



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

March 23/24, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Collection will be taken up in the parishes of our diocese next weekend, **March 30/31**. This collection benefits six organizations whose mission is to promote the sacredness of human life and dignity by serving people most in need around the world.

The money raised through this collection helps the Catholic Church respond to emergencies by supplying immediate shelter, food, and other necessities; by providing educational opportunities and legal services to our brothers and sisters who have fled their home countries seeking safety in other lands; and by promoting justice and peace-building efforts in countries around the world.

One region, in particular, that is being aided by monies raised during previous CRS collections is Latin and South America. The social, economic and political crisis in Venezuela continues to escalate, leaving citizens without basic necessities such as food, water and health care. A staggering 87 percent of people in the country now live below the poverty line. As of January 2019, 3.6 million people have fled to other countries including Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, and Trinidad and Tobago, and experts are predicting that number will double in the coming year. In these places, Catholic Relief Services is partnering with local agencies to provide emergency relief and basic supplies. This emergency support would not be possible without your generosity.

Please consider a contribution to the CRS Collection. There are few collections more critical than this one. Your prayers and financial support allow these organizations to bring immediate assistance and the love of Christ to people in need across the globe. For more information on the organizations whose work benefits from your generosity, please visit [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids