

March 9, 2020

Dear Brother Bishops:

I am writing to inform you that once again a Catholic blogger has launched an aggressive campaign against Catholic Relief Services, accusing the organization of not adhering to Catholic doctrine. He released what he calls part 1 of a series of attacks on March 2nd in an attempt to disrupt the CRS Rice Bowl campaign and raise funds for his own cause. While these reports may appear startling and perhaps even authentic, many of you know that the allegations have to date all been shown to be unfounded. The way in which these allegations are presented is not in good Christian faith and, what's more, use distasteful and doctored imagery in an effort to deceive people with information taken out of context.

While you may see more of these reports in the coming weeks, I can personally assure you that CRS takes the allegations very seriously and investigates them to determine if they hold any truth. CRS and our board of directors have a careful review system to ensure all programs adhere to Catholic moral teaching and all funds under CRS' direct control are used only for purposes complying with that teaching. CRS' decision-making processes for both programs and partners are based on its Catholic identity, and the USCCB Administrative Committee has publicly stated its support for CRS in the face of previous accusations.

You may receive inquiries from parishioners, the media or others throughout Lent questioning CRS because of these allegations, and I can assure you of the agency's commitment to Catholic teaching and rigorous processes for making programming and partnership decisions in an effort to provide quality service to the poor on your behalf. CRS will provide statements/talking points so you are better able to respond to your parishioners.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need assistance responding to parishioners who have genuine concerns. My prayer is that this Lenten season will be a time of self-reflection and renewal as we consider anew what our Lord's death and resurrection mean for living lives filled with grace and charity. If your diocesan teams require any information regarding these allegations, please don't hesitate to have them contact Paul Eagle (paul.eagle@crs.org) or Kim Pozniak (kim.pozniak@crs.org) at Catholic Relief Services. I have also attached an addendum to this letter to provide you with additional specificity regarding CRS' efforts.

Fraternally yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport
Chair, CRS Board of Directors