



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

Statement in Support of Catholic Relief Services

For Immediate Release | April 20, 2021

GAYLORD, MICHIGAN – In the past, and again in recent days, information has been circulated which calls into question certain Catholic charitable organizations and their fidelity to Catholic teaching, including Catholic Relief Services (CRS). To provide clarity, Bishop Walter A. Hurley, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord, has issued the following statement in support of Catholic Relief Services:

“Our diocese will continue to support the wonderful work of Catholic Relief Services, which serves the vulnerable and marginalized all around the globe and here at home. Their work provides housing for victims of natural disasters; educational opportunities for refugees displaced by war; and spiritual support and other aid to those who have unique pastoral needs due to their circumstances. CRS’ work impacts thousands of families, often in very remote, dangerous parts of the world.

“I am saddened by false assertions about Catholic Relief Services as these statements unduly harm their credibility and, as a result, misguide parishioners seeking to support commendable Catholic charities. I reassure you that CRS has been approved and supported by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, whose Executive Committee has stated: “The humanitarian relief efforts of CRS are grounded in the loving teachings of the Catholic Church. CRS stands in firm defense of life. Criticisms to the contrary should not detract from the powerful impact your donations have on the lives of otherwise forgotten suffering populations. We have confidence in the thorough vetting system utilized by CRS by which complaints are investigated and corrective action taken, if necessary. CRS works alongside other relief agencies that may not share our teaching. In these instances, CRS keeps its work distinct. We firmly stand with the personnel of Catholic Relief Services in their solidarity to the least among us. Together, we affirm the sacredness of every human life from the moment of conception until natural death.”¹

“While parishioners are in no way obligated to participate in Catholic Relief Services’ initiatives, support of CRS will continue to be encouraged in the Diocese of Gaylord. It is my sincere hope that the work of CRS will continue to receive full support from our parishes, in solidarity with our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are in dire need of immediate, and often life-saving, help.”

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The Diocese of Gaylord was established by His Holiness Pope St. Paul VI on July 20, 1971. The territory encompasses 11,171 square miles and includes the 21 most northern counties of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. The region is home to nearly 50,000 Catholics, served by 75 parishes, 17 Catholic schools and many closely-related institutions. For more information, visit www.dioceseofgaylord.org.

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¹ <https://www.usccb.org/news/2020/statement-us-bishops-executive-committee-catholic-relief-services-delivers-hope-christ>