

JOIN IN PRAYING FOR

- Children nearby growing up in foster care, and others that face life without their fathers and/or mothers.
- Social workers and officials serving foster youth.
- Churches and nonprofits with adoption/foster/global orphan ministries.
- The Church in the U.S. and worldwide to grasp and reflect God's heart for adoption and orphan care.
- Families that have adopted, mentored and/or fostered.
- Orphans worldwide: physical provision, protection, love and belonging, and to know the love of God.
- Personal guidance in how to reflect God's heart through thoughtful action, advocacy and continued prayer.

PREPARATION

As you plan your Orphan's Table, consider how to make the most of it. For example:

1. Physical objects can reinforce the experience—simple tin plates or plastic bowls; a shared jug of water; burlap sacks or old boxes piled around.
2. Posture can be significant, too—for example sitting on the ground or cardboard.
3. Fasting prior to The Orphan's Table can remind of the hunger many orphans face daily.
4. Use the films "Zambia's Gift to the World" and "Faultless" to stimulate further discussion. (More info at www.orphansunday.org)



The Orphan's Table is an initiative of the members of the Christian Alliance for Orphans. A very special thanks to A Child's Hope International, which provides the same meal you'll be sharing to feed orphans all around the world.

THE ORPHAN'S TABLE PRAYER & DISCUSSION GUIDE

Dear Friend,

Throughout history, God has made abstract ideas touchable for His people. From rainbows and a burning bush to the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper, God makes truth tangible so we can better understand and remember it.

The Orphan's Table serves this purpose, too. Together, we remember orphans worldwide in a physical way. The shared meal, discussion, and prayer help us better grasp the needs orphans...God's heart for orphans...and His deep love for each of us also.

This guide is offered to help as you prepare for your own Orphan's Table experience, whether as a family, small group or entire church. May it draw all involved to both see and respond to the heart of our God, the "Father to the fatherless."

Sincerely,

Jedd Medefind, President
Christian Alliance for Orphans



SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

God's Heart...for the Orphan

Deuteronomy 10:18

He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow...

Hosea 14:3

...For in you [God] the fatherless find compassion.

Psalms 68:5-6

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families...

God's Heart...for Us

Romans 9:26

In the very place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," there they will be called 'children of the living God.

Romans 8:15-16

The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Galatians 4:6-7

Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ...and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

God's Call to Us

Psalms 82:3

Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.

Isaiah 1:17

Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress....

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you think would be the hardest things about growing up as an orphan? If you were an orphan, what would you most desire?
2. Why do you think God so often mentions the "fatherless/orphans" and "widows" when speaking of people that He especially cares about?
3. Share about a time when you felt one of the emotions orphans often face alone: vulnerable...or isolated...or insecure...or lonely...or without help. What could others have done (or what did they do) to most show you love in that experience?
4. What does it reveal to you about God's character that He cares so deeply for the orphans—perhaps the most vulnerable and lonely of all people?
5. Tell about a time when you've seen a Christian reflecting God's heart in their actions towards you or others. How did this impact you and your faith?
6. If you've had opportunities to care for an orphan or other vulnerable child, share how this experience impacted you.
7. Consider the Scriptures under "God's Call to Us" above. How does your church/family respond to this call? Are the steps you could take together to reflect more fully God's heart for the fatherless?