

PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

You Matter to CRS

U.S. Operations Division



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Lives & Livelihoods: How Savings Groups Transform Lives

Why Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC)?

Most formal financial institutions are unable to reach the world's poorest people, who greatly need access to financial services. To address this need, we help community members to form groups, pool their savings and make loans to each other. This approach has created economic opportunities for nearly 1.8 million people who live in the world's most impoverished areas.

CRS provides training and capacity strengthening to new savings groups, using a highly sustainable market-based approach. [Learn more](#) about CRS' Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC).



Abaynesh Legesse prepares traditional injera for sale in her kitchen in Benben Village, Ethiopia. She has seen her restaurant business increase five-fold since taking out a \$50 loan for ingredients. Photo by Sara A. Fajardo

[Media Center Live: Link to CRS News Releases and Videos](#)

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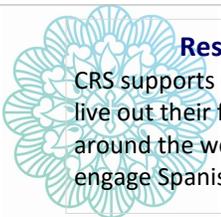
RCIA Session: Living Like Jesus

Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services have teamed up to offer [RCIA Session: Living Like Jesus](#), a lectionary-based catechetical session for the period of the Catechumenate and Mystagogia. The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults prepares people for full initiation into the Catholic Church through a process of catechetical formation, Christian living in the midst of the community, integration into a life of prayer and worship and living the apostolic life. This session will help initiation leaders form candidates, catechumens and sponsors to understand how living the apostolic life includes reaching out to people on the peripheries of society, as Christ did.



Resources for Leaders of Hispanic Ministry

CRS supports Catholic communities in the United States as they live out their faith in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable around the world. [Click here](#) and learn about resources available to engage Spanish-speaking Catholics in CRS' work.



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Congratulations and Farewell to Melissa Wheeler, CRS Diocesan Director for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Melissa Wheeler recently received The Humanitas Award from the Alumnae Association of Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame, IN. This award recognizes an alumna of the Catholic liberal arts women's college who is outstanding in her personal and volunteer accomplishments and is recognized for her concern for the interests and welfare of her fellow human beings. Her actions exemplify the qualities of personal dedication, compassion, selflessness, and sacrifice through social action, education, and reform within the community, the Church, and the world.

Melissa was recognized for her service in Catholic education and with Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Melissa has been teaching Theology at Bishop Dwenger High School since 2001, serving as the school's Social Justice Coordinator since 2005, and was named the Diocesan Director for Catholic Relief Services for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in 2012.

Under Melissa's leadership, the diocese has seen increased participation in CRS Rice Bowl and each of the 4 diocesan high schools participate in the CRS Global High School program. She recently established a new diocesan global solidarity team, laying the groundwork for the CRS Parish Ambassador Corp initiative. Melissa also travelled to Ghana in 2014 with the CRS Global High School delegation.

Effective June 1, Melissa has taken on a significant new project at Bishop Dwenger High School, developing a 4-year theology curriculum for students with special needs. Thus, Melissa has decided to step-away from her role as CRS Diocesan Director. We send her off with our prayers and gratitude for all that she has done to strengthen the work of global solidarity in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Original news release from St. Mary's College: <https://www.saintmarys.edu/news/alumnae-association-presents-humanitas-award-melissa-roberts-wheeler-%E2%80%999997>



From left: Melissa Roberts-Wheeler '97, Graciela Batista Nearing '67, Susan Scherer Calandra '72, and President Jan Cervelli.

Marquette University CRS Ambassadors Work to Humanize the Refugee Experience

by Sherri Walker, Marquette University Center for Peacemaking

In response to the executive order enacted at the end of 2016, students from Marquette's community came together to voice their concern. Students felt more should be done for refugees around the world. In the spirit of collective advocacy, Marquette's CRS Student Ambassadors, along with other student organizations, distributed information and scripts to encourage students to phone legislators and engage in public advocacy.

The effort was successful; students filled the voicemail boxes of their legislators and made their voices heard. By talking to fellow students during this activity, Marquette CRS Student Ambassadors found that Marquette students wanted to meet refugees and learn more about their experiences. (Continued on page 3)

COOKIES & CONVERSATION

Discussion with Refugees



CRS Midwest Region News (continued from pg. 2)

Marquette University CRS Ambassadors Work to Humanize the Refugee Experience (continued from pg. 2)

by Sherri Walker, Marquette University Center for Peacemaking

The ambassadors brainstormed two ways to humanize refugees and decided to host a panel discussion and simulation to help students become more aware of the refugee situation both locally and worldwide. On a college campus in Wisconsin, migrants can seem so far away and are often seen as a statistic, rather than a mother, father, or child.

The ambassadors invited three refugees from different cultural backgrounds to share their story with 120 Marquette students. Because of this experience, students expanded their knowledge and understanding of the difficult journey of refugees. A refugee from Iraq shared his experience of leaving behind his homeland because of continued war and violence. Students were able to act on this increased understanding by sending advocacy cards to their representatives to call for legislative change in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) statement, which pleads for support for refugees.



The ambassadors then held a refugee and migration simulation where students gained a better understanding of the stresses of leaving one's home and going through the immigration process. While there is no way to adequately emulate these horrific experiences, each station in the simulation attempted to demonstrate a different part of a migrant and refugee journey. Activities were designed to simulate border crossing, detention and deportation, asylum processing, and reflection with a previous refugee and current refugee case manager. In the deportation simulation, students participated in an ICE raid in which the entire family was questioned and the parents forcibly detained.

The activities informed students about the migrant experience in the midst of the Syrian Refugee crisis and the recent government actions regarding refugees and migrants. However, this is an ongoing issue. Marquette CRS Student Ambassadors hope that you will join in advocating for the rights and needs of refugees and migrants worldwide.

CRS Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Region News

Summer Happenings in the CRS Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Region

- The Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, along with The Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Unit hosted a welcome reception on July 12th at Villanova University. The reception offered the chance for attendees to meet with 35 members of our CRS staff from 24 countries around the globe.
- On August 21st, the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regional Office is hosting a gathering of Global High School participants in the region. The gathering will be held in Pennsylvania at St. Thomas of Villanova. The region will be providing the opportunity for school leaders to learn more about the resources available for the Global High School program, while connecting both new and seasoned schools with other teachers and administrators to learn how they have answered the call of global solidarity through CRS.
- The Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Region is offering a day of fellowship and conversation for our key partners from several dioceses in and around upstate New York. The hope for the day is to bring neighbors together to share ideas, and to find new ways to live as missionary disciples in our local and global Church. This will be held on September 11th at the Belhurst Castle, Geneva, New York.
- Three members of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia will travel with a group of five other participants and two CRS representatives to Burkina Faso. The purpose of this trip will be for the group to visit community partners in Burkina Faso that receive food packed during our Helping Hands programs, as well as to be immersed in the culture. The travelers from Philadelphia will be commissioned in the NE/MA regional office Thursday, July 13th, before they leave for their journey. Please pray for them as they make their final preparations for this hands-on experience of global solidarity!

CRS Programs and Resources Unit



Plan Your Fall Fair

It's time to start thinking about your fall fair trade sale. The fair trade catalog, Community Order and Consignment packets will be available in early September with all the gifts you need for your parish or school's holiday fundraiser. For more information and to order materials, visit CRS Ethical Trade: [Host An Event](#).



Interested in learning more about fair trade and ethical purchasing? [Sign up](#) to receive monthly emails to help you navigate the world of conscientious shopping. For a taste of the latest news, check out our most recent webinar about [fair trade gold](#).



We have begun creating CRS Rice Bowl faith formation materials for Lent 2018! Read about this and much more in the [July/August 2017 CRS Rice Bowl Newsletter](#).

CRS Diocesan Directors please note that CRS Rice Bowl spreadsheets with order updates are due **Friday, August 25th**.



CRS University News

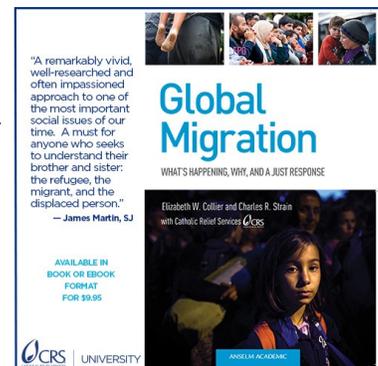
New Migration Book and Academic/Educational Faculty Learning Commons Modules

At latest count, 244 million people—the highest number in history—reside in a nation in which they were not born. But migration is not a new phenomenon.

Check out the new migration book [Global Migration: What's Happening, Why, and a Just Response!](#) It unpacks the complex issues surrounding modern migration, including the reasons people might need or choose to leave their country of origin, and the laws, treaties, and resources that dictate the opportunities of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced people upon resettling. Focused on the humanitarian work of Catholic Relief Services throughout the world, *Global Migration* inspires reflection, provokes discussion, and empowers students to respond to today's greatest humanitarian crisis.

The [academic and educational modules](#) via the CRS Faculty Learning Commons are accessible for use inside the classroom, for personal learning and beyond. These modules supplement the *Global Migration* book with additional resources and discussion questions.

Please contact the [CRS University team](#), if you have questions.





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.



World Day of the Poor Resources

Pope Francis has declared a World Day of the Poor, to be celebrated every year on the thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time. The first World Day of the Poor is November 19. We have prayers and liturgical resources for November 19, and more resources coming soon.



National V Encuentro: Resources for Forming Missionary Disciples

A list of concrete ways ministry leaders can help form missionary disciples who reach out to the peripheries



Video: Catholic Teaching on Welcoming Refugees

CRS leadership and other Catholic leaders, including Cardinal Peter Turkson and Archbishop José Gomez, reflect on Church teaching related to welcoming refugees.

Activities and Reflections for Immersion and Mission Trips

Rooted in Catholic teaching and based on our extensive experience working with partners overseas, these resources are designed to be used by a facilitator with groups as they prepare for, take and return from trips.



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 on 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 Facebook 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.

CONTACT US

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

CRS U.S. Operations

Jacklyn Ireland, Communications Specialist for the U.S. Operations Partnership, Training and Engagement Unit, prepares the bi-monthly *Partnership Newsletter*. The U.S. Operations Partnership, Training and Engagement Unit is responsible for managing national partnerships in the United States for CRS. If you would like others in your organization to receive this newsletter or if you have questions please contact the U.S. Operations Call Center at 1-866-608-5978 or email: resources@crs.org.