



A Middle School Family Hunger Event

It starts at home, moves to a local event, then to a diocesan gathering, and finally back with your family. The Costs? Your time to experience an adventure related to fasting and understanding hunger in today's world.... *And only \$10 per family.*

Schedule

Contact

Dear Parish/ School Leader,

Here it is. Finally. Thanks for your patience.

The cover is a poster to which you can add your own details.

The next page is a cover letter to parents reminding them that they are the primary guides to this experience. When you gather with them, please continue to emphasize that dynamic.

There is a morning prayer and family discussion sheet with which parents should begin their family's day of fasting.

There are three sets of inserts from the Catholic Relief Service's Food Fast Experience for your parish/ regional gathering.

- Prayer
- How Will our Fast help the Poor
- In my Prayer, through our fasting

You should plan to include an ice-breaker and an appropriate break time (to stretch, not snack!)

You have a set of directions to St. Michael, Poplar Springs where Mass for all participants will be celebrated at 5pm. Please plan your own meeting time for your parish/ regional gathering as well as an appropriate departure time. Although the materials provided cover over 2 hours, Please plan only to gather for 2 hours.

At Saint Michael's please encourage each family to make a canned good donation which will be distributed to a local food bank.

Finally, there is an evening prayer after we break-fast in the Eucharist and return to our homes or out for the first meal after the day of fasting.

If you are participating on November 12, we ask that you encourage an offering of \$10 per family. Please consider donating these funds to a local agency addressing hunger in your area.

These materials are intended for November 12, but can be done locally as well at any time. If you do the materials at another time, please make sure to let the offices know (smiller@archbalt.org) so that we can keep records as well as prayer for your efforts.

May God continue to bless you and yours,

D. Scott Miller
Director of the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Dear Parents,

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

Thank you for planning on participating with your middle school aged young person for *Travelling Fast*.

We want to encourage you and support you in your efforts to pass faith over into the lives of your young people.



All the research indicates that your young people are watching how you live out your faith and will most likely repeat the same patterns of living the faith that they see in you. One researcher has called for parents to do “something radical” in faith in hopes that their young people will witness it and feel compelled to live in the same manner as their folks have.

A Middle School Family Hunger Event

We are inviting you to spend a day in fasting with your young people. It will be important that you find ways to communicate that we are doing this not just to feel good about our faith, but that this is what we do as Catholic Christians.

We give things up, at times, to make more space for the experience of the Lord in our lives. We give things up, at times, so that we might find ourselves in greater solidarity with those who are not as fortunate as we might be.

You know your own health as well as that of your child. We are not asking you to put yourself medically at risk, so please plan accordingly as to how you will be travelling fast on November 12. We are asking that you spend intention time together throughout the day outside the programming...

- Holding a brief conversation and prayer at the breakfast table in the morning. We will have resources for you.
- Holding a brief conversation and prayer as you break-fast after liturgy in the evening. Again, we will have resources for you.

May God continue to bless you and yours,

D. Scott Miller

Director of the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
Department of Evangelization, Archdiocese of Baltimore



A Middle School Family Hunger Event

Morning Prayer:

Lord, we hunger for you today, May any experience of emptiness be filled with your love this day. Send your Spirit to give us strength and power through this day. Open our eyes, open our minds, and open our hearts to all that we experience throughout this day. Help us to remember those who will not only be hungry today, but also those who were hungry yesterday and will still be hungry tomorrow. We ask this all through Christ, our Lord.

AMEN

As we start our fast....

- 1) What are you most concerned about happening today?

- 2) How can we support one another throughout this day?

- 3) What are some of the things that we can focus upon to get us through this day?

Opening Prayer: I have called you by name

(30 minutes)

1 of 1

Objective

To begin the Food Fast with a reflection from Scripture and an awareness that God's call has brought us together this day to see, reflect and prepare to act in loving solidarity.

Materials Needed

- small table
- three candles
- matches
- large bowl to hold pieces of paper with each participant's name
- copy of *I have called you by name* handout for each participant
- slips of paper (one per participant)
- pens
- Gather hymnals or lyrics to "We are called"

Procedure

Ask 3 participants to light the candles after the introductory call to prayer and ask 7 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.

Prepare pieces of paper ahead of time and ask the participants to write their names on the paper as they enter the prayer space. Tell the participants to keep their papers until they are asked to offer them up.

Opening Prayer: I have called you by name

Handout

Leader We begin our Food Fast with the recognition that our God has formed us in love, and that He calls us to see, reflect and act in loving solidarity with all our brothers and sisters around the world. Let us light candles to represent this call and to remind ourselves that God is in our midst.

Lighting of the candles.

Reader 1 A reading from Isaiah 43: 1-2; 4-8

But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you,
O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you
are mine.

When you pass through the water, I will be with you; in the rivers you shall not
drown. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned; the flames shall not
consume you.

Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious, and because I love you, I give
men in return for you and peoples in exchange for your life.

Fear not, for I am with you; from the east I will bring back your descendants,
from the west I will gather you.

I will say to the north: Give them up! and to the south: Hold not back! Bring back
my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth:

Everyone who is named as mine, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed
and made.

Quiet moment of reflection on the reading.

Reader 1 You have called us, O Lord, and we are here, in this space made holy by our
desire to have You in our midst and to guide us with Your light and love through
this Food Fast.

All You have called us by name, O Lord.

Each participant will say his/her name, one by one, and then place their paper into the bowl.

Reader 3 We are here, O Lord.

All We, *[all say first names together]*, are here in solidarity with our sisters and
brothers across the globe, especially with those who hunger and thirst, for food
and drink, and for justice and peace.

Reader 4 We are here to listen and to learn,
To reflect and to pray,
To share and to shape a new way of seeing God's Creation,
And new ways of responding to the needs
Of all God's children, the global human family.

Song "We Are Called" (David Haas, GIA Publications)

Opening Prayer: I have called you by name

Handout

Reader 5 A reading from Isaiah 44: 1-5

Hear then, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.

Thus says the LORD who made you, your help, who formed you from the womb:
Fear not, O Jacob, my servant, the darling whom I have chosen.

I will pour out water upon the thirsty ground, and streams upon the dry land; I
will pour out my spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing upon
your descendants.

They shall spring up amid the verdure like poplars beside the flowing waters.

Reader 6 You have blessed us with life and health and the gifts of your Creation. Your
generous love calls us to be generous in turn, with our time, our talents and gifts,
and our loving compassion for a world in need of healing.

All While we fast today, open us to your wisdom.
While we fast today, help us create the interior space to receive your grace.
While we fast today, guide us to see and recognize what is happening to
your beloved world.
While we fast today, let us reflect deeply on the future of our beloved planet.
While we fast today, let us prepare to act in solidarity with those who know
hunger and those whose need for food and water continue in the years ahead.

Reader 7 Without your love we can do nothing, but with your grace, we can help "pour out
water upon the thirsty ground, and streams upon the dry land," so that nurturing
grain can spring up "like poplars beside the flowing waters," allowing all your
people to eat and drink with joy and thanksgiving.

All We trust in your call, and we trust in your promise.
Amen.

Reflection: How will our fast help the poor and hungry?

(45 minutes)

1 of 1

FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will:

- reflect on their reasons for attending this Food Fast and
- consider how their fasting will make a difference in the lives of the poor around the world.

Activity Summary

This activity should be done towards the beginning of the Food Fast. Through a process of journaling and sharing, participants will connect their fast with our responsibility to assist our brothers and sisters in need.

Materials Needed

- copy of *How will our fast help the poor and hungry?* handout for each participant
- pens/pencils
- music
- music player
- flipchart paper
- markers
- tape

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.

Write each reflection question from *How will our fast help the poor and hungry?* at the top of a separate sheet of flipchart paper. Post the paper around the reflection space.

Option: Use *Creating a Fasting Atmosphere: Prayer and Reflection Space* for the setting of this reflection.

Procedure

Invite participants into the prayer and reflection space and provide each person with a copy of the *How will our fast help the poor and hungry?* handout.

Have the readers read their section and then allow 5-10 minutes between each reading for participants to reflect on the reading and respond to the questions. Play a CD of soft instrumental music throughout this activity.

Debrief

At the end of the reflection, invite participants to share their answers to the questions with the entire group. Write their thoughts, words and emotions on the flipchart paper you have prepared ahead of time. Keep these reflections posted in the Prayer and Reflection Space so during quiet times and breaks participants can continue their reflection.

Be sure to provide time to discuss responses to "How will our fast today help the poor and hungry in our world?"

Reflection: How will our fast help the poor and hungry?

Handout

FACE THE FAST

As we continue our Food Fast, we begin to recognize that fasting is important and can guide us towards a deeper spiritual life. Take a moment to be still and to open your hearts and minds so that we may continue to deepen our relationship with God, with each other and with our global family.

Reader 1 A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 58: 6-11)

This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke;

Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am! If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech;

If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday;

Then the LORD will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails.

Consider your decision to participate in this Food Fast and how Isaiah encourages us to fast. Why are you here today?

Reader 2 A reading from Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* #37

Life in many poor countries is still extremely insecure as a consequence of food shortages, and the situation could become worse: *hunger* still reaps enormous numbers of victims among those who, like Lazarus, are not permitted to take their place at the rich man's table, contrary to the hopes expressed by Paul VI. *Feed the hungry* 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. Hunger is not so much dependent on lack of material things as on shortage of social resources, the most important of which are institutional...The right to food, like the right to water, has an important place within the pursuit of other rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a public conscience that considers *food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination*

What is Pope Benedict asking us to do? Who are you fasting for today?

Reflection: How will our fast help the poor and hungry?

Handout

FACE THE FAST

Reader 3 A reading from the U.S. Bishops' statement, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good #15*

Each of us should carefully consider our choices and lifestyles. We live in a culture that prizes the consumption of material goods. While the poor often have too little, many of us can be easily caught up in a frenzy of wanting more and more—a bigger home, a larger car, etc. Even though energy resources literally fuel our economy and provide a good quality of life, we need to ask about ways we can conserve energy, prevent pollution, and live more simply.

How do our decisions and choices affect our brothers and sisters around the world? What are you fasting from today?

Reader 4 A reading from the U.S. Bishops' statement, *Called to Global Solidarity*

Solidarity is action on behalf of the one human family, calling us to help overcome the divisions in our world. Solidarity binds the rich to the poor. It makes the free zealous for the cause of the oppressed. It drives the comfortable and secure to take risks for the victims of tyranny and war. It calls those who are strong to care for those who are weak and vulnerable across the spectrum of human life. It opens homes and hearts to those in flight from terror and to migrants whose daily toil supports affluent lifestyles. Peacemaking, as Pope John Paul II has told us, is the work of solidarity.

How does this Food Fast join us in solidarity with our global family? How will our fast today help the poor and hungry in our world?

Throughout our Food Fast, consider your answers to these questions. If you begin to struggle with your fasting, return to your thoughts, answers and feelings and know that God is accompanying you on this journey.

 **CRS** **FOODFAST**
CHRISTIAN RELIEF SERVICES

foodfast.org

Reflection: In my prayer, through my fasting, with my gifts

(45 minutes)

1 of 2

FACE THE FAST

Objective

Through this activity participants will reflect on how their prayer, fasting, and giving of themselves during this Food Fast can help them gain a better understanding of what God is calling us to do in our world.

Activity Summary

Participants will consider reflections on the practices of prayer, fasting, and giving of ourselves, and consider these reflections in the context of this Food Fast.

Materials Needed

- pens
- paper

Procedure

Invite participants to seat themselves comfortably and quietly. Pass out pens and paper to each person. Then lead the group through a guided reflection using the following script.

Leader Throughout this Food Fast we have been spending time in prayer together, fasting from food, and considering actions we can take to help others. Let's now spend a few minutes considering these three things: prayer, fasting, and giving of ourselves.

First, let us consider prayer.

In our prayers we seek to connect ourselves to God, lifting our minds and hearts to Him. At different times our prayers may be focused on requesting guidance or assistance, expressing our thoughts or sharing our challenges, or simply worshipping God.

We know that God hears us and listens to all of our prayers. In the first letter of John (1 John 5:14), the apostle tells us, "And we have this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

Our prayers can also help clear our minds and open our hearts so we can better hear God's message for us. Let us now take a few moments to consider what we have "heard" during our prayers throughout this Food Fast. What is God telling us through our prayers? What do we hear when we turn our attention away from ourselves and towards God?

Allow a few minutes for reflection on this statement about prayer. Ask participants to write the phrase, "In My Prayer" on their papers, and then write a word or phrase about what they have heard in their prayers during this Food Fast.

Now let us consider our fasting.

We have consciously and willingly decided to go without food for the duration of this Food Fast. There are many examples of fasting in the Bible and throughout history. Jesus himself fasted in the desert for forty days, telling us, "One does not live by bread alone." (Luke 4:4)

As our Food Fast progresses we begin to feel the pangs of hunger. Our hunger pangs are a ready reminder of our inability to sustain ourselves, of our reliance on God and on the divine generosity we receive from the earth, His creation.

We ask ourselves, how will this fast help me to recognize my dependence on God and to love Him with all my heart, mind and soul? Through the pangs of hunger that I feel, am I better able to recognize my neighbor in those who struggle with hunger and poverty? Will I be better able to love my neighbor as myself?

Reflection: In my prayer, through my fasting, with my gifts

(45 minutes)

2 of 2

Allow a few minutes for reflection on this statement about fasting. Ask participants to write the phrase, "Through My Fasting" on their papers, and then write a word or phrase about what they have experienced through their fasting.

Finally, let us consider giving.

In Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, he invites us to consider, "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for 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." (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

When we reflect on the many gifts that we have received from God, we feel grateful. We feel compelled in our gratitude to share our gifts with others. God provides for us through His overwhelming generosity, and in turn, we are called to be generous towards others.

Spend a few minutes thinking about the gifts and talents you have received from God. What "abundant graces" has God provided you? How does God give you all that you need? How can you use these abundant gifts to "give back" to our brothers and sisters in need?

Allow a few minutes for reflection on this statement about giving. Ask participants to write the phrase, "With My Gifts" on their papers, and then write a word or phrase about how they intend to share their gifts with others after this Food Fast.

At the end of the reflection, invite participants to share with each other some of the words or phrases that they have written in response to the reflections on prayer, fasting, and giving of themselves.

FACE THE FAST

**Directions to St. Michael, Poplar Springs
1200 St. Michael's Road
Mt. Airy, MD 21771**

Follow Route 70 to the exit for Route 94 – Woodbine/Lisbon.

As you exit, follow the signs for Lisbon (to the left, if you are coming from Baltimore; to the right if you are coming from Frederick).

Once on Route 94, turn right at the first intersection – Route 144/ Frederick Rd. (has a traffic circle).

Follow 144 for approximately 3 miles into Poplar Springs.

Turn left onto St. Michael's Road, and continue for one block.

St. Michael's Parish is on your left.

Park to the rear of the parking lot.

Saturday Vigil Mass is at 5pm

