

2019 Bread for the World Sunday Reflection

On Bread for the World Sunday, churches of all faith traditions offer prayers for and with those who live in hunger in our own country and abroad — and for our nation’s decision makers who can change the policies and conditions that allow hunger to persist. Trusting in the abundance of God’s creation, people of faith rededicate themselves to seeing that those who struggle with hunger are able to move out of poverty and feed their families.

“You Give Them Something to Eat.”

by Bishop Frank Madison Reid III

On this Bread for the World Sunday 2019, Jesus Christ is calling the church and all nations to end hunger and abolish poverty. This divine call is for every individual and institution on the planet.

There are governmental leaders attempting to redefine poverty, hunger, and need in such a way that can lead to the reduction of resources for those in need. Today, churches and non-profits find that their food banks are close to empty. Many feel abandoned in the face of policies that can lead to increased hunger in their communities. Today, Luke’s story of the feeding of the 5,000 increases our hope and encourages our work to provide bread for the world.

This work to which we are called finds its roots in God’s Word and God’s commitment to people affected by poverty. This scriptural imperative is powerfully and precisely stated in Matthew 25:35 when Jesus said: “For I was **hungry** and **you** gave me food; I was **thirsty** and **you** gave me drink; I was a **stranger** and **you** took me in; I was **naked** and **you** clothed me; I was **sick** and **you** visited me; I was in **prison** and **you** came to me.” In this consistent refrain is: *I was*, and *you acted* to meet my needs.

Matthew 25:32-40 is a biblical foundation for a clear understanding and practice of Luke’s account of the feeding of the 5,000. Luke 9:13 gives startling power and specificity to Matthew 25: **You give them something to eat!** You give them something to eat now!

Over 2,000 years later, Jesus is speaking to us through our partnership with Bread for the World. Jesus is giving each of us the same wake-up call given to his disciples: **You give them something to eat.** Our Lord’s 21st century wake-up call is for individuals, institutions, governments, and nations: **You give them something to eat.**

- You **love** people who struggle with hunger and poverty enough to fight for policies and funds to feed and empower those in need.
- You **lead** the way in delivering children and people affected by poverty, some of whom are working, from hunger and homelessness.
- You **lead** the way in developing programs and projects that will feed those who experience chronic hunger.
- You **listen** and act on God’s biblical preferential option for impoverished people.

Then, on this Bread for the World Sunday, we will celebrate **liberation** for the people in need. We will celebrate the fulfillment of Luke 4:16-21 in the 21st century.

Bishop Frank Madison Reid III is the Presiding Prelate of the Third Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). He also serves as the Bishop of Ecumenical and Urban Affairs for the AME Church.



Bishop Frank Madison Reid III

Offering of Letters

As part of your Bread for the World Sunday celebration, you may want to conduct an Offering of Letters—taking time to write brief letters to your representative and senators in Washington, D.C. Your letters can be written to urge Congress to accelerate progress on global nutrition, to address the root causes of migration, or to reform our criminal justice system—all critical to ending hunger and poverty in the United States and abroad. For sample letters and more information, visit bread.org/sunday.

About Bread for the World

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. God’s grace in Jesus Christ moves us to reach out to our neighbors—whether they live next door, in another state, or on another continent. Bread for the World’s work is made possible by contributions from individuals and churches. We invite you to join us by visiting bread.org/join or calling 800-822-7323.

Prayer for Bread for the World Sunday

by Evram Dawd

Lord Jesus Christ,

You sent out the twelve and told them to take nothing for the journey. Instead of staffs or money, You gave them “power and authority.” Remind us now that what You give is greater than what we think we need.

When they returned and told You all that they had done, You unexpectedly took them aside “into a deserted place.” Remind us now that our fantasies of expectation lead away from Your blessed reality.

Seeing the multitudes, You “spoke to them about the kingdom... and healed those who had need of healing.” Remind us now that true healing is not just for the body.

When Your disciples asked You to send the hungry away, You said to them, “You give them something to eat.” Remind us now that what You said to them, You are also saying to us.

After they all ate and were filled, twelve entire baskets of leftovers remained. Remind us now that You have come that we may have life and that we may have it more abundantly.

In Christ Jesus,
our Lord, Amen.

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breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

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Litany for Bread for the World Sunday

by Dr. Kimberly Lymore

SONG: *Give Us This Day*, written by Edwin Hawkins and performed by Jennifer Holliday, or *More than Enough*, written by Robert Gay and performed by Kim Stratton

LEADER: Lord, you are faithful and trustworthy. You supply us with every need and some of our wants according to your good and perfect will. We come before you with grateful hearts thanking you for your provision poured into our life.

ALL: Thank you, Lord, for being Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide, as you provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

LEADER: O Lord, you listened to the cries of the Israelites for food and fed them with manna in the wilderness. Let us be grateful for the food we have but also attentive to the cries of the millions who have no food.

ALL: Help us, O Lord, to be your disciples that provide the modern-day manna of food and clean water to those who are hungry and thirsty.

LEADER: Today, we remember all those affected by hunger, especially the children who suffer from malnutrition and die of starvation in a world where there is enough food produced for everyone. Forgive us our sin of selfishness, as individuals and as a nation that denies the basic human rights for food, drinkable water, and health care.

ALL: O Lord, we repent for not being our brothers' and sisters' keepers as you instructed us to do.

LEADER: Lord, we confess with shame the hunger in our world, the unjust systems that allow impoverished people to cry out to you for bread. Move our hearts not to look away from the poverty that stares at us each and every day; teach us to know that we cannot share in your life without sharing our lives with others.

ALL: Holy Spirit, inspire us to share God's love, challenge us with God's truth, empower us with God's strength to work for a world in which all will have food and clean water, and where all can sit at a table with family and friends sharing in the abundance of God's provision. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

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Dr. Kimberly Lymore