



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

February 4, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we approach the holy season of Lent, I write to invite you and your family to once again consider participating in Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl. This Lenten program provides us with an easy and concrete action that makes a tangible difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters who suffer from hunger and poverty.

In this liturgical season, we come together to celebrate our traditional Lenten practices. We pray with our families and faith communities, fast in solidarity with those who are hungry, and give sacrificial contributions to support the global work of the Church through Catholic Relief Services and other activities.

Annually, Operation Rice Bowl raises close to \$6 million for Catholic Relief Services relief projects and an estimated \$2 million is retained by dioceses in the United States for local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Last year, our Grand Rapids Diocese sent over \$71,500 to the national office and used 25% of the total funds collected for local relief efforts.

On behalf of all those who benefit from Operation Rice Bowl, I thank you for your generosity in the past and your continued support which makes this appeal a success each year.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids