It is difficult to imagine that living in the relative comfort we have that hunger and famine are the every day experience in many parts of the world; that many of our brothers and sisters go hungry every day and some die of starvation and malnutrition. One of these places is Burkina Faso, a country slightly larger than Colorado, located in northwest Africa, with a population of over 15,000,000. It is one of the poorest countries in the world with an annual gross domestic product, per capita, of approximately $1,200.00. Although it has largely an agrarian economy, it cannot produce enough food to feed its people.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been active in Burkina Faso since 1960 working with the government and other agencies to alleviate the problem of hunger, but now it faces a daunting task to continue that mission. The rising costs of basic food commodities and the global recession of the past four years has made the situation much more difficult. Also, in the past, Burkina Faso has relied heavily on US food aid to support several feeding programs including school feeding and food for the most vulnerable part of the population. However US food aid has greatly diminished. CRS reports that once again the current harvest season will not produce enough food to feed everyone.

In response to this crisis CRS has developed a program to involve US Catholics in a hands on project to help the people of Burkina Faso during this crisis. CRS delivers bulk food including rice, soy protein and dehydrated vegetables to the participating parishes where volunteers repackage the food into portions serving four people. CRS combines these packages with those produced by other parishes and ships them to Burkina Faso for distribution to the most needy. The cost to produce and ship each bag is $3.00. CRS estimates that a group of 50 volunteers can package 10,000 meals in approximately 2 hours at a cost of $5,000.

CRS will be bringing this program to St. Elizabeth on Saturday, June 8. The poor box collection for March and April will be used to fund this effort. The more money that is contributed, the more meals we can package and ship. This is a unique opportunity to share our time, talent and treasure with those most in need. Please help by putting your donation into the poor box and marking June 8 for this service activity.

For more information visit: http://www.crs.org/countries/burkina-faso

“For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat… To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.”
Matthew 25/35,40