



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

Lent 2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

Christians focus on the traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during the holy season of Lent. These practices allow us to look beyond ourselves and reflect on God's call to serve others. We give alms to help those in need as a sign of our Christian commitment to act. One longstanding program that can assist us in this effort is the Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Rice Bowl program.

Your contribution to this important program makes a lasting impact. In addition to providing immediate physical nutrition to curb hunger, CRS Rice Bowl programs provide education about sustainable farming practices to ensure that people in more than 100 countries continue to thrive.

In addition to helping our brothers and sisters around the world, 25% of donations to CRS Rice Bowl each year stay in West Michigan to support hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Many individuals and families in the eleven counties of our diocese struggle more than ever to make ends meet as food costs continue to rise. Your participation in the CRS Rice Bowl program last year helped many in need. Your donations supported pantries including Bread of Life Food Pantry through St. Ann - St. Ignatius Parish in Baldwin as well as their Grandmother's Cupboard Baby Pantry, and Caritas Food Pantry through St. Mary Parish in Custer, which serves several counties. Thank you for your generosity in supporting these local efforts!

Please join me in giving alms to the CRS Rice Bowl program this year. Your support can change lives. To learn more, visit [csrricebowl.org](http://csrricebowl.org).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids