



When Did We See You Hungry?

Lesson Objective:

To help the students discuss issues concerning global hunger and to begin to see the human face of hunger in fresh ways.

1. Opening

Ask the students to recall a time when they felt hungry (it could be as simple as a time when they forgot their lunch). What did it feel like? What did they eat to satisfy their hunger? Did anyone share their food with them?

2. Look at *World Hunger—Fast Facts* with your class.

Ask students a few questions concerning these facts: Do any of these numbers surprise you?

Is it possible to deal with these challenges?

What do these hunger facts mean to you?

How do the numbers make you feel? For instance, that 925 million people are malnourished and that one billion adults are overweight?

Allow the discussion to continue, moderating the discussion, and asking new questions as they arise.

Ask the following question, and finish the following sentence:

Do you believe it is possible to halve the number of people living in poverty and hunger by 2015?

We could halve the number of people living in poverty and hunger if:

3. Handout sheet “When Did We See You Hungry?” (following page).

Ask different students to read one of the **personal stories** aloud. Make notes of key points that arise during the conversation, and discuss the following questions:

List some of the key reasons you think each of these people is hungry. (*Suggest some of the following if necessary.*)

- Lack of education
- Low paying or lack of work
- War, injustice, greed
- Ignorance (whose?)
- Neglect of scripture
- Racism, racial differences
- Gender inequalities
- Immigration
- Destructive personal habits
- Disabilities

- Natural disasters
- Inadequate support systems
- Failure of caring community
- Inadequate socialization and so on.

Do you know anyone who deals with hunger and poverty? Are any of the previous answers part of the reason they are hungry?

Choose some questions from the following to discuss:

1. How does each speaker experience life? What would a day look like for them? How different are the things you worry about compared to what they might worry about?
2. Why might hunger and poverty be shameful?
3. When a child fears for their basic necessities, how does that make you feel?

4. Read God’s Story—from Matthew 25.

Read Matthew 25:31–46 (A shortened version is found in the handout.)

Discuss the following:

- In what way would it be true or false that when we see someone hungry we are seeing Christ?
- Who do you think “the least of these” are today?
- How would one of the people we read about earlier feel if they read this story? What would they say?
- Neither group seems aware that they have helped or declined to help the poor. Why do you think this is?
- Does this passage mention anything about belief in Jesus? Why do you think that is?
- Do you think that actions are more important than faith, or vice versa? Why? What does this passage seem to be saying about this?
- How do these words make you feel about your own life? About your school or church?

5. Our Story.

What is Jesus saying to all Christians about how they are to help people?

List some of the things you have done, or you know your school or church is doing to help the problem of poverty and hunger.

Articulate some connections between the action possibilities and the lesson.

Invite comments or questions about the lesson.

Provide further information on organisations like Australian Lutheran World Service, or local service organisations.



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HUNGER STORIES

“My Mum says that I can’t call her if I get sick at school, as she can’t take the time off work or she doesn’t get paid. If she doesn’t get paid, we can’t buy groceries, and I don’t get lunch. That’s why I am staying in the sick room today.”

8-year-old child, Australia

“If sometimes our poor people have had to die of starvation, it is not that God didn’t care for them. It is because you and I didn’t give, were not an instrument of love to give them that bread, to give them that clothing. It is because we did not recognise him, when he came in distressing disguise, in the hungry man, in the lonely man, in the homeless child and seeking for shelter.”

Mother Teresa

“I don’t know how to say about my difficulties because I have no good things to tell. I have three children, and my husband is working in the forest, cutting wood. We live in a small cottage in the forest. I wish we could live near the community, but we have no money to buy land. Every day we have nothing, not even rice.”

Chep Cheun, Cambodia

“I am only worrying about caring for my children. There is not enough food for them. Only coconuts and groundnuts and nakamayok. Sometimes we find wild green vegetables in the forest. The children are hungry and so they complain and cry. Sometimes they say they cannot eat



these things any more. We have only a small field. We grow a little sorghum, some sim-sim and cow-peas. There is not enough to sell, only for home. The children are not healthy really. They do not have good food so how can they be healthy?”

Alimerina Dudu, South Sudan

“We don’t get food assistance. We can only feed the children one meal each day, and this is only cassava leaves. If we don’t provide food, we are going to die. We feel very bad when our children don’t have food. They are always crying, and we are likely to cry like them.”

Zacharia Ndambemeye, an old man in Burundi

GOD’S STORY

(excerpted from Matthew 25:34 ff.)

**Then the King will say to those at his right hand,
“Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;
for I was hungry and you gave me food.
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.
I needed clothes and you clothed me.
I was sick and you looked after me.
I was in prison and you came to visit me.
Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or saw you thirsty and gave you something to drink?
And the King will reply, “Even as you did it to the least of these members of my family, so you did it for me.”**

OUR STORY

- Some interpreters suggest that Matthew 25:34- 40 may be loosely based on Isaiah 61. Read and reflect, alone or with others, on these two passages.
- **Reflect on or discuss Matthew 25:40. Who counts as family today? In what sense are we all part of the family of God? What does Jesus mean when he talks about “the least?”**
- Although war and natural disasters may cause hunger emergencies, long term malnutrition is caused by poverty and powerlessness. If people had resources, such as land or money, they could buy food. If they had personal and political power, they would lobby their government for change. Reflect or discuss what we can do to help reduce poverty and powerlessness in our communities, nation and world.
- **Reflect on or discuss the personal stories and learn about poverty facts from around the world. Each story is based on the life of a real person. Think about and pray for these people. And pray, each day, “O God, give us—all of us—this day our daily food.”**



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Australian Lutheran World Service
Awareness Week
Food Matters
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**Dare to
Dream a
Different World**