensuring that sufficient resources, both financial and human, are available to meet long-term development needs and address emerging and unanticipated humanitarian needs.

Gradually increase overall foreign assistance so that it meets a commitment that was made by richer nations, including the U.S., to devote 0.7 percent of their national income to global development. (The U.S. currently spends about 0.2 percent in this area.)

In the eyes of the Church, a moral framework for economic justice and food security also takes shape within the realm of global trade. In the trade of global goods, the market must be measured in respect to a fair and just sharing of the bounty of the earth and the fruits of human labor. It is frequently the case that existing inequalities between countries and within countries remain unchanged or even widen through “liberalized” trade, increasing the numbers of people living in poverty or further marginalized from a life of human dignity. Therefore, we must take care to ensure the following:

Livelihoods of farmers and food security.

Most of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on farming for their livelihoods. Poor farmers are often not able to compete with much more efficient, highly subsidized farmers in developed countries. Trade policy must address the needs of small and medium-sized farms both in the U.S. and abroad in developing countries.

Worker rights and environmental protection.

While certain labor and environmental provisions are included in new trade agreements, it is critical that they be demonstrably effective in leading to stronger protection of fundamental worker rights and the environment.

Poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Trade policies cannot be created in isolation from other international assistance, debt relief and development initiatives. Instead, trade must be integrated with measures to reduce poverty and improve education, health care, and democratic participation.

What will you do to make a difference?

Write it down on a slip of paper and share the item with a group member for accountability. Place it where you will see it often. Consider organizing a group in your congregation or community which works in an ongoing way on hunger issues.

As mentioned earlier, no one person or group can solve domestic or world hunger. But each person can do something to help and that will make a difference. After considering all the actions listed in this study guide, try this:

- 1) Write down one or more actions on a slip of paper.
- 2) Post your slip of paper where you will see it often.
- 3) Consider organizing a hunger & justice group with fellow participants or others in your church or community.

Resources for Action & Prayer

The following resources are designed to help parishes and faith groups put on a rightful spirit while trying to understand and act against hunger and poverty in the world today. Here you will find additional scriptural passages and suggestions for liturgy and prayer, as well as blessings for special occasions.

Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving from Scripture

Ps 8	The Majesty of God and the Dignity of Man
Ps 65	Thanksgiving for God's Blessings
Ps 104	Praise of God the Creator
Ps 146	Trust in God Alone
Ps 147	Zion's Grateful Praise to Her Bountiful Lord
Jn 1:1-5	In the Beginning Was the Word
Rev 21:1-4	New Heavens and New Earth

Special Occasions for Prayers and Blessings

January 1	World Day of Peace
Season of Lent	Focus on the poor or malnourished
April 25	Rogation Days (and/or three days before the Solemnity of the Ascension)
May 15	St. Isidore the Farmer
June 5	World Environment Day
August 15	Blessing of Produce
October 4	St. Francis of Assisi
October 16	World Food Day
Thursday before Thanksgiving	Fast for World Harvest
Season of Advent	Focus on the poor or malnourished in preparation for Christmas

Prayers for Peace and Justice	Ps 85
An Invitation to Grace	Is 55
The World Renewed	Is 65:17-25
Danger of Prosperity	Dt 8:6-20 1 Tm 6:6-1 Lk 12:15-21
The Land Is God's / Restoration of Property	Lv 25:23-28

Blessing for the Products of Human Labor

(Reprinted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, 323.)

Almighty and ever-living God,
you have made us stewards over the created world,
so that in all things we might honor the demands of charity.
Graciously hear our prayers,
that your blessing may come upon all those
who use these objects for their needs.
Let them always see you as the good surpassing every good
and love their neighbor with upright hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Blessing of Produce

(Reprinted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, 170-173.)

On August 15, or another appropriate day, the produce of fields, gardens, and orchards may be blessed. Those who take part should assemble in an appropriate place around the grains, fruits, and vegetables to be blessed.

All make the sign of the cross. The leader begins:

Let us ever praise and extol God's all-embracing providence,
who gives us food from the fruits of the earth. Blessed be God forever.

All respond: Blessed be God forever.

The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing:

The Lord has bestowed the fruits of the earth for the benefit of all of the world's people. May we share with all in need and so be good stewards of God's earth and its abundance. We remember the words Mary speaks in the gospel story of the visitation: "The hungry he has filled with good things."

Then the Scripture is read:

Listen to the words of the prophet Joel:

Fear not, O land! Exult and rejoice!

for the LORD has done great things.

Fear not, beasts of the field!

for the pastures of the plain are green;

The tree bears its fruit,

the fig tree and the vine give their yield.

And do you, O children of Zion,

exult and rejoice in the LORD, your God!

He has given you the teacher of justice:
He has made the rain come down for you,
the early and the late rain as before.
The threshing floors shall be full of grain
and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
You shall eat and be filled,
and shall praise the name of the LORD, your God,
Because he has dealt wondrously with you. . . .
Jl 2:21-24, 26

The reader concludes: This is the Word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

After a time of silence, all join in prayers of intercession. The following petitions may be Included:

That the rights and needs of all may be recognized and provided:
we pray to the Lord.

That all may be fed and none go hungry:
we pray to the Lord.

That all may have life and have its fullness:
we pray to the Lord.

That we may give thanks not only with our lips but in our lives:
we pray to the Lord.

That God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven:
we pray to the Lord.

After the Lord's Prayer, the leader may invite all to extend their hands in blessing:

All-powerful God, we appeal to your tender care
that even as you temper the winds and rains
to nurture the fruits of the earth
you will also send upon them the gentle shower of your blessing.

Fill the hearts of your people with gratitude,
that from the earth's fertility
the hungry may be filled with good things
and the poor and needy proclaim the glory of your name.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader concludes:
Let us bless God, forever let us praise and extol the name
of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

The blessing may conclude with an appropriate song.

Litany for the End of Hunger and Deprivation

Leader: Let us pray for the poor, hungry, and neglected all over the world, that their cries for daily bread may inspire works of compassion and mercy among those to whom much has been given.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for the farmers with limited or marginal land throughout the world, for those who lack access to water and other resources, and for the light of research and support services to shine in the lives of all God's people.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to the divisions and inequalities that scar God's creation, particularly the barriers to freedom faced by God's children throughout the world because of gender; that all who have been formed in God's image might have equality in pursuit of the blessings of creation.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for the health of women, children, and families around the world, especially for an end to maternal and child mortality, that in building healthy families, all God's people may be empowered to strengthen their communities and repair the breaches which divide nations and peoples.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to pandemic disease throughout the world, particularly those exacerbated by lack of nutritious food and outright hunger; that plagues of death may no longer fuel poverty, destabilize nations, and inhibit reconciliation and restoration throughout the world.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for an end to the waste and desecration of God's creation, for access to the fruits of creation to be shared equally among all people, and for communities and nations to find sustenance in the fruits of the earth and the water God has given us.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray for all nations and people who already enjoy the abundance of creation and the blessings of prosperity, that their hearts may be lifted up to the needs of the poor and afflicted, and partnerships between rich and poor for the reconciliation of the world may flourish and grow.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Litany on Food for the Future

Leader: Lord, give us this day our daily bread.

People: We will extol you, our God and King.

Leader: Let your mercy rest upon the seed time and harvest.

People: We praise you and thank you for early rain and late rain and for a bountiful harvest.

Leader: Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of the many varieties of seed that produce our food supply.

People: For this we give thanks, Lord.

Leader: Heavenly Father, we thank you for making the earth that produces what is needed for life. Bless those who work the fields and grant that we may all share in your goodness.

People: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

Leader: Lord, give all our congregations and social service organizations wisdom and knowledge as they minister to the needs of the hungry and dispossessed.

People: The Lord is good to all.

Leader: Heavenly Father, bless those in authority who strive to end world hunger through various international relief organizations.

People: Lord, the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.

Leader: We are one human family, created by God, needing the same creature comforts to sustain a life of dignity. The most basic of those creature comforts is food. If the world as we know it is to have a future, it must have food for all.

People: Thank you for giving us this day our daily bread. Amen.



Blessing for the Products of Nature

(Reprinted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, 323.)

Blessed are you, O God,
Creator of the universe,
who have made all things good
and given the earth for us to cultivate.
Grant that we may always use created things gratefully
and share your gift with those in need,
out of the love of Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.
R. Amen.

Give us this day our daily bread.

God our Creator, All good gifts of the earth come from
Your generous hands.
Yet, this abundance is not shared equally among us.
While some are satisfied, others are go hungry.
Too many women around the world are desperate to feed
and care for their children;
Yet they are underserved or passed over or exploited.
If only we would be mindful that each and every one of us must
pray in earnest:
Give us this day OUR daily bread.
Then we will do much more than feed our individual selves. Amen.

Additional Biblical Passages:

Genesis 1:29-30 *God gives the world's food*
Exodus 3:7-12 *Moses asked to go to Pharaoh*
Exodus 16:1-12 *The manna lifestyle – economics of enough*
Leviticus 19:9-11 *The law of gleaning – leave food for the poor*
Deut. 10:17-19 *God executes justice*
Deut. 14:28-15:11 *The law of tithe helps the poor*
2 Kings 4:42-44 *Feeding the 100*
Psalm 72:1-14 *How to pray for a just government*
Psalm 82 *Justice to the weak and destitute*
Psalm 140:12-13 *God maintains the cause of the needy*
Psalm 146:5-9 *God is just and feeds the hungry*
Proverbs 14:20-21 *Happy are those who are kind to the poor*
Proverbs 19:17 *Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord*
Proverbs 21:13 *Listen to the cry of the poor*
Isaiah 1:16-18 *Seek justice – correct oppression*
Isaiah 3:13-15 *Why do you grind the face of the poor?*

Isaiah 5:1-7	<i>I expected justice but found bloodshed</i>
Isaiah 10:1-4	<i>God's anger at unjust government</i>
Isaiah 58:1-12	<i>The fast that I choose</i>
Jeremiah 22:13-16	<i>To do justice is to know the Lord</i>
Lamentations 4:9	<i>It is better to die by the sword than by hunger</i>
Ezekiel 16:49	<i>Sodom was guilty of neglect of the poor</i>
Ezekiel 34:16-22	<i>God will judge between the fat and lean sheep</i>
Amos 5:10-24	<i>Let justice roll down like waters</i>
Amos 8:4-7	<i>God will not forget those who trample on the needy</i>
Micah 6:8	<i>Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly</i>
Matt. 6:25-34	<i>Seek first the kingdom of God and righteousness</i>
Matt. 14:14-21	<i>Feeding the multitude</i> <i>(also Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-14)</i>
Matt. 23:23	<i>You have neglected justice, mercy and faith</i>
Matt. 25:31-46	<i>I was hungry and you gave me food</i>
Mark 8:1-9	<i>Feeding the 4,000</i>
Luke 1:46-55	<i>Mary's magnificat – He has filled the hungry with good things</i>
Luke 6:20-26	<i>Blessed are you who are poor</i>
Luke 10:25-37	<i>The story of the good Samaritan</i>
Luke 12:15	<i>Watch out for all kinds of greed</i>
Luke 12:35-48	<i>To whom much is given, much is required</i>
Luke 14:12-14	<i>Invite the poor to your dinner</i>
Luke 16: 19-31	<i>The story of the rich man and Lazarus</i>
Luke 18:18-30	<i>Give to the poor</i>
Luke 19:1-10	<i>Zacchaeus' radical generosity</i>
John 13:1-20	<i>Jesus washing disciples' feet</i>
Acts 2:42-47	<i>Sharing in the early church</i>
Acts 6:1-7	<i>Dispute over the distribution of food</i>
1 Cor. 11:17-34	<i>Selfishness in the Christian community</i>
1 Cor. 16:1-2	<i>Put aside for the needy each Sunday</i>
2 Cor. 8:12-15	<i>A balance between need and abundance</i>
2 Cor. 9:6-15	<i>God loves a cheerful giver</i>
Galatians 2:10	<i>Remember the poor</i>
1 Tim. 6:17-19	<i>The wealthy are to be generous</i>
James 2:1-7	<i>God's bias toward the poor</i>
James 2:14-17	<i>Faith without works is dead</i>
1 John 3:17-18	<i>Love in truth and action, not just word</i>
1 John 4:19-21	<i>Loving God means loving neighbor</i>

[Credit: A Bible Study on Hunger, Society of St. Andrew, 2009]

Additional Resources

To learn what others are doing to end hunger and poverty, visit the websites of these organizations:

Bread for The World (www.bread.org/institutel/index.html)
Church World Service (www.churchworldservice.org)
ELCA World Hunger Program (www.elca.org/hunger)
United Methodist Committee on Relief (gbgm-umc.org/umcor/)
National Council of Churches (www.nccusa.org)
Society of St. Andrew (www.endhunger.org/index1.htm)
Mennonite Central Committee (www.mcc.org/catalog)
United Methodist Church (www.UMC.org)

America's Second Harvest (www.secondharvest.org)
Souper Bowl of Caring (www.souperbowl.org)
Foods Resource Bank (www.foodsresourcebank.org)
Hunger No More (www.hungernomore.org)
World Food Day (www.worldfooddayusa.org)
Food First (www.foodfirst.org)
NYC Food Systems Network resource list (www.foodsystemsnyc.org/resources)
Community Food Security Coalition (www.foodsecurity.org)
WHY Food Security Learning Center (www.whyhunger.org/fslc/)
Heifer Project International (www.heifer.org)
The Earth Institute (www.sachs.earth.columbia.edu)



Join *Catholics Confront Global Poverty* to be one in one million Catholics in the United States working to confront global poverty.