

WEEK 2

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY: VISIT THE SICK

Parents in Madagascar learn how to keep their children healthy with support from community health workers. Ministering to the sick—and helping others stay well—is one of the corporal works of mercy and something Jesus instructs us to do when he says, “I was ill and you cared for me” (Matthew 25:36).

A STORY OF HOPE FROM MADAGASCAR

What is your favorite show or movie? Why do you like it? Has it taught you anything new or interesting?

In Madagascar, families gather to watch puppet shows that entertain and teach. They love seeing the brightly colored puppets talk to each other, tell stories and ask the crowd questions. After each show, parents leave with new information to help their families.

Half of all children in Madagascar are undernourished, meaning they don’t have enough nutritious food to stay healthy. Parents want their children to grow up healthy and strong, and the puppet shows give them new knowledge they can use right away to make sure that happens. Community health workers trained by CRS use the puppets to teach families about how doctor visits, hand washing and *rainbow foods*—different colored foods like tomatoes and carrots that have important vitamins and nutrients—are necessary to stay healthy.

Frankline and Labaladezy have eight children. Their youngest child, Thorin, is almost a year old. While Frankline was pregnant with Thorin, she and her husband Labaladezy watched the puppet shows and learned new ways to support Thorin’s growth and development. When Thorin was born, his parents fed him different, more nutritious foods and took him to the health center for regular check-ups. Thorin is growing a lot and is reaching all his developmental milestones.

Frankline is happy her youngest son is doing so well, and she sees the positive effects of their new rainbow diet on the rest of the family. She says, “I dream that my children will stay healthy.



Photo by Dooshima Tsee / CRS

I hope that Thorin may become a doctor or a leader in our community.” Every parent wants their children to reach their full potential, and CRS is helping make sure they can do just that.

FACTS TO CONSIDER:

- CRS has worked in Madagascar for nearly 60 years, providing lifesaving relief in the wake of natural and man-made emergencies, and supporting development in education, agriculture, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and other areas.
- Communities are working together in Madagascar to address food insecurity and malnutrition through an innovative CRS program called Community Led Total Nutrition. The program aims to improve the health of children under age 5 through education, health check-ups and better nutrition.
- Stunting, which happens when a child doesn’t get the right amount of nutrition, affects nearly half of all children in Madagascar and has a permanent impact on their physical growth and brain development.



For downloadable photos, visit crsricebowl.org/photos and watch the video from Week 2 at crsricebowl.org/stories.

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45 MINUTES

OBJECTIVE

Through the story of community health workers supporting families in Madagascar, students will learn about the corporal work of mercy visiting the sick.

MATERIALS

- Week 2 story or video (available at [crsricebowl.org/stories](https://www.crsricebowl.org/stories))
- Materials for students to make a puppet (popsicle sticks, glue or tape, markers, construction paper, felt, etc.)

DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

1. Ask students if they remember where Madagascar is. Locate it on the map. What is one thing you already know about Madagascar?
2. Read or watch the story from Week 2.
3. Reflect:
 - What stood out to you in the story?
 - Why is it important for the children of Madagascar—and all people—to have healthy food?
 - How does the food you eat affect how you feel?

ACTIVITY (25 MINUTES)

1. Explain the corporal work of mercy visiting the sick. We all know what it feels like to be sick. It can be painful and make us feel alone. God made us to be healthy and whole. We can ease the suffering of those who are ill by visiting them, praying for them and performing other acts of charity.
2. Provide students with materials and time to make a puppet that they will use with their families to write a script or story that teaches about the importance of staying healthy or about the corporal work of mercy visiting the sick.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

O God,

We pray that we may recognize the suffering of our sisters and brothers in our local community and around the world, and that we always respond to help those who are sick and undernourished. We know that when we care for those who are ill, we care for you in them. We pray in a special way for the children and families in Madagascar who struggle to stay healthy due to hunger and malnutrition.

Amen

AT HOME

1. Write a script or story with your family that uses your puppet to teach a lesson about staying healthy or about the importance of visiting the sick.
2. As a family, read the daily reflection found in your **CRS Rice Bowl Lenten Calendar**.

IF YOU ONLY HAVE



1. Read or watch the Week 2 story.
2. Lead Discussion step 3.