

Nourishing Hope: A Mary's Meals Mission Appeal

This resource is intended to support mission appeal speakers representing Mary's Meals in Catholic parish settings. The tone of the talks should remain prayerful, authentic, Gospel-centered, and rooted in hope.

Delivery Notes

- Speak conversationally and prayerfully rather than performatively.
- Allow pauses after important emotional moments, especially Emma's quote, Edward's response, Scripture, and the prayer.
- Avoid rushing the stories. Simplicity and sincerity are more powerful than dramatization.
- The goal is encounter, reflection, and invitation — not emotional pressure.
- Adapt naturally to the parish culture, liturgical setting, and timing available.

Personal Witness Guidance

Speakers are encouraged to briefly weave in a personal encounter, reflection, or experience connected to Mary's Meals.

- The strongest personal stories are simple, authentic, and brief.
- Personal witness works especially well after mentioning the scale of the mission or before the Ethiopia story.
- Stories of encounter, humility, hope, or faith are more impactful than organizational accomplishments.
- The audience should feel that the mission has transformed the speaker as well.

Suggested Placement for Personal Story if time permits

- After: "Today, Mary's Meals feeds more than 3 million children every single school day."
- Before the Ethiopia fence story.
- Before the final invitation and transition into prayer.

Spiritual Themes to Emphasize

- Human dignity
- Hope through education
- The Gospel call to feed the hungry
- Mary as mother and protector
- God multiplying little acts of love
- Solidarity with the poor
- Prayer and providence

Parish Environment Notes

- Appropriate attire is: MMs polo shirt with khakis or longer length skirt/ Sunday business casual attire (no jeans or t shirts)
 - Mission appeals during Mass should remain reflective and prayerful.
 - Avoid sounding overly scripted or overly promotional.
 - Leave room for silence and reflection after key moments.
 - Where possible, conclude with the Mary's Meals prayer.
 - If prayer cards are available, parishioners may be invited to join in praying together.
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Speaker script guides

3 minutes

Good morning/afternoon.

Before I tell you about Mary's Meals, I want to begin by telling you a story.

Years ago, during a famine in Malawi, a woman named Emma was sitting on the floor of her small home. She was dying.

Beside her sat her young son, Edward.

Emma spoke up and turning to her visitor, said:

“There is nothing left for me now. I only worry about who will take care of my children.”

He then turned to Edward and asked:

“What do you hope for in life?”

And Edward answered:

“I would like to have enough food to eat... and one day go to school.”

That was it.

Just enough food to eat.

And the chance to go to school.

Two things many of us would assume every child already has.

That visitor was Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow — and from that encounter the Mary's Meals mission was born — feed a child one nutritious meal, in school every day. Magnus began by feeding 200 children in one school in Malawi. Today, with the help of thousands of supporters and volunteers, we feed over 3 million daily.

What began in that small home in Malawi was not only a response to hunger, but a mission deeply shaped by prayer, faith, and trust in God's providence. Through pilgrimage and devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Magnus and the early volunteers came to believe that God could multiply even the smallest acts of love.

They decided to name the organization after Mary, the mother of Jesus, because just as Our Lady lovingly cared for Christ — and even knew the vulnerability of fleeing as a refugee to protect her child — Mary's Meals seeks to offer hope to children around the world who are hungry, vulnerable, and longing for a better tomorrow.

And for many of these children like Edward, the path toward a better future begins with something very simple: the opportunity to go to school.

But hunger is often the very thing that keeps children out of the classroom.

In some of the poorest countries in the world — places like Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan — children are forced to make heartbreaking choices. Some try to learn while carrying the pain of extreme hunger. Others cannot attend school at all because they must work, search through rubbish dumps, or sell scraps just to help themselves or their families survive.

That is why Mary's Meals focuses on one simple but powerful idea:

if a child can receive a daily meal in a place of education, that child is far more likely to come to school, stay in school, and begin to hope for a different future.

And they do.

Today, Mary's Meals feeds more than 3 million children every single school day.

One story that deeply affected me came from Ethiopia, where children receiving Mary's Meals began passing spoonfuls of their own mug of food through a fence to other hungry children standing outside.

Children who themselves had experienced hunger...

still wanting to feed someone else.

I think there is something deeply Gospel-centered about that image.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says:

“For I was hungry and you gave me food.”

And that is exactly what Mary’s Meals allows us to do — one child at a time.

For \$25.20, Mary’s Meals is able to feed a child in their place of education for an entire school year. That seems like a made up number right? But because of our sourcing and partnership with local communities and volunteers we can. That’s worth repeating: \$25.20 feeds a child in their place of education for an entire school year.

Not only food —

but education,

hope,

dignity,

and the possibility of a better tomorrow.

Today, I simply invite you to prayerfully consider becoming part of this mission with your little act of love: be that prayers, financial support or becoming an ambassador for our mission.

Because through little acts of love, God is feeding millions of children every day.

Thank you, and God bless you.

5 minutes

Good morning/afternoon.

Before I tell you about Mary's Meals, I want to begin by telling you a story.

Years ago, during a famine in Malawi, a woman named Emma was sitting on the floor of her small home. She was dying.

Beside her sat her young son, Edward.

Emma spoke up and, turning to her visitor, said:

“There is nothing left for me now. I only worry about who will take care of my children.”

He then turned to Edward and asked:

“What do you hope for in life?”

And Edward answered:

“I would like to have enough food to eat... and one day go to school.”

That was it.

Just enough food to eat.
And the chance to go to school.

Two things many of us would assume every child already has.

That visitor was Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow — and from that encounter the Mary’s Meals mission was born – feed a child one nutritious meal, in school every day.

Magnus began by feeding 200 children in one school in Malawi. Today, with the help of thousands of supporters and volunteers, we feed over 3 million daily.

What began in that small home in Malawi was not only a response to hunger, but a mission deeply shaped by prayer, faith, and trust in God’s providence. Through pilgrimage and devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Magnus and the early volunteers came to believe that God could multiply even the smallest acts of love.

They decided to name the organization after Mary, the mother of Jesus, because just as Our Lady lovingly cared for Christ — and even knew the vulnerability of fleeing as a refugee to protect her child — Mary’s Meals seeks to offer hope to children around the world who are hungry, vulnerable, and longing for a better tomorrow.

And for many children like Edward, the path toward a better future begins with something very simple:
the opportunity to go to school.

But hunger is often the very thing that keeps children out of the classroom.

In some of the poorest countries in the world — places like Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan — children are forced to make heartbreaking choices.

Some try to learn while carrying the pain of extreme hunger.
Others cannot attend school at all because they must work, search through rubbish dumps, or sell scraps just to help themselves or their families survive.

No child should have to make those choices.

That is why Mary’s Meals focuses on one simple but powerful idea:
if a child can receive a daily meal in a place of education, that child is far more likely to come to school, stay in school, and begin to hope for a different future.

And they do.

Today, Mary's Meals feeds more than 3 million children every single school day.

But what makes this mission so beautiful is not only the number of children being fed. It is the way the mission works.

Mary's Meals partners with local communities, local volunteers, and local farmers.

The people preparing and serving the meals are often parents and community members themselves — people who deeply love their children and want hope and opportunity for their communities.

The meals are locally served.
The communities are involved.
And slowly, hope begins to grow from within.

One story that deeply affected me came from Ethiopia, where children receiving Mary's Meals began passing spoonfuls of food through a fence to other hungry children standing outside.

Think about that image for a moment.

Children who themselves had experienced hunger...
still wanting to feed someone else.

Children with almost nothing...
still choosing generosity.

I think there is something deeply Gospel-centered about that image.

Because when people encounter love, love multiplies.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says:

“For I was hungry and you gave me food.”

And that is exactly what Mary's Meals allows us to do —
one child at a time.

For \$25.20, Mary's Meals is able to feed a child in their place of education for an entire school year.

Honestly, that number almost sounds made up.

But because of careful sourcing, partnerships with local communities, and the extraordinary commitment of volunteers, it is possible.

And that is worth repeating:
\$25.20 feeds a child in their place of education for an entire school year.

Not only food —
but education,
hope,
dignity,
and the possibility of a better tomorrow.

Today, I simply invite you to prayerfully consider becoming part of this mission with your own small act of love —
whether through prayer,
financial support,
or becoming an ambassador for our mission.

Because through little acts of love, offered faithfully to God with the intercession of Our Lady, millions of children are now being fed every day.

Thank you for welcoming me today.

God bless you.

8 minutes

Good morning/afternoon.

Before I tell you about Mary's Meals, I want to begin by telling you a story.

Years ago, during a famine in Malawi, a woman named Emma was sitting on the floor of her small home. She was dying.

Beside her sat her young son, Edward.

Emma spoke up and, turning to her visitor, said:

“There is nothing left for me now. I only worry about who will take care of my children.”

Imagine those words for a moment.

A mother no longer worried about herself.
Only her children.

The visitor then turned to Edward and asked:
“What do you hope for in life?”

And Edward answered:

“I would like to have enough food to eat... and one day go to school.”

That was it.

Not wealth.

Not comfort.

Not possessions.

Just enough food to eat.

And the chance to go to school.

Two things many of us would assume every child already has.

That visitor was Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow — and from that encounter the Mary’s Meals mission was born – feed a child one nutritious meal, in school every day.

Magnus began by feeding 200 children in one school in Malawi. Today, with the help of thousands of supporters and volunteers, we feed over 3 million daily.

What began in that small home in Malawi was not only a response to hunger, but a mission deeply shaped by prayer, faith, and trust in God’s providence. Through pilgrimage and devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Magnus and the early volunteers came to believe that God could multiply even the smallest acts of love.

They decided to name the organization after Mary, the mother of Jesus, because just as Our Lady lovingly cared for Christ — and even knew the vulnerability of fleeing as a refugee to protect her child — Mary’s Meals seeks to offer hope to children around the world who are hungry, vulnerable, and longing for a better tomorrow.

And for many children like Edward, the path toward a better future begins with something very simple:
the opportunity to go to school.

Education changes everything.

Education creates opportunity.

It creates stability.

It creates dignity.

It allows children to dream beyond survival.

But hunger is often the very thing that keeps children out of the classroom.

In some of the poorest countries in the world — places like Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan — children are forced to make heartbreaking choices.

Some try to learn while carrying the pain of extreme hunger.
Others cannot attend school at all because they must work, search through rubbish dumps, or sell scraps just to help themselves or their families survive.

Imagine being a child and having to choose between hunger and education.

No child should have to make those choices.

That is why Mary's Meals focuses on one simple but powerful idea:
if a child can receive a daily meal in a place of education, that child is far more likely to come to school, stay in school, and begin to hope for a different future.

And they do.

What began feeding a few hundred children now feeds more than 3 million children every single school day.

But what makes this mission so beautiful is not only the scale of it.
It is the simplicity of it.
And the dignity within it.

Mary's Meals partners with local communities, local volunteers, and local farmers.

The people preparing and serving the meals are often parents and community members themselves — people who deeply love their children and want hope and opportunity for their communities.

This is not a mission done *to* communities.
It is a mission built *with* communities.

Meals are cooked locally.
Communities volunteer locally.
Hope begins to grow locally.

And what starts as a meal often becomes something much bigger.

Children return to school.
Attendance rises.
Communities become more stable.
And children begin imagining futures they never thought possible.

One story that deeply affected me came from Ethiopia.

At one school where children were receiving Mary's Meals, there were other hungry children standing outside the school fence with no food.

And the children inside the school began passing spoonfuls of food through the fence to the children outside.

Think about that image for a moment.

Children who themselves had experienced hunger...
still wanting to feed someone else.

Children with almost nothing...
still choosing generosity.

I think there is something deeply Gospel-centered about that image.

Because when people encounter love, love multiplies.

And isn't that exactly what we see throughout the Gospel?

Jesus feeds the hungry.
He notices the forgotten.
He responds with compassion.
And then He asks us to do the same.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says:

"For I was hungry and you gave me food."

Not someday.
Not symbolically.
But concretely.

And that is exactly what Mary's Meals allows us to do —
one child at a time.

What I also find beautiful is that this mission transforms not only the children receiving the meals, but also the people who become part of it.

A child holding a lemonade stand.
A school raising funds through small sacrifices.
A parish praying for children halfway around the world.
Volunteers serving meals every day in their own communities.

Small acts of love.
Offered faithfully.
And somehow God multiplies them.

That is really the story of Mary's Meals.

Not extraordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Just ordinary people saying yes to God.

And through those yeses, millions of children are fed every day.

For \$25.20, Mary's Meals is able to feed a child in their place of education for an entire school year.

Honestly, that number almost sounds impossible.

But because of careful sourcing, partnerships with local communities, and the extraordinary commitment of volunteers, it is possible.

And that is worth repeating:

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Not only food —
but education,
hope,
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and the possibility of a better tomorrow.

Today, I simply invite you to prayerfully consider becoming part of this mission with your own small act of love.

Maybe that is through prayer.

Maybe through financial support.

Maybe through becoming an ambassador for the mission and sharing this story with others.

But every act matters.

Because Mary's Meals began with one small encounter in a home in Malawi.

One mother.

One child.

One simple hope.

And through God's grace and little acts of love from people around the world, more than 3 million children are now being fed every single school day.

Thank you for welcoming me today.

Please keep the children we serve in your prayers, and know that we will keep all of you in ours.

God bless you.

8 minutes plus Mary's Meals Prayer Card

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That was it.

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And the chance to go to school.

Two things many of us would assume every child already has.

That visitor was Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow — and that encounter would become the beginning of Mary's Meals.

What began in that small home in Malawi was not only a response to hunger, but a mission deeply shaped by prayer, faith, and trust in God's providence. Through pilgrimage and devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Magnus and the early volunteers came to believe that God could multiply even the smallest acts of love.

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or becoming an ambassador for our mission.

Because through little acts of love, offered faithfully to God, millions of children are now being fed every day.

At Mary’s Meals, we often say that this mission was built on prayer and little acts of love. And so I would love to close today with the Mary’s Meals prayer.

[If prayer cards have been placed on the seats or provided by ushers, parishioners may now be invited to take the card and join in praying together.]

Mary’s Meals Prayer

Our Father,
give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Open our eyes and our hearts
so that we may recognize each child
as our brother and sister.

And may we share our bread and resources
especially with those who are hungry and vulnerable.

Give us today our daily bread
and the grace to share it with others.

Amen.