

## **Fasting In Solidarity with Hungry People?**

What does it mean for us to say that “this fast offers a way for us to be in solidarity with the 3 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day and to discern how God is calling us to respond?”

Fasting is a spiritual practice that transforms both persons and society. Our decision to fast is, simply put, a decision.

People who are starving because of the current food crisis or because of ongoing poverty are not choosing to go without food. Starvation is not a decision but a horrific, unnecessary manifestation of the injustice of our current food system and the economic and political policies which support it.

When we say our decision to fast “offers us a way to be in solidarity with hungry people,” we do not mean by this that we are “playing at hunger” or attempting some facile, voyeuristic connection to the suffering of others.

It means that we are endeavoring to bring the stories, the analyses, the priorities and prayers of poor and hungry people, to the forefront of our awareness, our reflection, and our action.

Together we will read accounts of the food crisis that were prepared by our partners who work with people who are starving or who are themselves starving. We will hear how current policies have devastated lives and livelihoods. We will hear how faith, like a mustard seed, continues to disrupt and persist even in the most horrifying circumstances. We will ask how does the same food system and policies that are causing starvation and poverty around the world, cause starvation and poverty in our own country?

The food crisis has not caused our own families to starve. But it has aroused a mighty fury within our souls; anger at what seems the calculated expendability of some of God’s children, helplessness at the magnitude and severity of the crisis, longing to be of real, material and lasting help.

Our fast is a cry “Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus, come!” It is an acknowledgment first and foremost the sovereignty of God and our responsibility as stewards of creation.

During our fast we will seek God’s guidance and listen intently for God’s word through Scripture, through prayer, through the words of poor and hungry people around the world. We will confess and repent of our knowing and unknowing complicity in the current food crisis. And we will strive to discern God’s leading.

*- Reflections by Noelle Damico, Coordinator, Campaign for Fair Food*