

## World Food Day, October 16<sup>th</sup>

Hunger feels like pincers,  
like the bite of crabs,  
it burns, burns and has no fire.  
Hunger is a cold fire.

Let us sit down soon to eat  
with all those who haven't eaten;  
let us spread great tablecloths,  
put salt in the lakes of the world,  
set up planetary bakeries,  
tables with strawberries in snow,  
and a plate like the moon itself  
from which we can all eat.

For now I ask no more  
than the justice of eating.

*-Excerpt from "The Great Tablecloth"*

Tener hambre es como tenazas,  
es como muerden los cangrejos,  
quema, quema y no tiene fuego:  
el hambre es un incendio frío.

Sentémonos pronto a comer  
con todos los que no han comido,  
pongamos los largos manteles,  
la sal en los lagos del mundo,  
panaderías planetarias,  
mesas con fresas en la nieve,  
y un plato como la luna  
en donde todos almorcemos.

Por ahora no pido más  
que la justicia del almuerzo.

*"El gran mantel"*

*-Poem by Pablo Neruda Chilean Poet, Nobel Prize Winner<sup>1</sup>*



### What is World Food Day?

World Food Day was first begun in order to draw global attention to the problem and prevalence of hunger in the world. The UN recognized that “food is a requisite for human survival and well-being and a fundamental human necessity.” World Food Day is sponsored by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) which was founded in 1945 as part of the United Nation System. World Food Day is celebrated on the anniversary of FAO’s founding, which is October 16<sup>th</sup>. The theme for World Food Day 2006 is, “Investing in Agriculture for Food Security.”

**More information is available about World Food Day on their website:**

<http://www.fao.org/>

<sup>1</sup> Source: The Essential Neruda: Selected Poems, by Pablo Neruda, Mark Eisner, ed. NY: City Light Books, 2004.



## World Food Day Prayer Reflection

**Opening Song Suggestions:** Harvest of Justice, For the Beauty of the Earth

**Leader:** Let us quiet our minds and open our hearts to the reality of hunger in the world today. Take a moment to reflect on your own experience of hunger. When was the last time you knew hunger? How did it feel? Recall this feeling and let it unite you with all those who are hungry in the world at this moment. In your prayer bring your loving attention to human beings who are living at the edge of survival due to lack of bread, rice or even a simple meal.

**Side One:** God of Abundance, use our gifts, our creativity to eliminate the harvest of hunger that poverty has sown. Root out the seeds of greed and gluttony within the human heart that choke off the ability to recognize and respond to those who are suffering.

**Side Two:** Through Your grace, provide the nutrients we need to plough and plant, to tend and train the budding vines of compassion and care. May we hear and respond to the cries of millions of men, women, and children who hunger for life itself and are desperate for survival for just one more day.

**Side One:** Wean us from our normal diet of disregard and empty distraction. Help us to push back from the crowded table of self-preoccupation. Draw us instead to a common table where there is room and welcome for all, where all are fed.

**Side Two:** Help us to work to ensure that empty bowls be replaced by nourishing bonds of community so that no one is forced to beg at the edge of the road of life.

**Side One:** In places where war and violence are the cause of widespread hunger, call us to the inclusive table of peace and replace all fear and destruction with just ways to reconstruct security, home, and hope.

**Side Two:** May our actions and advocacy sow seeds of solidarity so that we might work as one body in Christ to eliminate the scandal of hunger, the politics of food assistance and the death of too many children as a result of starvation.

**Side One:** Bless the land and all those who work the land. Preserve us from drought and flood, from blight and disease. Grant all farmers increased yields, abundant harvests, sustainable production, and fair prices in the marketplace for these farmers, their families, and their futures.

**All:** Gracious God, nourish our world with hope and call your people to the table of cooperation. Bless our efforts to work for food security and eliminate hunger so that all might know a harvest of justice. May our attempts to end hunger not be politicized or prophesied, but realized in the sharing of our daily bread. We ask this in Christ's name. *Amen*