



# You Matter to CRS

U.S. Operations Division

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## Global Emergency Update

This global emergency snapshot provides information on the pressing humanitarian emergencies that were handled during this past holiday season by Catholic Relief Services teams and partners around the world. If you would like additional information please contact your regional CRS office or the CRS U.S. Operations Call Center at 1-866-608-5978



CRS continues its work in reconciliation. Photo by Michael Stulman/CRS

## Brazil Models Courage in Fighting Modern-Day Slavery

Whether we know it or not, modern-day slavery is everywhere. It lurks in our phones, food, clothing and more.

Like few other countries, Brazil has made a concerted effort to identify products tainted with slave labor and end modern slavery within its borders. It has actively enlisted help from businesses and publicly listed firms and farms with slave-labor connections. [Read more..](#)

Here is a 5-minute link to a YouTube film on CRS's work against Human Slavery in Brazil <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eucfa5RvXg&feature=youtu.be> . It is hard-hitting and informative, and dovetails our international focus on Human Trafficking. Please take time to view it and share it with others.



### Reminder: CRS Collection March 5-6

The annual Catholic Relief Services Collection will take place in most parishes over the weekend of March 5-6, 2016.

The CRS Collection funds the core mission of CRS and five other Catholic agencies that give aid to struggling, poor, and underrepresented families at home and abroad. With the support of the Collection, these six organizations provide humanitarian aid and disaster relief, help resettle displaced individuals and families, and advocate on behalf of those in need around the world.

We are grateful for your dedication that inspires others to serve and give generously to help our brothers and sisters in need. Parishes are encouraged to use the posters, fliers, web ads, and bulletin announcements on the USCCB website, available in English and Spanish.

If you have any questions about the CRS Collection, please contact Bevin Kennedy, Assistant Director, Promotions, USCCB Office of National Collections, at [BKennedy@usccb.org](mailto:BKennedy@usccb.org) or (202)-541-3365.



## NEWS from the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

### **Boston Ambassadors Reporting for Duty!**

by Deacon Timothy F. Donohue, Archdiocese of Boston

The Archdiocese of Boston launched the CRS Ambassador Program in November. CRS trained and commissioned 18 Ambassadors under the leadership of Debbie Rambo, President of Catholic Charities, and Mary Campion, Pastoral Associate, and Deacon Rey Spadoni.

The Ambassadors are currently engaged in their first assignment to create plans to organize and launch three initiatives that support CRS in their local parish in 2016. Many of the Ambassadors are already at work reaching out to other parishioners to share in this mission.

The Boston Team is hoping to hear about ideas and successes from the Seattle and Chicago Ambassadors on the Facebook Group page: The CRS Parish Ambassador Corps. Several parishes have already used the information they learned from our launch meeting to host Fair Trade events during the Advent season. [Read more...](#)

### **Season of Solidarity: Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Syrian and Iraqi Refugees at Villanova University**

by Danielle Corea, Relationship Manager

On December 2, 2015, over 200 members of the Villanova community's students, faculty, alumni, clergy and members of the larger Radnor, PA community gathered together at the St. Thomas of Villanova Church. They came together for a moment of recognition to stand in solidarity for the nearly 11 million people affected by the on-going conflicts in Syria and Iraq. [Read more...](#)

### **The Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire Holds Event to Advocate for Refugees in the Middle East**

by Mari Barboza, Relationship Manager

The Diocese of Manchester held its Annual Catholics in the Public Square event on Saturday, November 21st at the Institute of Politics at Saint Anselm College. This annual event serves to educate the faithful about a particular area of Church teaching and the role of Catholics in public life. This year's event focused on the crisis in the Middle East and drew over 200 people. Bishop Libasci has a deep concern for this region of the world and has lifted-up and advocated on behalf of this region of the world. Bill O'Keefe, Vice President of CRS shared with participants why, as Catholics we should care about what is happening in this region and what CRS and its partners are doing to respond to the situation. The Annual Catholics in the Public Square event has focused on such topics as immigration, the death penalty and end-of-life care.

## NEWS from the West Regional Office

### **Welcome the Syrian Refugees**

Juneau Empire.com Opinion November 23, 2015

By Deacon Charles Rohrbacher

"Lord, when did we see you a stranger and welcome you or naked and clothe you? ... And the king will answer, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did for me.'" (Matthew 25:38, 40).

In my home, in front of the icon of Jesus and Mary in my prayer corner, I keep a photo of a Syrian refugee family. The mother is wearing what looks to be a hijab, which would indicate that this holy family fleeing the violence and killing in Syria is probably Muslim.

Which is all to the good because when Jesus commanded us to welcome the stranger, he meant everyone, including Muslims. I put their picture there because I want their beautiful faces to be a daily reminder to pray for them and for all of the refugees fleeing from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan who are desperate to find shelter, safety and most importantly, welcome.

The horrific attacks last week by Islamist terrorists in Paris are a reminder of the unrelenting warfare and daily violence that has forced tens of thousands of families to flee Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan in search of refuge and safety. Their situation continues to be dire and their needs are basic and urgent.

The numbers alone are staggering. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) reports that since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011, 4 million refugees have fled Syria to nearby Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. [Read more..](#)

## PROGRAM AND RESOURCE UNIT NEWS

### CRS RICE BOWL NEWS

#### Lent is Just Days Away!

Don't worry there are three easy ways you can make Lent a success throughout your dioceses. Find out how in the [CRS Rice Bowl Newsletter for January/February 2016](#) !



### FAIR TRADE NEWS



— Carry on your fair trade giving throughout the year and purchase one of a kind gifts this St. Valentine's Day. From beautiful scarves to delicious chocolates, our partners have just the right gifts for your loved ones. By sharing the gift of fair trade you impact the lives of artisans and farmers around the world and bring smiles to those you love most.

Order from [Serrv](#) by February 7 for regular shipping.  
Order from [Equal Exchange](#) by February 1 for regular shipping.

## PARTNERSHIP TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT UNIT NEWS

### CRS Global Fellows Travel to Witness Work of CRS and the Church with Syrian Refugees

Seven CRS Global Fellows will travel to Athens and Belgrade to witness the work of CRS and the Church with the Syrian Refugees. The Global Fellows will be available to share their testimonials upon their return January 30<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to request a Global Fellow please contact us at [globalfellows@crs.org](mailto:globalfellows@crs.org) .

### Check out the New CRS Clergy Outreach site!

The CRS Clergy Team is pleased to announce the launch of the Clergy Outreach page. This website is meant to be a resource for clergy, our partners who may be looking for resources to share with clergy and our seminary partners. Please be sure to share this link <http://www.crs.org/get-involved/participate/crs-clergy-outreach> with all who may be interested and find it useful.

### Laudato Si' - Our Common Home and Climate Change

**Living on the Edge of Climate Change** is a 2 part series of stories highlighting the challenge of the earth's changing climate and effects on the world's poorest and most vulnerable. The first story of the series is *Walking through the Corridor of Concern in Guatemala* which you may view by [clicking here](#).



### CURRENT ACTION ALERTS

#### Launch an Offensive of Mercy for Syrian Refugees

Urge Congress to Extend Support for Syrian Refugees [Read the full alert](#)

#### Urge Congress to Protect Human Dignity and Combat Human Trafficking!

You Can Shine a Light Against Human Trafficking [Read the full alert](#)



## New Catholic Relief Services Resources

The **CRS Resource Center** (<http://www.crs.org/get-involved/resource-center>) offers an array of resources suitable for all ages to form disciples to live out Christ's call to care for the poor and vulnerable everywhere.

### Jubilee Year of Mercy Resources

Videos, adult faith sharing sessions, handouts and more about for the Jubilee Year of Mercy .

### Through the Year with CRS



A webpage arranged with a monthly calendar that suggests resources for ministry throughout 2016



### Pope Francis in Mexico

A prayer and videos available in English and Spanish that focus on themes of migration— specifically in Central America— in light of Pope Francis' upcoming trip to Mexico and the Mass he will celebrate on the US-Mexico border .

### Responding to the Refugee Crisis

Ways your faith community can pray, learn, act and give to support refugees in need .

For additional information on these and other resources 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 that are brief good news stories of the Church in action across America and around the world. **A new feature is available!** A "how to" e-brochure answers questions and offers suggestions how to use the stories is available on **CRS.org/you-did-it-for-me**. It easily explains the download features with step-by-step directions for church bulletins, websites, newsletters, even for Face Book and Twitter. Please visit **CRS.org/you-did-it-for-me** for the e-brochure and a sign-up form if you're not already receiving these wonderful stories. Share with all!! If you have questions, send them to [bulletinstories@crs.org](mailto:bulletinstories@crs.org).

### Contact Us

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