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Twinning in the Best Interest of Children: Promoting Family Life not Orphanages

About 80 percent of children in Haitian orphanages are not, in fact, orphans. Although no one knows the exact number of residential care facilities, or the number of children who live in them, most orphanages house children whose parent(s) are extremely poor, or those who have been abandoned, neglected or abused by family guardians. [Click here](#) to read some guidance for church-based institutions that already supporting orphanages in Haiti.



CRS trained staff, like Enock Vilma, to identify children who were separated from their families during the January 12 earthquake. Photo by Lane Hartill/CRS

CRS Rice Bowl



Lent is coming. Are you ready?

Ash Wednesday (February 18) is right around the corner! Check out 3 ways that CRS Rice Bowl can help make this Lent a meaningful one for the parishes, schools, and families in your (arch)diocese in the [CRS Rice Bowl Newsletter](#) for January/February 2015.

Contact Us

- [CRS Regional Offices](#)
- Email: resources@crs.org
- U.S. Operations Call Center—1-866-608-5978

2015 CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES COLLECTION

You can help us make the upcoming Catholic Relief Services Collection more successful by promoting the collection through your publication(s), website, and any other outlets available to you. In most dioceses, this collection will occur the weekend of March 14-15, though your (arch)diocese may schedule it at a different time. Materials to promote the collection are available on the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/catholic-giving/opportunities-for-giving/catholic-relief-services-collection/collection/> or [click here](#). There you will find ads, web banners, and other useful information. We truly appreciate your support of the Catholic Relief Services Collection.



CRS Northeast-Mid-Atlantic Office News

A Reflection Commemorating the Anniversary of Typhoon Haiyan

A reflection written by Michelle Dugan of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Advocacy committee about a talk given by Caroline Brennan of CRS in November 2014.

On Thursday evening, Nov. 6, a diverse group gathered at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia to commemorate the anniversary of Typhoon Haiyan (known there as Yolanda), which devastated the Philippines just a year ago. Caroline Brennan, Senior Communications Officer for the CRS Global Humanitarian Response Team, shared her experiences of the disaster – its immediate aftermath, progress made through relief efforts to date, and long-term strategies for rebuilding. Members of the Filipino community here in the Philadelphia area joined students, area parishioners, Archdiocesan staff, and clergy in prayer and solidarity. While Caroline's slide presentation and talk certainly showed the gravity of the situation and the challenges still faced by thousands of Filipino citizens, nevertheless she imparted an overwhelmingly positive message: the excellent infrastructure of the Catholic Church in the Philippines in partnership with CRS, the deep faith of the people, and the outpouring of generosity around the world have combined to restore personal choice and dignity for survivors and to inspire CRS toward the goal of finding homes and restoring livelihoods for 100,000 families within the next five years.

-Michelle Dugan, CRS Advocacy Committee, Archdiocese of Philadelphia

News from CRS Southeast Regional Office

CRS Southeast Staff Share the Message of the Gospel Call

The Southeast staff has been spending months traveling and sharing the message of our Gospel call to care for one another as brothers and sisters. Some of those recent engagements have been:

- presentations to Directors of Religious Education in the Diocese of Birmingham and Campus Ministers in the Diocese of Charleston
- trainings for priests in the Archdiocese of Atlanta and new Campus Ambassadors at Xavier University in New Orleans, LA
- exhibit tables at the Bishop John Ricard Conference in the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, the Eucharistic Congress in the Diocese of Charlotte and the International Catholic Stewardship Conference in Orlando, FL
- meetings at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, FL and Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, LA.

Please touch base with your CRS Relationship Manager if you are interested in any of these types of opportunities.

"Charity may be a very short word, but with its tremendous meaning of pure love, it sums up man's entire relation to God and to his neighbor." St Aelred of Rievaulx

Participate in the 2015 Multimedia Youth Contest Sponsored by CCHD

Calling all parishes and schools! Materials are now available for the [2015 Multimedia Youth Contest](#), sponsored by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) with support from RCL Benziger. This year's theme is *"Do Justice, Love Goodness, Walk Humbly with God."*(Micah 6:8) Educators lead participants through easy steps to learn about U.S. poverty, CCHD's response, and the Two Feet of Love in Action. Youth then create multimedia work of any type (e.g. painting, video, poetry, dance, etc.) and work to educate their peers before submitting their work to the contest. The contest can be facilitated by any diocesan office – for example, the Social Concerns, Youth Ministry, Religious Education, Catholic Schools, or Hispanic Ministry office. The annual national contest deadline is March 31, 2015. Visit the contest materials now in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

CRS Youth and Education

Why do so many go hungry if there is ENOUGH food for all?

Explore the answer to this question through the 2014-15 CRS FoodFast program! Designed for Catholic youth, CRS FoodFast invites young people to spend time walking in the shoes of people who go hungry, deepen their faith and strengthen their yearning to bring change to our world! CRS FoodFast offers a variety of NEW resources and components this year that were developed in collaboration with the Center for Ministry Development:

A variety of learning formats:

- *The traditional 24-hour retreat experience
- *A one-day/10-hour retreat
- *A 3-hour youth group night
- *A family night
- *A Confirmation Component
- *A theme song written by Catholic musician, Pasquale Talarico - One Family
- *Integration of the Caritas Internationalis the Pope Francis-inspired campaign, One Human Family, Food for All
- *A special message by Fr. James Martin, SJ
- *A Food & Faith Jeopardy ... and more!

Visit <http://foodfast.org> or email foodfast@crs.org for more information. Our partner, the Center for Ministry Development, promotes the development of ministry and catechesis with youth and families through leadership formation, service learning, and resources rooted in Catholic tradition and Scripture. For more information, go to cmdnet.org.



2015 Called to Witness Goes to El Salvador

Catholic Relief Services, in partnership with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry and the National Association for Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders, announces the 2015 Called to Witness trip to El Salvador in May 2015. Through Called to Witness, CRS provides parish, diocesan and national youth ministers with a global experience to help them call and empower young people to an active commitment to working for solidarity, peace and justice. Among the many situations and realities to be explored, this delegation will highlight CRS' work in the areas of migration, peacebuilding, youth violence prevention programming, and integral human development.

Applications are now available. For more information, visit the CRS Education website or contact Ted Miles at 410-951-7475

**Slavery and Human Trafficking
Find Out How You Can Help Set Them Free**



Human trafficking is a \$32 billion industry and at least 12.3 million people are trafficked worldwide [Read more.](#)

CRS Farmer to Farmer Program

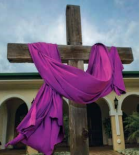
Learn about CRS' relatively new Farmer to Farmer Program in East Africa. This five-year U.S. Government funded initiative program is a great opportunity for Catholics across America to put their faith into action and work directly with CRS in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda! Please visit our Website for more information and use our online application: <http://farmertofarmer.crs.org/>



New CRS Resources

CONFIRMED FOR SERVICE IN THE WORLD

A session that helps explain the connection between Confirmation and service, encouraging confirmandi to understand service as a part of their Christian vocation—not just a requirement that they need to fulfill in order to be confirmed. Available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). We also have a CRS Food Fast Confirmation retreat in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

A [handout](#) with background information and practical ways that ministry leaders can incorporate Catholic social teaching through the USCCB's pastoral plan for the New Evangelization



WATER IS LIFE

An interactive family [catechesis session](#) that helps explain the Catholic social teaching principle of the Dignity of the Human Person through the example of access to clean water

EMERGENCY PRAYER CARDS

Prayer cards for those who are experiencing emergencies around the world. Children can cut out each card and read the prayers together with their class or family. Available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

CRS Resources Commemorating the Haiti Earthquake

- [Strengthening Catholic Education in Haiti](#)
- [CRS in Haiti 5 Years After the Earthquake](#)

CRS Hispanic Resource

- [Resources for Leaders in Hispanic Ministry](#)

For additional information please contact the [CRS regional office for your state](#) or the CRS U.S. Operations Call Center at 1-888-608-5978.

You Did it for Me!

You Did It for Me is an exciting joint venture between Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services. **YDIFM** is a series of brief stories for parish, diocesan, or organization websites and parish bulletins - any place you would like to share good news of the Church helping those in need across America and around the world. CRS Diocesan Directors should ask their archbishop or bishop if their parish bulletin editors may receive these weekly stories of our faith in action. Please return the completed sign up form to bulletinstories@crs.org.



Yes, snail mail is still one of most effective ways to communicate with your Members of Congress and influence their policy decisions! [Click here](#) for some tips to help you draft an effective and powerful letter.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN
**EFFECTIVE
LETTER**
TO YOUR
**MEMBERS OF
CONGRESS**