

Offering of Letters



COMBATING CHILDHOOD HUNGER

Catholic Social Teaching Calls Us to Act to End Hunger.

Hunger remains one of the most pressing moral crises of our time. Every 10 seconds, a child dies from hunger-related causes, and more than 735 million people worldwide face chronic food insecurity. In the United States alone, more than one in five children live in food-insecure households. As Catholics, we cannot ignore this reality. Our faith calls us to act in both charity and justice, addressing the systemic causes of hunger while providing for those in immediate need.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) emphasizes that food is a basic human right, not a privilege. The principles of CST compel believers to respond to hunger with urgency: The dignity of the human person demands that no child suffer from hunger in a world where there is enough food for all. The option for the poor and vulnerable calls us to prioritize the needs of struggling families. Solidarity reminds us that hunger is not just an issue affecting others; it is a moral responsibility for all of us. The call to community and participation insists that faith demands action. We are called not only to feed the hungry but also to advocate for policies that eliminate hunger at its root.

For decades, the Catholic Church has supported programs like WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) because they save lives. WIC serves 40% of U.S. infants, ensuring they receive proper nutrition from birth. Studies show that WIC reduces infant mortality, improves birth outcomes, and supports healthy childhood development. SNAP provides food assistance to over 40 million Americans, including 20 million children, preventing families from having to choose between paying rent and putting food on the table. Yet, these programs are under threat from funding cuts that could leave thousands of families without support. Catholics have a duty to raise their voices and defend these programs.

One of the most effective ways for Catholics to respond is through the Offering of Letters, an advocacy initiative by Bread for the World. Since 1975, churches, schools, and Catholic organizations have participated by writing to Congress, urging lawmakers to protect nutrition programs. This year's priorities include protecting SNAP ...

Hunger Statistics

Global Hunger:

735 million people face chronic hunger
45 million children suffer from wasting, a severe form of malnutrition.

Hunger in the United States:

More than 1 in 5 U.S. children live in food insecure households.

SNAP (Food Stamps) serves over 20 million children.

WIC supports nearly 7 million participants, covering 40% of U.S. infants.

Childhood Hunger and Health

Malnutrition contributes to 45% of all deaths among children under age 5 (WHO).

Children in food-insecure homes are twice as likely to suffer from poor health and developmental delays.

Every 10 seconds, a child dies from hunger-related causes worldwide.

Economic and Policy Impact

Every \$1 invested in WIC saves at least \$2.48 in healthcare and educational costs.

90-95% of food aid in the U.S. comes from federal nutrition programs, not food banks.

The Farm Bill, reauthorized every 5 years, determines key hunger and nutrition policy funding.

A sample letter to send to your local representative can be found on the following pages.

The Social Action Ministry

from cuts and restrictions, reauthorizing the Food for Peace global nutrition program at no less than \$2.5 billion annually, fully funding WIC so that all eligible families can enroll and stay enrolled, and providing robust USAID funding for international nutrition programs.

Participating in an Offering of Letters is a simple yet powerful way to make a difference. Here's how to help: Speak with your parish or school about organizing an event. Gather a team, such as a Social Justice Committee or youth group. Write letters to your Senators and Representatives urging them to support policies that combat hunger. Set up tables after Mass, inviting parishioners to sign letters. Deliver the letters to local congressional offices.

Pope Francis reminds us: "Whenever we encounter a poor, hungry person, we cannot look away. That would prevent us from encountering Christ Himself." As Catholics, we are called to act boldly, advocate persistently, and stand in solidarity with those suffering from hunger. A single letter may seem small, but for every letter written, a life is saved.

Our Local Representatives



Senator Jon Husted

SR-198 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
P# 202-224-3353



Senator Bernie Moreno

Carl B. Stokes U.S. Courthouse
801 W Superior Ave., STE 1400
Cleveland, OH 44113
P# 202-522-7272



Congresswoman Shontel Brown

District Office East
25200 Chagrin Blvd, Suite 200
Beachwood, OH 44122
P# 216-522-4900

To Find additional representatives, and to fill out an online letter than you can easily print and mail, please use this QR Code.



Other Ways You Can Help

Support Local Food Pantries & Soup Kitchens – Donate food, volunteer time, or help organize parish collections to support those facing food insecurity in your community.

Advocate Within Your Parish – Consider joining the Social Action Ministry by calling the parish office 216-521-0184, Organize hunger awareness events, host discussions on Catholic Social Teaching, or encourage others to take part in initiatives.

Pray for the Hungry & Vulnerable – Have a Mass said, or offer your own private prayer for the ending of hunger.

Fast in Solidarity – Participate in voluntary fasting and donate the money saved on meals to hunger relief organizations like Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Support Ethical & Sustainable Agriculture – Purchase fair-trade and locally sourced food, advocate for just wages for farmers, and support policies promoting sustainable food systems.

Volunteer with Catholic Charities & CRS – Engage in direct service opportunities with Catholic organizations that provide food aid and advocate for hunger relief programs.

Sponsor or Mentor Families in Need – Work through parish ministries to provide assistance, mentorship, or resources to struggling families in your community.

Engage in Legislative Advocacy Beyond Letters – Schedule meetings with lawmakers, participate in public hearings, or join Catholic-led advocacy coalitions that address hunger and poverty issues.

Sample Letter

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Your Email]
[Date]

The Honorable [Senator/Representative Name]
[Office Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Senator/Representative Name],

As your constituent and as a Catholic guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, I write to urge you to take decisive action in addressing the crisis of hunger that affects both our nation and the world. The dignity of every human person demands that we work to ensure that all people, especially children and vulnerable families, have access to sufficient and nutritious food. Programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provide lifelines to millions and must be fully funded and protected.

As a person of faith, I am deeply concerned that food insecurity continues to impact families, particularly low-income mothers and children. WIC currently serves nearly 7 million participants monthly, providing essential nutrition and health benefits to pregnant women, infants, and young children. Without adequate funding, many eligible families could be turned away for the first time in decades.

As Congress works to shape policies related to nutrition and food security, I ask that you champion policies that promote human dignity and the common good. Specifically, I urge you to:
Protect SNAP from funding cuts and further restrictions.

Reauthorize the Food for Peace global nutrition program at no less than its current level of \$2.5 billion annually, with added flexibility to provide the most effective assistance in each local context.

Fully fund WIC and strengthen the program so that more eligible families can enroll and stay enrolled. Provide robust funding for global nutrition programs through USAID to reach millions of children with lifesaving assistance.

Our Catholic tradition calls us to uphold the rights and dignity of the poor and to seek justice for those in need. As Pope Francis reminds us, “Whenever we encounter a poor, hungry person, we cannot look away. That would prevent us from encountering Christ Himself.” The Offering of Letters initiative, in which I am participating, is an expression of faith in action—advocating for policies that serve the most vulnerable among us.

I urge you to support these critical programs and stand against any efforts to weaken them. Your leadership in this matter can make a profound difference in the lives of millions. Please be a voice for those who often go unheard, and work to ensure that hunger is not a reality for any family in our nation or across the world.

Thank you for your service and for considering my request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
