

FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT

Guide to a Successful
Community Fundraiser

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for fundraising on behalf of Catholic Relief Services. We are the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. For more than 70 years, CRS has served our poorest brothers and sisters in more than 100 countries on 5 continents. We reach 85 million people regardless of race, religion or nationality.

With the support of community fundraisers like you, CRS can feed hungry families, provide health care and clean water in remote villages, and help farmers grow better crops. We can protect orphans and vulnerable children, and respond immediately to emergencies.

Our new online giving platform – Fundraise for CRS – will help you promote your event *and* raise money for CRS.

- Start by creating a personal fundraising page and setting a fundraising goal. Add some text explaining your event, and why CRS and our mission are important to you.
- Make the first contribution to your page to show your commitment.
- Invite your friends, family and coworkers to support you by giving through our easy and fast online payment system.

You can send email updates to your supporters from the platform, and track your cash or check donations.

WE CAN'T ALL GO OVERSEAS TO HELP THE MOST VULNERABLE—BUT WE CAN MAKE A LIFE-CHANGING DIFFERENCE IN THREE EASY STEPS.



1 CREATE A PAGE. Set up a personal fundraising page in just minutes at crs.donordrive.com.



2 SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT. Make the first donation to show your family and friends that you're passionate about this cause.



3 SHARE. Share your campaign on social media, and watch while your compassion grows into generosity that saves lives and eases suffering around the world.

HOW TO: PLAN AND HOST A FUNDRAISER

We can't all go overseas to help the most vulnerable—but you *can* help fund Catholic Relief Services' on-the-ground efforts by hosting a personal campaign or event. CRS' online platform makes it easy. Here are a few tips to ensure your fundraising effort is a success.

1

Start early. It's never too early to begin planning your campaign or event. Whether it's 1 week or 1 month, consider these questions when thinking about how you want to raise money for CRS.

- **What kind of event or campaign do you want to host?** A memorial campaign to honor a loved one, donations instead of birthday gifts, running a race to support CRS ... the sky's the limit. See **Event Ideas** for inspiration, and get creative!
- **Why are you passionate about CRS?** What inspires you about CRS' mission? What cause(s) do you care about the most? Identifying what you care about and why, and being able to communicate it, will give other people a reason to care and get involved.
- **Who can you contact for support?** Start thinking about who you know and how they might be able to help you reach your goal—by making a donation, helping you plan or by sharing your campaign with their network. You can get more strategic about who—and how—to ask later, but start brainstorming early.
- **Where, when and how?** If you're hosting an event, start thinking about logistics. Do you need to reserve a venue? Will you serve food or refreshments? Will there be any costs associated with the event?

Remember to review the [CRS Guidelines for Fundraising](#) when planning your event. You can find them in the **Resources** tab of your **Fundraise for CRS** dashboard.

2

Set a goal. How much do you want to raise for CRS? \$100, \$1,000, \$5,000? Be ambitious but realistic. You can always adjust your goals as you go.

3

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Once you launch your campaign, you'll be asking people to share it via social media. You may also want to ask for help *before* you launch your campaign. If you're planning a big event, put together a small committee of people who can help you strategize, call vendors, etc. If you're planning something smaller, ask a friend or two for feedback on your fundraising page to ensure it's user friendly and typo free. You don't have to go it alone!

4

Spread the word. Share information about your campaign and event via social media, email, phone calls, in-person ... any way you can think of to get the word out. Quick tips:

- **Don't be shy.** Most people make annual charitable donations—so keep in mind that you're not asking people to *become* givers: you're giving them an option.
- **Create your potential supporter list wisely.** Who shares your passion for CRS and its mission to help the poor and vulnerable overseas? Your fellow parishioners? Your book club? Parents at your kids' schools? Your family? Be strategic about who you ask—and what you ask for. You might feel more comfortable asking closer connections to give more. If you know a connection is not in a position to give financially, you can ask him/her to support you by sharing your campaign or event with his/her network. See **A Network of Support** for suggestions on how to plan your direct asks.
- **Use social media.** Facebook, Twitter, Instagram ... Use social media to launch your campaign and share updates with your friends. Social media is a great way to reach people in your network who might not be close enough for a direct ask. Check out our **Sample Messages for Social Media**. Be sure to share a link to your personal fundraising page in your messages.

5

Inspire your supporters. The key to creating excitement about your campaign or event is giving people a reason to become involved. In your messaging, share stories about the people CRS serves and the impact that your financial support can have on their lives. Statistics and numbers are important, but stories and photos make it personal. See our list of **Talking Points** for examples and download from our **Photo and Video Resources**. Include why you're passionate about CRS on your personal fundraising page and in your messaging. By sharing your passion and our stories, your event will build its own momentum.

Quick Tip

Nobody likes to be first. Get your fundraising off to a good start by making the first contribution.

6

Recognize and thank your supporters. It's important to acknowledge the generous donors who contribute to your campaign. Send a personal thank you email or handwritten note after each contribution—within 2 or 3 days, if possible. You can also recognize your supporters using social media or email updates. Post an update to Twitter each time you get a donation, or send a weekly email naming everyone who has contributed to your campaign. Showing your gratitude will increase the likelihood of people supporting you in the future.



“Whenever we do something together, something good, something beautiful, everyone changes - all of us change in some way - and this does us good.”

- POPE FRANCIS

EVENT IDEAS

You can plan a campaign in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. You can plan an event at your work, in your school, or in your community. Here are a few ideas to get you started. But don't stop here – get creative! Your only limit is your own imagination.



- **Film Screening** 
Host a film screening at your community center or parish. Charge an admission fee and donate the proceeds to CRS—add a CRS concession stand featuring donated baked goods to increase your donations even more! All you need is a video, projector and a screen or blank wall.
- **Community Yard Sale** 
Get your neighbors together and clear out your garages for a good cause. Make your signs big and bold, and let people know that all proceeds will benefit CRS. It's a win-win—you'll be free of clutter *and* touch countless lives around the world!
- **CRS Café** 
Serve up an international dish from one of the 101 countries CRS serves, and charge a fee per plate. Click [Where We Work](#) on our main web page for information on CRS' programs in that country—and distribute it to your guests.
- **Dance Marathon** 
Organize a dance-a-thon. Charge a fee to enter, or encourage participants to reach a fundraising goal by asking their friends and family to sponsor them. The longer you dance, the more you raise for CRS!

- **Dress-Down or Dress-Up Day** 🧑🏻

Ask your school administration to allow students to dress down for a day. Or pick a theme and encourage classmates and faculty to dress in costume. Charge each participant a fee that will go toward providing lifesaving aid to our poorest brothers and sisters overseas. You can also do this at work! Just be sure to contact your HR department first.

- **Get Competitive** 🏃

A surefire way to get people engaged is to weave in elements of friendly competition. Organize a competition among clubs, classes—even faculty and students—to see who can raise the most for CRS. An added bonus is that competitions are naturally conducive to social media activity. You can post and tweet updates on the progress of the competition, announce winners or simply rally team spirit.

- **Game Tournament** 🧑🏻

Set up a bracket for board games or video games and play until only one competitor is left standing. Charge an entry fee, and donate the proceeds. Participants can feel good about supporting CRS—even if they don't make it to the final round.

- **Run, Bike, or Swim (or All Three!) for the Cause** 🏃

Register for a race and ask your coworkers, friends and family to sponsor you. Let your supporters know that their contributions will help CRS serve poor and vulnerable people in more than 100 countries.

Before you get started, read [CRS' Guidelines for Fundraising](#). You can find it in the Resources tab at the top of your Fundraise for CRS user dashboard.

Our Community Giving Advisor, Laura Maguire, is available for ideas and helpful information. She can also answer any questions you may have. Email Laura at laura.maguire@crs.org or call 800-235-2772, ext. 7171.

HELP FROM CRS



Free access to **Fundraise for CRS** platform and features, including a customizable personal fundraising page



Photo and video resources for promotional materials



News stories, program information and educational resources



Fundraising Toolkit with tips and ideas to make your event or campaign a success



Sample to-do list and timeline



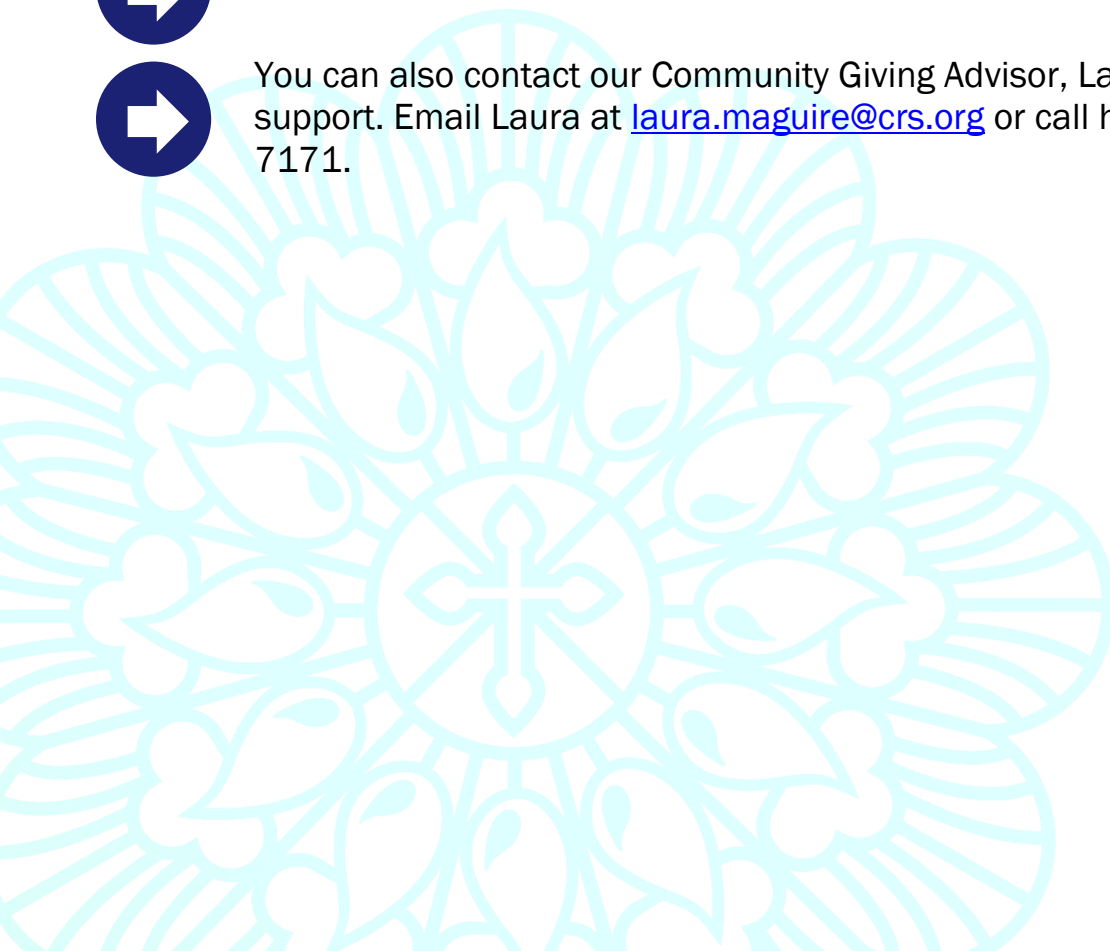
Use of CRS name and logo in connection with the event



Recognition of top individual and team fundraisers on **Fundraise for CRS** website



You can also contact our Community Giving Advisor, Laura Maguire, for additional support. Email Laura at laura.maguire@crs.org or call her at 800-235-2772, ext. 7171.



SAMPLE TO-DO LIST AND TIMELINE

	✓	TASK	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	NOTES
PLANNING TASKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine type of campaign/event and personal fundraising goal		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create Fundraise for CRS campaign page		Edit text to tell personal story about passion for CRS and its mission
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruit event planning committee		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify potential supporters		Use network map (optional)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create promotional materials, plan and schedule		Use CRS logo and images available on Fundraise for CRS dashboard
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan event activities and logistics. Provide details below.		Venue, food, entertainment, etc.
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
FUNDRAISING TASKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Publicly launch Fundraise for CRS page		Make the first donation to kick-start giving
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post first reminder on social media		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Send an update to friends, family and coworkers		Be sure to recognize people who have already contributed
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other promotion activities. Provide details below.		See promotional plan and schedule
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
FOLLOW-UP TASKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Send personalized thank you notes to donors	Send within 2-3 days of donation	Consider handwritten notes, if possible
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Send end-of-campaign email to supporters		Recognize donors and highlight campaign impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thank the event planning committee		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Convert cash donations to a check or money order and mail to CRS		Use donation form found in Fundraise for CRS dashboard
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Tip: When planning task deadlines, start from the date of your event or campaign launch and work backwards. How far in advance do you need to reserve a venue, recruit a planning committee or create your campaign page?

A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

Network mapping helps fundraisers identify who they are connected with and who they can ask for support. The idea is simple: map out your contacts, their contacts ... and so on.

While the concept is simple, the task can seem daunting since we have so many people in our networks, especially online. Make it easier by starting with 5 to 10 of your closest contacts—target people who share your passion for Catholic Relief Services’ mission. Then ask these people if they know others who might be willing to support you.

You can go a step further and indicate close *and* more distant connections using solid and dashed lines, or some other symbol. This can help you determine the kind of support you can request from each person. For example, you might feel more comfortable asking a closer connection for an introduction to her boss. Or you might prefer to ask a more distant connection to share your campaign or event with his Facebook friends.

Being strategic about who you invite can help you reach your fundraising goal faster.



HOW TO: COMMUNICATIONS

Your **Fundraise for CRS** dashboard is preloaded with sample emails. But you may want to customize your communications to better convey why you're passionate about Catholic Relief Services' mission so you can engage more supporters. Below are some ideas you can use in your campaign.



Tell a story about an area of CRS' work. Why is it important to you?



End each message with a call to action: Donate, Give, Share. Be specific when possible; for example, "Share this post with 5 friends."



Include a link to your personal fundraising page in all messages.



Start by asking your closest friends and family. Once you have a few donations, share your campaign on social media and ask your friends to join the movement you've started.



Visuals like photos, videos and infographics are more engaging than text-only messages.



Create a hashtag for your campaign or event and ask supporters to use it when posting pictures, testimonies or anything else related to your fundraiser.
#myCRSfundraiser



Send updates to let your supporters know how your campaign is doing.



Thank your supporters. Send personalized messages shortly after each donation. You can also publicly thank them on social media.



Encourage donors to visit [crs.org](https://www.crs.org) to discover other ways they can get involved.

SAMPLE MESSAGES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

Campaign Launch

Today I'm launching a personal campaign to raise money for Catholic Relief Services. CRS works in more than 100 countries and reaches 85 million people every year. My goal is to raise \$500 in 2 weeks. You can help by donating just \$10 at [insert page link here] and sharing this post with your friends! #myCRSfundraiser

Progress Update

Just 1 week in, and I'm already 50% of the way toward reaching my goal! Thanks to everyone who has contributed so far. I just need 10 more people to give \$20 to reach my goal of raising \$400 for Catholic Relief Services. Give at [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

General Thank You

I am so grateful to everyone who contributed to my campaign and helped me reach my goal of raising \$1,000 to support Catholic Relief Services! Your donations help the poor and vulnerable overseas. You can learn about other ways to get involved at [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

TWITTER

Celebration

Happy birthday to me! I'm celebrating this year by giving back. Join me! [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

In Memory

Help me honor [Name] by supporting the cause s/he cared about so much. Give \$20 at [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

Competition

The other team is leading! Help our team reach our goal of raising \$500 for @CatholicRelief [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

Thank You

[@Name] just donated \$10. Thank you! Only \$140 until I reach my goal for @CatholicRelief [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

Quick Tip

Use hashtags (#) that are trending and link to others (@) to increase visibility of your posts.

Awareness

MT @CatholicRelief: More than 57M children are denied access to primary #education [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

MT @CatholicRelief: #EINino threatens 11M children in Africa with hunger & disease, says @UNICEF [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

INSTAGRAM



I'm raising money to support survivors of the Nepal earthquake. Help me reach my goal by donating \$10 today at [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

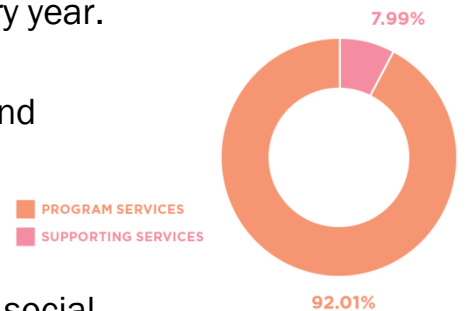


@CatholicReliefServices works to improve maternal and neonatal health. Join my personal campaign to support this cause by donating at [insert page link here] #myCRSfundraiser

TALKING POINTS

Telling your friends and family why you're passionate about Catholic Relief Services' mission will inspire them to get involved in your campaign or event. But you can also share information about CRS, our impact and our goals for the future. Feel free to use these talking points or other information you'll find on crs.org.

- CRS has served our poorest brothers and sisters for more than 70 years. CRS works in more than 100 countries and reaches 85 million people every year.
- CRS maintains strict standards of efficiency, accountability and transparency: 92% of expenditures go directly to its lifesaving programs.
- CRS' guiding principles draw upon a rich tradition of Catholic social teaching. To learn more about CRS' guiding principles, go to crs.org/about/guiding-principles.



You can also use quotes and stories from our beneficiaries, partners and supporters.

- "I have worked with many international organizations who [say] they work in partnership, but CRS is the only one that invests a lot in how it does partnership and capacity strengthening."
— *Debbie Pitt, Senior Financial Management Trainer, Mango*
- "I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to CRS for enabling me to be what I am today. Without food aid, I could never have survived at school. Instead, my father would have eventually taken me out of school to follow his footsteps. You raised me from grass to grace—and for that I will always remain grateful to you."
— *Alphonsus B. Dakora, CRS program beneficiary*
- "Catholic Relief Services, one of the most vigorous aid organizations in the third world, is an example of humanitarianism at its noblest."
— *Nicholas D. Kristof, The New York Times*

For more endorsements, go to crs.org/about/endorsements.

For stories, visit www.crs.org/stories.

FAQs

What kind of fundraiser can I host?

You can plan a campaign in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. You can plan an event at work, in school or your community. You'll find a few ways to get started in the **Event Ideas** document in your Fundraise for CRS dashboard. But don't stop there—get creative! Your only limit is your imagination. Make sure your event doesn't conflict with Catholic Relief Services' mission or Catholic social teaching

How much money do I need to raise?

As much or as little as you want! All of the money you raise supports CRS' mission to serve the poor and vulnerable overseas, so even a small amount is valuable. But don't be afraid to be ambitious when setting your fundraising goal.

What will the money I raise be used for?

Your contribution goes toward feeding hungry families, protecting vulnerable children, helping farmers grow better crops, and providing health care and clean water to remote communities. *And* to helping CRS respond immediately to emergencies. We reach 85 million people without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS maintains strict standards of efficiency, accountability and transparency: 92% of expenditures go directly to these lifesaving programs.

Can I specify which project I want my money to go to?

Unless designated for a specific emergency, donations will be contributed to our general fund, allowing us to respond immediately to the next crisis or emergency.

What is Fundraise for CRS?

Fundraise for CRS is an online platform that helps you raise funds for Catholic Relief Services. You can use **Fundraise for CRS** to set up a personal fundraising page to celebrate a special occasion, honor a loved one, host an event, or raise awareness and funds to support an emergency. **Fundraise for CRS** lets you share your page via social media, invite your friends and family to support you via email, set a donation goal, track your progress and more.

What is the Fundraise for CRS dashboard?

The **Fundraise for CRS** dashboard is your one-stop shop for setting up and managing your personal fundraising page. Your dashboard is the first page you see each time you log in. From the dashboard, you can customize your personal page, see who has donated to your campaign, browse photos and videos to use on social media, and find other resources to make your campaign a success.

How do I customize my personal fundraising page?

When you first set up your fundraising page, it will be filled with generic text. You may want to customize your page so potential donors know why you're passionate about CRS. You can edit the text and photos on your page from your **Fundraise for CRS** dashboard. From the dashboard, click on the Edit Your Page link on the left. From there, you will be able to create a custom URL for your page, add a photo of your own or one from our **Photo and Video Resources**, change your fundraising goal, and edit page content and settings.

How does Catholic Relief Services support my event or campaign?

CRS provides a number of resources to support your fundraiser.

- Free access to the **Fundraise for CRS** platform and features, including a customizable personal fundraising page
- Photo and video resources to use in promotional materials
- News stories, program information and educational resources available at **crs.org**
- Fundraising Toolkit with tips and ideas to make your campaign or event a success
- Sample to-do list and timeline
- Use of CRS name and logo in connection with the event
- Recognition of top individual and team fundraisers on **Fundraise for CRS** website
- Access to our Community Giving Advisor, Laura Maguire. You can email Laura at laura.maguire@crs.org or call her at 800-235-2772, ext. 7171.

Does Catholic Relief Services provide any financial support to cover expenses associated with my fundraiser?

No, CRS does not fund expenses incurred in connection with your fundraising campaign or event. If you anticipate any expenses, we suggest that you seek out local sponsors.

Can I use some of the money from donations to cover expenses?

No. Donations made to your fundraiser should not be used to cover expenses. Local sponsorships are a great way to offset costs associated with your fundraiser.

Can I use Catholic Relief Services' logo on my fundraising page and promotional materials?

Yes. You may use the CRS logo in connection with your fundraiser, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- You may not change or alter the logo in any way
- If the event benefits more than one charity, the CRS logo should appear in the same size as the other charity's logo
- CRS reserves the right to revoke the use of the logo at any time

Can I use Catholic Relief Services' name on my fundraising page, promotional materials, or other event or campaign activities?

Yes. You may use the CRS name in connection with your fundraiser, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- If you solicit donations of goods and/or services for an auction or other event, clearly state that you are soliciting for an event that will benefit CRS, and that you are hosting the event (not CRS)
- All promotional materials must clearly state what percentage, or dollar amount, of the sales or admission price will be donated to CRS. You must state that your event is "benefiting CRS" or a "donation will be made to CRS" as opposed to stating that "a portion of the proceeds will support CRS."

Are there any guidelines I should be aware of before planning my event or campaign?

Yes. Please be sure to review and adhere to [CRS' Guidelines for Fundraising](#).

Are donations collected through my personal fundraiser tax deductible?

Yes, but only for monetary donations given directly to CRS. This includes credit card donations made through **Fundraise for CRS**, checks made payable to CRS and cash donations linked to an individual. If you are sending multiple checks to CRS at one time, tax receipts will be sent to the name and address listed on each check. Cash donations should be converted to a check or money order and include the name and address to which a tax receipt should be sent. CRS cannot provide tax receipts for goods, like items for auction, or services, like advertisements and printing, donated to your event.

What is a matching gift and how does it work?

A matching gift is when a secondary donor agrees to contribute a gift that “matches,” or doubles, the contribution made by another donor.

- Many employers will match the charitable contributions their employees make. You or your supporters can find out if an employer matches gifts on [CRS' Matching Gifts page](#). If the company does match gifts, please mail their completed matching gift form to Catholic Relief Services, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, Maryland 21297.
- As part of your fundraising campaign, you can seek out a sponsor to match any gifts made within a certain period of time—often one day. A “matching day” is a great way to incentivize new donors to give to your campaign.

Can I count offline donations (checks and cash) on my personal fundraising page?

Yes. When you're logged into your **Fundraise for CRS** account, click on Donations in the top navigation bar. Go to the Add Offline Donation tab to enter check and cash donations. You can include the donor's name so they are credited on your page. You will still need to send the check and cash to CRS at the address provided.

Who should donors make their checks out to?

Check should be written directly to Catholic Relief Services. **Please write Community Giving in the memo line.**

What should I do if someone donates cash?

We advise you to convert all cash donations to either a check or money order before mailing to CRS. Tax receipts will only be sent to the names and addresses on the check or money order.

Will CRS accept nonmonetary contributions that I raise through my event, like clothing?

No. CRS cannot accept nonmonetary contributions.

Where should I mail offline donations raised through my event or campaign?

Catholic Relief Services
P.O. Box 17090
Baltimore, MD 21297-0303

How quickly should I send in the donations?

Please mail any check or cash donations to CRS as soon as you can. The sooner we receive them, the faster we can process them and send acknowledgements and tax receipts to donors.

Are there other ways to support Catholic Relief Services?

Yes! There are many ways to get involved with Catholic Relief Services beyond giving.

- **Pray.** As Catholics in the United States, we recognize that prayer is of the utmost importance, an invaluable contribution to helping the poor overseas.
- **Learn.** Knowledge is the first step in combating hunger, disease and injustice.
- **Act.** Put your faith into action through advocacy or by participating in a CRS program like CRS [Rice Bowl](#) or [Helping Hands](#).

CRS has opportunities specifically tailored to college students and faculty, educators, parish and diocesan leaders, and parishioners. Go to crs.org/get-involved to learn more.

Can I send photos from my event to CRS?

Yes. We would love to see photos from your event. Email them to our Community Giving Advisor, Laura Maguire, at laura.maguire@crs.org. In your email, please let us know if we may feature them on our website or in publications.

Is there someone I can talk to if I have questions?

Yes. You can contact our Community Giving Advisor, Laura Maguire, at laura.maguire@crs.org or 800-235-2772, ext. 7171.



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