COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Icebreakers, Warm-ups and Energizers

BE THE CHANGE
FOODFAST

A CRS EDUCATION PROGRAM
Through **CRS FoodFast—Be the Change**, Catholic Relief Services helps you to create an experience that is unique to the charism and needs of your community. **Be the Change** explores the realities of global hunger through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching. Participants are encouraged to reflect on Jesus’ call to discipleship as an invitation to effect meaningful change in their own lives and in our world.

Pick and choose from a wide variety of community builders, prayer resources, learning experiences, and general reflection activities to create your own unique **CRS FoodFast** event. Schedule templates are included in the Coordinator’s Manual and provide a framework to guide your planning. Consider using the supplemental resources on the CRS FoodFast website [foodfast.crs.org](http://foodfast.crs.org) or integrate your own ideas to enhance the overall experience for participants. We recognize the level of commitment many faith and school communities have to inspiring young people to live out their faith in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world. We hope the resources in this theme help you to achieve that vision.

**COMMUNITY BUILDERS:**
**ICEBREAKERS, WARM-UPS AND ENERGIZERS**

This collection of games and activities offer opportunities that foster community and unity within your group. Not only do they help participants get to know each other, they also nurture communication, cooperation and fun.

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ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BUILDERS

All of the theme-based FoodFasts contain community builders that can also be used or adapted for a general FoodFast. Check out the list below for additional ideas that can be found in the 24-Hour modules of each theme!

ENOUGH
- **Food and Me:** an introductory icebreaker that focuses on participants’ use of food and their understanding of food security
- **World of Food:** a team-oriented matching game that explores what goes into different types of cultural foods
- **Simon Says:** a fun “food” version of the popular game
- **Food and Faith Jeopardy:** a fun relaxed way to make the faith-life connections around the issues of hunger and food using the popular television show game

JUST FOOD
- **Name Tag Mingling:** an introductory icebreaker to mix up participants and get them talking about food
- **Where in the World Does our Food Come From:** a fun team-oriented quiz game exploring the global nature of our food supply
- **Food Music:** an energizer that encourages participants to use popular music to sing about their favorite foods

UNCOMMON GOOD
- **Speed Sharing:** an icebreaker that encourages participants to talk about food and care for creation
- **Dress Me Relay:** a team-oriented community builder focusing on the benefits of collaboration over competition
- **Shape Shifters:** an energizer that fosters cooperation and teamwork
OBJECTIVES
To help participants feel relaxed and ready to go while allowing participants to learn about each other while playing a fun game.

MATERIALS NEEDED
• Print one Bingo card for each participant. Use the pre-filled card provided or use the blank card and fill it with customized topics for your group.
• pens/pencils
• a fair trade prize for the winner

PROCESS
Distribute a Bingo card and pen or pencil to each participant.

Invite participants to move around the space asking other participants to sign a box that matches or corresponds to a fact about them. Participants can only sign one fact per card, unless you are working with a small group in which case you can increase the number of boxes they sign. Unlike regular Bingo, all spaces on the card should be filled.

In boxes marked “share,” participants should share more information related to that fact. For instance, if someone signs “Has traveled to another country,” that person should say to which other country he or she has traveled.

Whoever completes the card first, wins.
BINGO CARD ATTRIBUTES

- Plays an instrument (Share)
- Has a dog
- Likes soccer
- Is wearing something green
- Is learning another language (Share)
- Is the youngest child
- Has a driver’s license
- Has traveled to another country (Share)
- Has ridden a train
- Has a cat
- Has red hair
- Born in October
- Plays a sport (Share)
- Is the oldest child
- Has a six-letter name
- Likes winter
- Is an only child
- Was born in another state (Share)
- Likes to cook
- Has applied to college (Share)
- Born in February
- Knows what profession he or she wants to do (Share)
- Likes to sing
- Has participated in a service trip
- Attends a Catholic school (Share)
- Enjoys hiking or camping
- Enjoys rollercoasters
- Has contributed time, money or items to help someone in the past month
- Has visit at least one national park (Share)
### GET-TO-KNOW-YOU BINGO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plays an instrument (Share)</th>
<th>Has a dog</th>
<th>Likes soccer</th>
<th>Is wearing something green (Share)</th>
<th>Is learning another language (Share)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the youngest child</td>
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<td>Has traveled to another country (Share)</td>
<td>Has ridden a train</td>
<td>Has a cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has red hair</td>
<td>Born in October</td>
<td>Plays a sport (Share)</td>
<td>Is the oldest child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a six-letter name</td>
<td>Likes winter</td>
<td>Is an only child</td>
<td>Goes by their middle name</td>
<td>Was born in another state (Share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to cook</td>
<td>Has applied to College</td>
<td>Born in February</td>
<td>Knows what profession he/she wants to do (Share)</td>
<td>Likes to sing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BINGO CARD

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OBJECTIVES
To foster individual introductions through the creation of name acrostics.

MATERIALS NEEDED
• paper
• markers
• tape
• pens/pencils

PROCESS
Give a piece of paper and a pen or pencil to each participant and have them write their names vertically along the left side of the paper. Next to each letter, they should write a word or phrase that describes them using that letter. Encourage participants to decorate their papers.

When everyone is finished, ask participants to stand up and introduce themselves and quickly rattle off the words they used to describe themselves. If you have a large group, divide into smaller groups and have participants share within that group.

After everyone has been introduced, hang each person’s acrostic around the retreat space. Note: This icebreaker is a good opening activity.

Example:

F un
O pportunity
O ffering
D ynamic
F aith
A ctive
S olidarity with the poor
T each my community about global issues
OBJECTIVE
To highlight the importance of communication and working together by unraveling a “human knot” without letting go of each other’s hands.

PROCESS
1. Divide participants into groups of 10-15 and have them form a circle.
2. Ask each participant to put one hand in the middle of the circle and grasp another person’s hand, making sure not to hold the person’s hand on either side of them. Then ask them to put their other hands in the middle and grasp another hand.
3. Explain to participants that they must untangle themselves, without letting go of hands, so that when they are finished their group forms a circle. (Option: Make it more challenging by not allowing any verbal communication.)
4. Participants may change their grip to be more comfortable, but they are not to unclasp and re-clasp. If the human knot is unraveled quickly, have participants try again.

If time permits, spend a few minutes discussing the following questions after the exercise is complete.
• What did your group have to do in order to successfully complete the task?
• What lessons from this activity can we apply to what we are learning during our CRS FoodFast about our world and our role in it?
**OBJECTIVE**
To build team spirit while helping participants consider the basic necessities of life that we often may take for granted.

**SETUP/MATERIALS NEEDED**
- One lightweight basket per group
- Tape
- Items representing necessities for survival (one of each for every group)
  - bundle of twigs (represents fuel for cooking and for heat)
  - grains of rice in zip lock bags (represents food)
    Option: The rice can be part of the simple meal prepared to break the fast so that it is not wasted.
  - small water bottles (represents clean drinking water)
  - handful of blocks (represents building materials for housing)
  - yarn or spools of thread (represents clothing)
  - air filtering face masks (represents clean air/environment)
  - bandages or small first aid kits (represents health care)
  - heart-shaped candy (represents love)

Option: Provide copies of processing questions for each group.

**PROCESS**
Divide participants into small groups. In this relay race, members of the group will take turns transporting one item at a time in the basket, while balancing the basket on their heads.

Mark a starting line and a finish line 15-20 feet apart on the floor with tape. Groups must transport their items one at a time from the starting line to the finish line. Items will be placed in the basket, and balanced on the participants’ heads. If the relay racer touches the basket with his/her hands or if the item or basket falls, he/she must go back to the starting line and begin again. When an individual reach the finish line, he/she sets the item down, returns to the starting line and gives the basket to the next person in line, who transports the next item. The first group who completes the transport of materials wins.

**OPTIONAL PROCESSING:**
- What necessities do the materials represent and how is each important in our lives?
- What supply chains do we rely on in order to access each of these necessities?
- What happens when our supply chains are interrupted?
- How did you feel when one of the items you were transporting fell to the ground, thus dropping out of the supply chain?
OBJECTIVES
To allow participants to share their hopes and expectations for this CRS FoodFast while performing a physical exercise.

SETUP/MATERIALS NEEDED
• Make a poster or a PowerPoint slide listing the embargoed words (words that cannot be spoken)
• Tape the poster or project the slide onto a wall space so that it is clearly visible to everyone
• A timer
• Copy the CRS FoodFast Calisthenics Resource page. Cut along the dotted lines to create a “Discussion Topic / Embargoed Words” slip for each pair.

PROCESS
Divide participants into pairs and distribute one “Discussion Topic/Embargoed Words” slip to each pair. Each pair will take a turn in front of the group and proceed as follows:

1. Each pair will speak on their assigned topic for 1 minute while both participants perform an assigned exercise (examples below).
2. Each participant will speak for no more than 30 seconds at a time and both participants must speak.
3. If either person uses any of the embargoed words listed on their slip of paper, the pair must continue the conversation and exercise for an additional 30 seconds.
4. When the pair successfully discusses their topic for the allotted time without saying any of the embargoed words, they are done and the next pair can advance to the front of the room.

The whole group will observe and listen to the conversations as each pair takes a turn to complete the assignment. After all of the pairs have taken a turn, take a few minutes to debrief the whole group on how they felt about this activity, and what they learned about themselves and each other from the conversations.

Option: If you have a large group, this activity can also be performed in small groups, but you may want to extend the time to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak.

EXAMPLES OF PHYSICAL EXERCISES
• Sit-ups
• Jumping jacks
• Jog in place
• Wall-sit
• Pushups
• Leg and arm stretches
• Pinwheels/Touching-Toes
DISCUSSION TOPICS/EMBARGOED WORDS

DISCUSSION TOPIC
What experiences with fasting have you had before today?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
Why did you sign up to participate in this FoodFast?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
What do you think will be the hardest part of this FoodFast?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
What do you expect to learn during this FoodFast?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
What do you think is the spiritual benefit from fasting?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
What do you think are the greatest challenges facing people living with hunger or in poverty?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

DISCUSSION TOPIC
How do you think your participation in this FoodFast will make a difference in the world?
EMBARGOED WORDS
• Helping
• Poor
• Hungry
• Poverty
• Hunger
• Food
• Eating
• Security
• Friends

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OBJECTIVES
To add fun and energy into your CRS FoodFast while exploring communication channels and obstacles.

MATERIALS NEEDED
- A bowl or container for the charade index cards
- In advance, prepare slips of paper or index cards with the following words or phrases written on them (feel free to use other words or phrases not listed):
  - Hula Hoop
  - Pirate
  - Sky Diving
  - Eating an Apple
  - Bungee Jumping
  - Roller Coaster
  - Candy Bar
  - Thanksgiving
  - Hunger, Water
  - Farmer
  - Family
  - Community Service
  - Recycling
  - Electricity
  - Jesus
  - Stations of the Cross
  - Resurrection

ACTIVITY SUMMARY:
In small groups (4-6 people), one participant acts out a word or phrase for one of the other small group participants. Without any words or sounds being exchanged, that participant acts out what she/he thinks the word is to the next participant, and so on until the last person in the small group guesses what word or phrase was given.

PROCESS
Divide the group into teams of four to six people and pick a team to go first. Each team’s turn will proceed as follows:

1. In the front of the room, the group members should line up single file, all facing one direction so they are lined up one behind the other (they will look like they are forming a human train).
2. The person at the end of the train will be the first to act out the clue. The person at the front of the train will eventually be the final guesser. The end person picks an index card with a word or phrase from the bowl and shows it to the audience (all the other groups).
3. After a brief moment to think about how she/he will act out the word/phrase, the person will tap the next person in line (person #2) on the shoulder. That person will turn around and face the actor. The actor will then have 1 minute to act out the word or phrase (using no sounds) while second person tries to silently determine what the word/phrase is. Person #2 never makes a guess aloud; instead, that person merely tries to determine the answer and continues with the next step by acting out what he/she thinks is the charade word in his/her own manner.
4. After a minute, person #2 becomes the new actor and taps the next person in line (person #3) on the shoulder. That person will turn around and face the new person (person #2). The new actor then has 1 minute to act out what she/he thinks the word is.
5. This continues until the game gets to the person at the front of the line (the guesser).
6. The person at the front of the line must guess what word/phrase is being acted out. If the person guesses correctly, that team gets 2 points.
7. If the person at the front of the line guesses incorrectly, the original actor for that team gets a chance to act out the word/phrase to the person at the front of the line (the guesser). If the guesser answers correctly from the original actor, that team gets 1 point.

8. When the first team is finished, the next team comes to the front of the room and the process starts over.

9. Play as many rounds as time permits.

Note: This whole exchange should proceed silently without the team communicating verbally until the final guess is announced.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

1. What occurred as the word or phrases was acted out or “charaded” through the small group?
2. What might this say about communication in general?
3. How might this relate to our perceptions regarding hunger and poverty?
OBJECTIVES
To foster community building and help participants identify commonalities with others.

SETUP
Review the list of characteristics

PROCESS
In a large room or outside, invite participants to move and intermingle around the area. Every few seconds the leader shouts a category. All people with the same characteristic should “clump” together as fast as possible. (For “either/or” categories, those that do not have that characteristic should “clump” together.)

To help participants easily identify their groups, encourage them to shout out the characteristic that applies to them. After everyone is in a group, invite them to introduce each other if needed and do a quick cheer. Participants should then break up and continue moving around until the next characteristic is shouted.
CLUMP BY:
- Age
- School
- Number of siblings
- Type of pet they have
- Hair color
- Shoe size
- Number of years living in their hometown
- Graduation year
- Favorite sport
- Favorite subject
- Favorite restaurant
- Usual mode of transportation to school

... And create your own!

ADDITIONAL “EITHER/OR” CATEGORIES:
- are wearing jeans
- play an instrument
- speak a second language
- can drive
- have participated in Food Fast before
- know what Catholic Relief Services is (have the group define CRS)
- know what solidarity is (have those that know what solidarity is explain it)
- know at least 4 principles of Catholic social teaching (have the group state the ones they know)
- know how many people in the world who go hungry (1.02 billion people)
- know how many people in the world do not have access to clean water (2.5 billion people)