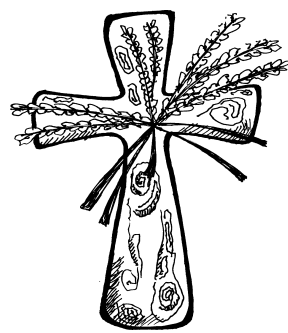


# 40 Days to Better Understanding

*The folks at Seeds of Hope believe that authentic work towards healing hunger comes from an inner strength, and that inner strength comes from spiritual disciplines. We also believe that a concerted effort, even by a small number of people, to observe a time of prayer together (and perhaps fasting—come on; we dare you!) can make a huge difference in how we all face the problems of hunger and poverty. This forty-day calendar is designed to help you prepare spiritually for the work ahead of us. We challenge you to use the scriptures and suggestions on these two pages to make these forty days a holy season. —from the staff and Council of Stewards*

## Sunday



**7** Be more attentive to recycling. Use the money you save to start a hunger offering. *Amos 5:10-24*

**14** Find out what people are doing to break the chains of debt for impoverished countries. Contact Jubilee 2000/USA; 222 East Capitol Street, NE; Washington, DC 20003-1036; Phone: 202/783-3566; Web: www.2000usa.org/2000.



**21** Start walking more instead of driving. *Acts 4:32-35*

**28** Prepare a meal out of the *More-with-Less Cookbook* (Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; 717/859-1151.) *I Kings 21*

**35** Eat a meal with a friend and be attentive to the holy nature of breaking bread together. *Isaiah 58:6-12*



## Monday

**1** Set aside a time each day to pray for hungry people and to pray for those who could help them if they knew what to do. Ask a friend to be your prayer partner for these forty days. *Deuteronomy 24:14-15*

**8** Rent the new documentary on Dorothy Day and watch it with a church group. *Mark 10:23-27*

**15** Go shopping with someone who uses food stamps, and watch how people treat him/her. *Exodus 16:1-12*

**22** Give one of your favorite garments to a thrift store or clothing program. *Matthew 25:31-46*

**29** Find out if there is a 10,000 Villages, Jubilee Crafts, or Pueblo to People in your area. Get in the habit of shopping there. *I John 3:17-18*

**36** Before you go to bed tonight, think about the things that made you happy. Then imagine a world without hunger. *Luke 14:12-14*

## Tuesday

**2** Plan ways to come into actual face-to-face contact with poor people during these next thirty-nine days. Make eye contact with a homeless person. Speak to the cleaning people in your building before you speak to your boss. *Deuteronomy 24:17-22*

**9** Pray for people who work on the "front lines" in feeding programs. *Luke 14:16-24*



**16** Do your church buildings have extra space that could be used by other groups? Find out how your church could practice better stewardship of space. *Ezekiel 16:49*

**23** Find out if there are any Kosovar refugees near you. If so, ask if your church group can help them adjust to living in a strange country. *John 13:1-20*

**30** Practice believing six impossible things before breakfast. *Jeremiah 22:13-16*



**37** Gather some friends, take a \$25 budget, go to the grocery store, and figure out how to feed a family of four for the week. (No fair using what's already in your pantry.) *Psalms 82:1-4*

## Wednesday

**3** Find out how to get involved with a CROP walk. Contact Church World Service at PO Box 968; Elkhart, IN 46515; 209/549-9054; www.churchworldservice.org. *Proverbs 14:21*



**10** Talk to your pastor or missions committee about the church's hunger emphasis. Suggest a hunger/communion service or a "hunger meal." *Isaiah 1:16-20*

**17** Carry an extra apple or sandwich in your lunch or briefcase. Give it out when someone asks for money. *Matthew 5:13-14*

**24** Start buying your coffee from Equal Exchange, 251 Revere St, Canton, MA 02021 USA; 781/830-0303; www.equalexchange.com *Luke 3:1-6*

**31** Go to the library and look up Bishop Dom Helder Camara. Read some of his poetry. *Isaiah 3:13-15*

**38** Get a Bible commentary and look up all of the references to feeding the poor. *Matthew 19:16-22*



## Thursday

**4** Begin reading *The Testament* by John Grisham. *Ezekiel 18:5-9*



**11** Take your Sunday school class to serve at a soup kitchen. After you have served, go out and eat with the guests. *Leviticus 25:8-17*

**18** Do research on the rebuilding in Nicaragua and Honduras after Hurricane Mitch. Is there anything your faith community can do to help? *Matthew 6:25-33*

**25** Pray for people who work to influence public policy for the poor. *Isaiah 6:1-13*



**32** Take this question to a discussion group: What is the relationship between political upheaval and poverty? *Mark 9:14-29*

**39** Don't pay money for food today. Eat what you have in your cupboards. *Psalms 41:1*

## Friday

**5** Find out about "poverty simulation" weekends. Contact Mission Waco, CrossCulture Experiences, Inc; Waco, TX 76707; 254/753-4900. *James 2:2-7*

**12** Try not to eat meat for a week. *Luke 16:19-31*

**19** Help a group of children in making toiletry bags (soap, razors, wash cloths, etc) for your local shelter. *Proverbs 19:27*

**26** Volunteer to stock shelves at a local food pantry. *Micah 6:6-8*

**33** Research what a poor family in Russia would eat for supper. Prepare that for your family and talk about what life is like for Russian peasants. *Zechariah 7:8-14*

**40** Choose a time to go aside today and assess what you've learned about hunger and about yourself. Spend some time listening for God's leading. How can you stay in tune with this issue? What can you do over the next few months that will make a difference in your world? *Matthew 14:13-21*



## Saturday

**6** Don't eat any snacks today. *Matthew 6:26*

**13** Pray for people who do research to help farmers produce more food. *Luke 1:46-55*

**20** Take a child with you to deliver Meals on Wheels. Take fresh flowers along with the food and give one to each recipient. *I Corinthians 10:23-24*



**27** Make a list of the different ways you can avoid wasting food. *Amos 8:4-7*



**34** Don't eat any sugar today. *Luke 10:29-37*

