



What is it?

A global reality meal is a dramatisation of the *inequality* of our world for upper primary, secondary and adult groups.

Why share this meal

By being actively involved in situations of injustice – the unequal distribution of food and resources - participants experience something of the global reality! In bringing to life the inequalities in our world, it challenges us, as the more economically fortunate, to do something about it.

Who do you need?

- Participants
 - In order to model the inequality of numbers amongst rich and poor a large group of up to 100 works really well. However, it can work with groups of any size from 20 to 100.
- A group to organise the activity
 - Who will be invited?
 - Who will devise the final script?
 - Who will set up the room?
 - Who will provide the food and drink?
- A Master of Ceremony (MC)
- Waiters to serve only the Rich
 - With food
 - Any activity undertaken during the meal
- Facilitators to debrief the participants (this could be the MC)

What do you need?

- A large enough venue
- Microphone
- Tickets to be distributed in the right ratio for the activity
- Food for the Rich - more than enough - burgers, pizza, fruit, chocolate, cream cakes, chips, soft drinks
- Food for the Poor –enough – rice with a little flavour, beans and water
- Food for the Very Poor – barely enough – plain rice, ‘dirty’ water
- Appropriate furniture for each group
- Facilities for a PowerPoint display



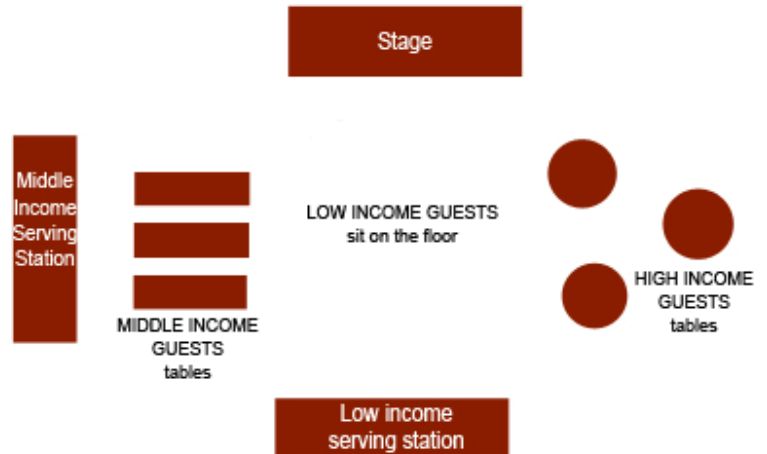
What do you do?

3 ECONOMIC GROUPS

Each participant pays a set amount of money for their meal (eg \$2.00 or a donation) and receive a ticket which randomly assigns them to a group. The 15% join the High Income group.

The 30% join the Middle Income group.

The majority 55% join the Low Income group.



MC Begins

We gather here for this meal in a world where so many are hungry and so many are lonely. We gather here today because 1.2 billion people - one fifth of the world's population - live on less than one dollar a day and 3 billion people - nearly half of the world's population - struggle to survive on less than two dollars a day. 815 million of these people suffer from chronic hunger. Every 3 seconds, a child dies from hunger or other preventable cause - 29,000 children every day.

Let me, therefore, introduce you to the three segments of this world remembering that we do not measure the world in purely economic terms but rather by each person's ability to achieve a sense of security and at the same time have access to resources necessary for them to be the architect of their own future.

MC moves near the High Income group who are already being served food

If you are sitting over here, you represent the 15% of the world's population who are fortunate enough to afford a nutritious daily diet.

As a group, you consume 70% of all the grain grown in the world, most of it in the form of grain-fed meat. Most of you exceed your daily requirement of calories and you face health problems such as heart disease and diabetes. But, at the same time, most of you don't have to worry about receiving healthcare. You have access to the best medical care in the world.

Your children are born destined to go to school; the only uncertainty is how many years they will study after high school. You and your family live in a comfortable and secure home. You own at least one car - probably two - have at least two - probably more - televisions and DVD's in your home. When you take your annual four weeks of leave, you don't worry about your job disappearing. It's a good life because YOU have access to everything you need and you have the security to enjoy it.

MC moves near the Middle Income group whose food is on a table nearby

If you are sitting here, you represent roughly 30% of the world's population. The levels of access and security you enjoy vary greatly. You are the people who live on the edge. For many, it will only take the loss of one crop to drought, or a serious illness, to throw you into poverty.

You probably own no land and may work as a day labourer, being paid a paltry amount - better than nothing but not enough to help you out of this existence. Your small income allows for some use of electricity and a few years of schooling for your children - especially if they are boys. Alternatively, you may have left your family to go to work in the city where you hope that the money you earn from your less than minimum wage job as a domestic helper or sweat shop worker will eventually allow you to move back home and make a better life for your family. You work long hours performing back-breaking work but still cannot afford nutritious food for your children.

Through no fault of your own, you were born into this harsh life. You hope that your children will have the opportunity to do better. So, like everyone stuck in the middle, you feel squeezed and wonder if you will ever climb out of the situation in which you find yourself.

You may want to move to the table and serve yourself a nourishing but very simple meal.

MC moves near the Low Income group

If you are sitting on these chairs, you represent the majority of the world's population – roughly 55 %. You earn about \$2 a day – although many of you earn much less. Most of you are from poor countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Tanzania, East Timor or Cambodia.

Every day is a struggle to meet your family's basic needs. Finding food, water and shelter can consume your entire day. For many of you women, it would not be uncommon to have to walk five to ten kilometres every day to get water, spend several more hours working the fields, and of course taking care of the children. Many of you are frequently hungry. It is quite likely that you don't get the minimum number of calories your hardworking life requires. Many of you are homeless or living in structures so flimsy that, like the South Asia floods last year, hard rain and/or strong wind can cause a major catastrophe.

Even though education is the single most powerful weapon against poverty, school is a luxury few of your children will ever experience. Most girls don't even bother to dream about school. Not surprisingly, many of the countries where you live also have the largest foreign debts. Your governments are forced to throw money into a bottomless pit of debt repayments, instead of spending money on essential services like education and healthcare. Adequate healthcare is out of the question for many of you. For most of you, early death is all too familiar, with many mothers expecting to lose one or two children before they turn five.

You may want to walk to the table outside and serve yourself a small helping of plain rice and a glass of local water.

Whilst the groups continue to eat the MC Moves between groups

No one can choose the circumstances into which they are born. Some people have the good fortune to change their lives for the better, but for most the circumstances of life are determined by circumstances beyond their control.

MC chooses six people from the Low Income group

These six people live in Manila in the Philippines. Like many others in the Philippines, many people in Manila lived from day to day struggling to scavenge what they could from the dumps, too poor to send their children to school. But Caritas Australia, along with the Sisters of the faithful Companions of Jesus, came and listened and helped them to identify their needs. With training and support from Caritas, families were encouraged to build small semi-detached homes, water tanks and take up a cash generating activity. They now are able to buy better food, live in a healthier place and send their children to school. You have had the good fortune to change and so I invite you to leave your simple meal, make a place for yourselves in the middle group and share their food, but before you go ...

MC chooses six people from the Middle Income group

You come from a city in Indonesia. You have just experienced a devastating earthquake which wiped out half the population. The earthquake has completely devastated the city and your homes. The streets are lined with tents sheltering people. The earthquake has seriously disrupted the water supply and sanitation. A serious threat of disease is imminent. You find yourself in circumstances completely beyond your control. You now leave your meal and take the place of those in the very poor group who have been assisted to achieve a sustainable way of life, and a way out of poverty.

These two groups exchange places and sit down. MC turns and asks 1 person to stand from each of the three groups.

Very Rich Group Person: You are Jonathan Sledge a middle manager at a large coffee company. The world market price of coffee has just been cut in half, and even though your company is paying less for the coffee, it is not going to lower the prices it charges consumers. Your company's profit margins are about to escalate, and you will receive a hefty bonus at the end of the year. Congratulations! Once again you come out on top as the rich continue to get richer.

Middle Income Person: You are Joseph Mkombo. You have just been laid off from your job picking coffee beans, which allowed you to provide the basics for your family in Kenya. After the price of coffee dropped, your employer was forced to scale back its workforce because it would no longer afford to pay everyone. Please move to the low-income group.

Low Income Person: Lillian Kenyatta you live in the same village as Joseph, and you eke out a living selling maize and other vegetables from your garden in the local market each day. Because Joseph and many of your other customers have been laid off from the nearby coffee plantation, they are buying less from you, and you won't be able to afford enough corn for your family. You have to save half your portion of rice for tomorrow or go hungry then.

MC suggests that all finish their meals and during this time walks among them and asks them to share how they feel about being in the group in which they find themselves. As the 'meal' finishes and a lot of the food from the rich group table is thrown in the bin, the MC comments,

We live in a world where a few get a lot and most get very little indeed. Yet there is plenty of reason for hope, because with your support, Caritas Australia has helped thousands of people work their way out of poverty through self-help initiatives in our indigenous communities and in more than 50 countries.



just want justice
... a call to action

This year's Project Compassion theme is '**just want justice – a call to action**'. The challenge of just want justice, this call to action, is echoed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) signed by all United Nations Member States, including Australia, which aim to halve world poverty by 2015. Each of these goals calls us to action. For the goals to be achieved we must work with our elected leaders to make sure that poverty and the needs of the poor become one of our top priorities. By Supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion, you are helping people to transform their own lives, restoring their dignity by promoting solutions that empower them to take control of their lives.

Script adapted from: <http://www.hungerbanquet.org> and www.oxfam.org

And so we pray:
That no children may be denied an education;
That no worker will be cheated of justice,
That no child will die from curable diseases
We pray,

All: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

That no financial system will ever again burden the poorest
That no trade will deny a fair wage,
That no debt will ever again trap nations into poverty
We pray,

All: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Go then,
To do justice
To love kindness
To walk humbly with your God.

Amen.

Adapted from the prayer of Peter Graystone in "A World of Blessings"

What do you do?

2 ECONOMIC GROUPS

Participants each pay a set amount e.g. \$2.00 or a donation for their meal. As each student enters the venue, they receive a ticket. Tickets appear similar but on the back 20% are marked rich and 80% poor. Tickets must be randomly distributed.

The Rich 20% are led by the waiters to table, chairs and cushions.

The Poor 80% are herded to the floor in what should be a rather overcrowded area.

MC SCRIPT: (may be shortened or simplified according to age of students/time available)

We are here today because 1.2 billion people, one fifth of the world's population – live on less than one dollar a day. [Pause]

3 billion people – almost half of the world's population – struggle to survive on less than two dollars a day. [Pause]

815 million of these people suffer from chronic hunger. [Pause]

Every 3 seconds, a child dies from hunger or other preventable cause. That's 29,000 children every day! [Pause]

You may think hunger is about too many people and too little food. Not true. This rich and bountiful planet produces enough to feed every woman, man and child on earth. It's about power!

In fact, 20% of the world's population (**facing the Rich Group**) that's you, consumes 86% of the world's goods, represented in the food here today. The rest of you (**facing the Poor Group**) get only 14%.

The roots of hunger lie in inequalities in access to education, resources and power. The results are illiteracy, poverty, war and the inability of families to grow or buy food. [Pause]

This Global Reality Meal is a metaphor for how food and other resources are inequitably distributed in the world. As such, we can only touch upon the issues. We cannot recreate the many and complex ways in which poverty manifests itself.

We will not have time to go into all the problems associated with lack of access to healthcare, education and employment opportunities, and the realities of the day-to-day struggle for survival. The one thing I would like you to remember is this: Everyone on earth has the same basic needs; (**ask participants to suggest what basic needs are**). It is only our circumstances – where we live and the culture we are born into – that differ. Each person's place is randomly determined.

As each of us walked in the door here today, we chose – at random – our lot. Look around, and you can see that equality and balance don't exist here.

It is important to note that no one section of this room represents a single country. While Australia may be one of the wealthiest countries, many Australians do not get enough to eat.

Stark inequalities prevail, both worldwide and within countries.

Optional ending: I now invite the Rich to begin their meal; the poor may go to the back table and help themselves

OR

Optional Extra Activity to reinforce the fact that those with much are able to succeed quickly, those who have little have little chance of success

MC continues

Now I am about to give you a task. You are being given what you need to complete this task. **Assistants distribute paper, pens and dictionaries – one to each of the Rich plus extras, then scatter very few on the floor amongst the Poor.**

I will give you two words. Each person must have their own, individual piece of paper with those two words, and the dictionary definitions of those two words written on it. Shared efforts or your own definitions are not good enough.

Write OPPRESSED and GREEDY on whiteboard. Waiters may assist the rich so that they finish quickly. After a few minutes ask all to hold their definitions up. The MC then praises the rich and invites them to begin their meal. For the poor who do complete the task, invite them to go and help themselves to their food first then the others line up at the table.

You may wish to have music playing and images in the background of Caritas Australia Projects.

See www.caritas.org.au Click on Project Compassion Icon; go to Materials/Schools for appropriate PowerPoints.

CONCLUSION

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For ideas go to www.caritas.org.au click on the Project Compassion icon and go to Materials/Schools. Under Reflections you'll find many wonderful quotes followed by appropriate prayers.

DEBRIEFING

Debriefing is one of the crucial elements of holding a Global Reality Meal. It can be a confronting experience. Participants commonly experience feelings of discomfort, anger, sadness, guilt, and many others. That's OK! That is the way the activities are designed. The important point is that the facilitators help participants explore their feelings and their meanings and help them to see they have the power to enable change.

- Be familiar with relevant information eg: statistics.
- Be aware that students are sharing thoughts and feelings – there is no right or wrong when it comes to feelings!
- Be aware of the desired educational outcomes.

Some facts on Poverty

1.2 billion people live on less than \$1.00 per day This is 20% of the world's population.

1.2 billion people do not have access to save water.

2.6 billion people do not have access to basic sanitation.

900 million adults cannot read or write

160 million children under the age of 5 are malnourished.

250 million children work as child labourers.

800 million people do not have access to health services.

25% of school age children do not attend school.



Global Village

If the world's population were shrunk to 100 people...

- 6 out of the 100 would possess 59% of the world's wealth
- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer malnutrition
- 25 would not have access to safe water
- 50 would not have access to basic sanitation
- 1 would have a university degree
- 1 would have a computer
- 1 would be about to be born
- 1 would be near death
- 52 would be female
- 48 would be male
- most would be under 25 years
 - 57 would be Asian
 - 21 would be European
 - 8 would be African

