

## Thanksgiving in Malawi



Home for the holidays. This year, nine members of our family of 17 will sit down at the table for a delicious Thanksgiving Meal. When Dad cooks he doesn't like to prepare a traditional turkey, mash potatoes and gravy dinner, but something more exotic. Last time it was curried lamb and mulligatawny soup. This year, it's curried shrimp (classic Indian and shrimp Korma), two types of dhal (green and red), six varieties of chutney, a fresh fruit platter, nun bread and condiments.

Today, millions of Americans will enjoy an abundant meal topped off with pumpkin pie for dessert. Even in the soup kitchens of America, volunteers have donated and prepared turkey dinners for all who want to eat. As we give thanks for living in a land of plenty, let us pause a moment to remember that 60% of the world's population will still be hungry at the end of today!

Here's a simple way to visualize global poverty, adapted from the folks at Oxfam relief and development agency: (source: Oxfam Hunger Banquets at [www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org))

If 20 people are sitting around your table today, let each one represent a percentage of the world's population. Three will eat a gourmet meal (like my family today). Five will get rice and beans (enough to live). And 12 will receive a small portion of rice (not enough to be well-nourished, like what the AIDS orphans in Malawi are eating today).

In the real world, the problem isn't a lack of food. As Gandhi said:

*"There are enough resources in the world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed."*

The problem is the distribution according to need, rather than accumulation according to greed. It's an inequity that that can be fixed if we have the will to do so.

What can you do? Consider joining the campaign to end extreme poverty in the world in our lifetime by sharing some of your time, talent and treasure with an organization working in the developing world. Visit [www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org) for a list of NGO partners worthy of your support during this season of sharing.

As for me and my house, [www.citihope.org](http://www.citihope.org) is the charity of choice.

This year (2006) CitiHope distributed 75 metric tons of food commodities (a protein-fortified nutritional soup mix) to 40 institutions in Malawi, enough to prepare approximately 4,000,000 meals and feed 22,000 people for six months. However, due to the lack of other food resources, many institutions used up the soup mix, which was intended as a nutritional supplement, as their main meal. Therefore, the estimated number of recipients fed was only 12,000 needy orphans, patients, and children. And now, the food has run out.

More food aid is needed this month and next year, and with your help, CitiHope can do more.

If you and I are lucky enough to have food on our table this Thanksgiving, then you and I also have the power and means at our disposal to help end extreme poverty in the world.

I urge you to make a contribution to a humanitarian relief organization of your choice that delivers food aid and assists in agricultural development in the third world. If you choose to support CitiHope International, you may do so online at [www.citihope.org](http://www.citihope.org) or send a check ear-marked for Malawi Orphan Care to:

*CitiHope International*  
PO Box 38, Andes, NY 13731

Thanksgiving, of course, is not celebrated in Malawi, but those who receive enough food today and tomorrow to nourish and sustain themselves will survive and thrive knowing that they are not forgotten by the world.

How grateful they are for the gift that has been supplied.

**-Michael J. Christensen, Africa Regional Director**

