



*Save the Date:* An Evening of Confession  
at all Catholic Churches in the Diocese  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>  
5 - 8 PM



Catholic  
Diocese  
of  
Cleveland

*"GOD NEVER EVER TIRES OF FORGIVING US!" (POPE FRANCIS) | [WWW.WELCOMECATHOLICS.COM](http://WWW.WELCOMECATHOLICS.COM)*

## The Joy of God is the Joy of Forgiving

Pope Francis encourages us through the words from the Angelus on September 15, 2013 to be welcomed into God's love, God's joy, through forgiveness: "In...chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke, which contains three parables of mercy: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and then the longest of them, characteristic of St Luke, the parable of the father of two sons, the "prodigal" son and the son who believes he is "righteous", who believes he is saintly. All three of these parables speak of the joy of God. God is joyful.

This is interesting: God is joyful! And what is the joy of God? The joy of God is forgiving, the joy of God is forgiving! The joy of a shepherd who finds his little lamb; the joy of a woman who finds her coin; it is the joy of a father welcoming home the son who was lost, who was as though dead and has come back to life, who has come home. Here is the entire Gospel! Here! The whole Gospel, all of Christianity, is here! But make sure that it is not sentiment, it is not being a "do-gooder"! On the contrary, mercy is the true force that can save man and the world from the "cancer" that is sin, moral evil, and spiritual evil. Only love fills the void, the negative chasms that evil opens in hearts and in history. Only love can do this, and this is God's joy!

Jesus is all mercy, Jesus is all love: he is God made man. Each of us, each one of us, is that little lost lamb, the coin that was mislaid; each one of us is that son who has squandered his freedom on false idols, illusions of happiness, and has lost everything. But God does not forget us, the Father never abandons us. He is a patient father, always waiting for us! He respects our freedom, but he remains faithful forever. And when we come back to him, he welcomes us like children into his house, for he never ceases, not for one instant, to wait for us with love. And his heart rejoices over every child who returns. He is celebrating because he is joy. God has this joy, when one of us sinners goes to him and asks his forgiveness...

It is love of God and neighbor that brings fulfillment to all the Commandments. And this is the love of God, his joy: forgiveness. He waits for us always! Maybe someone has some heaviness in his heart: "But, I did this, I did that...". He expects you! He is your father: he waits for you always!"

On November 18, 2015, Pope Francis spoke about the upcoming Jubilee Year of Mercy and the doors are open to everyone, "Each one of us has something that weighs on us inside, right? We are all sinners," he said. "Let us take advantage of this moment that is coming and cross the threshold of this mercy of God who never tires of forgiving, who never tires of waiting for us, who looks upon us and is always by our side. Courage! Let's enter through this door."

Through these words of encouragement from Pope Francis you are invited during this Jubilee Year of Mercy to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at "An Evening of Confession" on February 24, 2016 from 5 - 8 pm. at any church in the Diocese of Cleveland. Come and find the joy of forgiveness.



2015-2016  
Jubilee Doors of Mercy

**LOVE**  
hopes &  
bears  
**All Things**

Diocese of Cleveland

# CRS RICE BOWL

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

## YOUR FAMILY CAN TRAVEL THE WORLD THIS LENT— WITHOUT LEAVING YOUR DINNER TABLE.

Let CRS Rice Bowl be your ticket to global solidarity as you **pray, fast, learn** and **give** this Lent in order to change the lives of our brothers and sisters in need.

All you need is a CRS Rice Bowl and a Lenten Calendar!

Keep the CRS Rice Bowl near your family dinner table during Lent so that you can refer to it each night.

**PRAY** using the Lenten Calendar and the CRS Rice Bowl app. What is the day's message? How does it connect to the life of your family?

**FAST** together. How is your family's Lenten fast going? How will it affect your lives today, tomorrow and after Lent?

**LEARN** about the people for whom this week's Lenten prayers are being offered. Read and discuss the Story of Hope. Who is your family helping this week? Where do they live? What do they do?

**GIVE** the suggested donation to your CRS Rice Bowl from the Lenten Calendar. Why is it important to give to others? How can you continue giving back even after Lent?

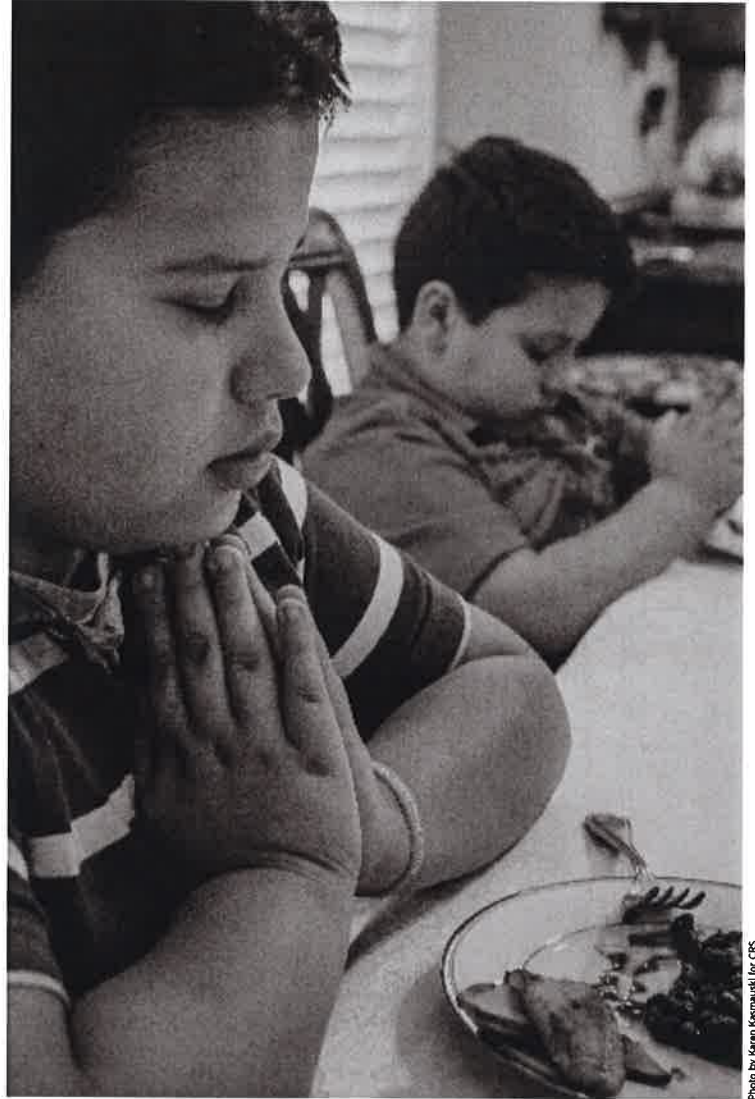
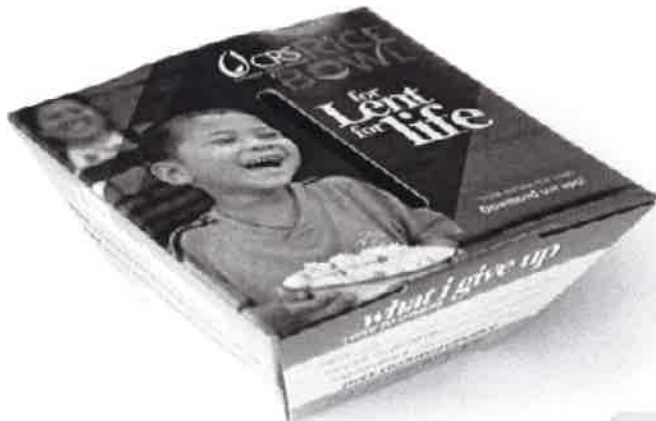


Photo by Karen Kaemmerli for CRS



Find videos and more resources at [crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org)

Download our app!

