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*Hunger No More* is a uniquely cooperative effort of the churches and organizations listed on the back cover of the folder and on the handout titled “Go and Do Likewise.”

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*Hunger No More* can be ordered from Bread for the World, [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org), or downloaded, along with children’s activities, supplementary materials and Web site links at [www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org).

## Introduction

### What is this study about?

We live in a shrinking and ever-more-interdependent world. Whether we look at the labels on our clothes, the globalization of communication and markets, the role of transnational corporations, the threats of international terrorism, multi-national peacekeeping, surfing the world wide web, or hunger at home, our lives are touched by people, events and ideas that originate far from our homes and borders. And, we, in turn, affect the lives of people far away.

For people of faith, this growing awareness brings a gift – knowledge of customs, traditions and witness from many cultures – and an obligation to understand our world better, and the claims made on us. High among these claims are the biblical mandates to care for those who are hungry and poor, and constantly to look into our own hearts for the ways in which we can open our hearts to God's grace, to walk in love as Jesus did with people for whom he also suffered and died.

This new packet helps parishes open up a discussion of issues related to hunger, poverty and powerlessness in the United States and the developing world; the causes, solutions and the roles that we might play. It is about the relationship of the community of faith, Christ's body in the world, struggling to clarify our identity and mission – believers seeking to understand and respond to God's call at home and abroad.

### Who is it for?

These lessons are very basic, very introductory. While social activists will find it useful, the material is designed for people of faith who are willing to discuss these issues, perhaps for the first time. The materials aim to get a discussion going, not to push people to predetermined answers. At the end of the sessions, people may continue to disagree about issues and strategies, but remain friends in the faith.

This packet includes six sessions for adults and youth as part of the larger program of parish life and education. Each session is supported by a unit in this guide, a separate handout with

stories from scripture and from life, references for further study and suggestions and materials for children that can be offered simultaneously with, or separately from, the youth/adult sessions. Many of the materials can be adapted for more than one age group or setting. So explore them all with an inquisitive mind and an open heart. Since the issues cross generations, the lessons can also be used to connect generations!

Here are some ideas for using the materials:

- Adult, youth or children's Sunday school during a special season of the church year, such as Lent, or as an on-going supplement to the regular curriculum
- Small-group faith formation, including programs for newcomers, for Christian initiation of adults and confirmation preparation for any age
- Meetings of Christian communities
- Mid-week adult or inter-generational forums
- Program groups and committees to ground the work of mission, e.g. education or family ministry committees
- Retreats. Family nights at home. For the formation of parish staff or as a focal point for ecumenical and interfaith gatherings. (There is a separate, but parallel, Jewish version of *Hunger No More*.)

One of the best ways to use the materials is during regularly scheduled study sessions that have an ongoing established community. The leader can do supplementary recruitment, but does not have to start from scratch.

Be creative! How about involving shut-ins by phone, computer, correspondence? Use the internet to reach those temporarily away, like college students who may be studying these issues in other ways.



The six handouts included in the back pocket can be handouts for class or discussion sessions, bulletin inserts or in newsletter mailings to the congregation. Choose one, two or all six to help educate the whole congregation. They can also be used along with an outside speaker. Some pages in this guide can be used in the group sessions, incorporated into other education programs or events, or used for individual study and reflection.

### Who might lead this study?

This study is not just about learning facts. It engages people in a conversation about their faith, with prayerful reflection, dialogue and response. The primary learning occurs in the group interactions as people share their own experiences, opinions and knowledge with one another. Participation is key!

The leader **does not** need to be someone who is:

- An expert
- A member of the parish staff
- Someone already active in hunger or social justice issues

The leader **does** need to be someone who is:

- Comfortable leading group discussions, who will encourage everyone to participate and be accepting of a diversity of opinions
- Open to the work of the Spirit in the group
- Wants to learn more about faith, the ways God works in the world and asks us to do likewise
- Willing to take on the tasks of preparation and follow up

### What should the leader know before starting?

People have varying points of view on issues, approaches and interpretations, some of which may be strongly held. The leader will want to encourage an atmosphere of trust and openness rather than the promotion of an individual agenda. This requires sensitivity, but will also be helped by starting out with basic ground rules. On page 30, you will find “Helps to Guide Our

Discussions.” The leader should go over the “helps” with participants at the beginning of the first session, and post a copy of them on newsprint or poster board so everyone will remember during the sessions.

These materials are introductory. The group may be looking for answers or further guidance on questions between sessions. For those who are interested, we have provided additional resources and Web sites.

The leader should be able to deal with (and make the group comfortable with) the likelihood that consensus on solutions to hunger and poverty are not likely to arise in any one session, or even at the end of all the sessions. At the same time, people can and do change – both minds and hearts. This change may be apparent, or may be going on deep within. Never discount the hidden work of the Holy Spirit.



### Getting Started

The person(s) initiating this study needs to:

- Get permission to hold the sessions from the appropriate people in your faith community. Discuss ways in which the larger pastoral team can support the program or relate it to other work or study going on in the parish.
- Decide on the timing and number of classes to be held, and whether the children’s activities ([www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org)) will be used during the same hours as the youth/adult studies or independently.
- Give the materials to the appropriate people in plenty of time to prepare. Children’s sessions may take longer to prepare. You may want to hold a preparatory session with just the leaders if there are more than one.
- Hang the poster (included with this packet) in a prominent place to advertise the sessions. Include the dates, times, topics and contact information (person, phone number).
- Announce the sessions in the congregation’s bulletin, newsletter and Web site (if available), and at the appropriate time when people are gathered for worship.

## Introduction

- If possible, get a sign-up sheet or other indication of the number of participants so that you will have enough materials and the space adequately prepared.

### Each session has:

- An opening prayer. You may use the suggestions in each unit or develop your own. It is important that the discussion and atmosphere be shaped by prayer.
- God's Story, a brief study of selected Scripture(s).
- A story by or about people in different societies, countries, communities and cultures. The sessions suggest various ways of presenting these stories.
- Facts about facets of hunger, poverty, powerlessness and what we can do. Remind participants that behind each fact, there are many human stories.
- Our Story, that explores how we can connect our individual, family and congregational lives with the people in need and with our mandate from Scripture.
- Closing reflections and prayer.

The sessions can be done in approximately one hour. The timing and setting depends on the size of the group. In some cases you will have more materials than you can use. So select according to your sense of the group's interests. To shorten a session, skip some of the discussion questions. To lengthen a session, e.g. for a retreat setting, allow more time for discussion and include supplementary games, discussion questions and other activities found at [www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org).

As part of any session, you can invite someone involved in hunger concerns from your congregation or community to share briefly with the group. Make sure to encourage the group to look for and bring in news articles explicitly or implicitly related to hunger. Post these articles for others in the congregation to see. You can also share a quick summary from each session in the congregation's newsletter or bulletin. Be alert to articles, radio and television programs

and Internet sites that you can suggest to the group as well.

Remember, that the learning taking place *in* the group can be a catalyst for the whole congregation.

### For each session you will need:

- This leader's guide
- The "Helps to Guide Our Discussions" poster or sheet, p. 30
- Photocopies of the appropriate handouts in the pocket of this guide, and other materials, for each participant
- Bibles for each participant, or enough to share
- Overhead projector or copies of selected pages; a VCR for videos
- Statements from your denomination on world hunger, justice or poverty (see [www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org))
- Pencils and markers
- Newsprint and easel
- Masking tape
- A rough outline of how you plan to divide the time of the session among activities – even though things might not go exactly as you plan!
- Copies of any parts of the prayer materials that the whole group will use, or an overhead of the same



### Hints for Leaders

- Begin your own preparation with prayer.
- Be sure to read over the session well in advance so that you have a good idea of the materials and direction.
- Make the required copies or transparencies.
- Begin each session with the prayer and Bible study to set a framework for the discussion and remind the participants of its purpose and grounding.



- Encourage everyone to participate in the discussion and be receptive to listening to all points of view. Be clear at the beginning of each session, and by your own actions throughout the session, that whether or not you agree with someone's opinion, no opinion or person is to be belittled.
- If one participant tends to dominate the discussion, ask that no one speak a second time until everyone has had the opportunity to speak. If this is an opening ground rule, no one will feel singled out later.
- Expect that the discussion will bring out a variety of opinions. Encourage participants to speak with certainty only of their own experiences and to avoid making generalizations from them or about others.
- Keep track of the time so you will not have to rush or omit the closing meditation and prayer. You might ask for a volunteer timekeeper to tell you when you are halfway through, or at various benchmarks on your own timeline, and when there are 10 minutes left to go. It is helpful to keep a brief summary of each session, especially concerns that remain to be addressed in future sessions. You will save time and avoid being distracted if you can ask one of the participants to act as a volunteer recorder.
- At the end of each session add your own notes to the recorder's notes. Is any action required on your part before the next session? Has anyone else volunteered to look into something that you might need to remind them of? Are there issues arising out of the discussion that you might want to be particularly alert to before you meet again?

### The Millennium Development Goals

Many of the handouts include one or more of the Millennium Development Goals (p. 31). You could hand out and post copies of the whole list at any point in the group discussion, e.g. during the discussion of globalization. Or, the Goals could become the focus of an entire session. For more information on the Goals, see links at [www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org).

In 2002, President George W. Bush announced that the United States would significantly increase development assistance to poor countries that demonstrate a commitment to good governance, investment in people and sound economic policies. Citing and affirming the Millennium Development Goals, the president said the increased assistance would go to a new Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) to fund initiatives that improve the lives of people in developing countries around the world.

The Millennium Challenge Account should incorporate many of the lessons learned over the years about the effective delivery of development assistance. Governments that are tough on corruption, invest in improving the health and education of their people, and implement sensible economic policies are much more likely to have a good strategy for reducing poverty and to use development assistance effectively.

In order for the Millennium Challenge Account to meaningfully enhance the lives of hungry and poor people, Congress must adequately fund it. This amounts to an additional \$5 billion a year in poverty-focused development assistance by 2006, as the president promised in his announcement. Along with securing this funding, Bread for the World and other organizations will urge Congress to design the MCA in a way that maximizes its effectiveness in reducing hunger and poverty. Check [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org) to learn the current status of this initiative.

### Adult, Youth and Children's Activities

A partial list of adult and children's activities, and many other materials to supplement *Hunger No More* can be found on page 32 or at [www.hungernomore.org](http://www.hungernomore.org).

