

Signs of Hope

People of Faith Respond to HIV/AIDS: Catholic Relief Services

“Our AIDS policy calls for compassion, not simply sympathy. It calls us to affirm human dignity, responsibility and social justice, and most importantly, it compels us to seek effective means of addressing the AIDS crisis. Our work responds to the poorest of the poor . . .”

- Catholic Relief Services

Catholic Relief Services, a Catholic international development relief organization, overseas 80 HIV/AIDS projects in 40 countries. CRS AIDS projects serve 2 million people affected by AIDS and focus particularly on Africa but are also present in Asia and Latin America. Staff works with orphans and vulnerable persons to provide them with food, shelter, health care, and education. CRS also seeks to educate U.S. families about the global AIDS crisis. The *Children Left Behind: AIDS Orphans Around the World* exhibit familiarizes individuals in the U.S. with our family members in Uganda, South Africa, India, Cambodia and Guatemala who are struggling with AIDS.

Source: www.crs.org

Actions for Combatting HIV/AIDS

At the CRS AIDS website at http://www.catholicrelief.org/get_involved/advocacy/grass_roots/support_more.cfm, you can:

- **Learn** about the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa and other areas.
- **Send an e-postcard** to family, friends, and fellow advocates to raise awareness about global HIV/AIDS.
- **Download a prayer service** for World AIDS Day.
- **Get quotes from Church leaders** and global AIDS statistics for church bulletins and other handouts.
- **Sign up for the CRS legislative network** and encourage others to do in order to use your voices to support U.S. policies that help fight HIV/AIDS.
- **Invite a speaker** to talk about HIV/AIDS.
- **Get involved in the *Africa Rising! Hope and Healing* CRS Campaign** ([see www.crs.org/africacampaign.cfm](http://www.crs.org/africacampaign.cfm).) The campaign focuses on addressing the AIDS pandemic in Africa and raising awareness and foster action among U.S. Catholics on issues that affect the poor in Africa.
- **Learn more by visiting *Fighting Back: Living Positively and Reaching out in Kenya***, a photo gallery and stories of AIDS outreach work.
- **Include those suffering from AIDS** in the prayers of the faithful at your church.
- **Make HIV/AIDS and CST flyers available** before or after Mass.

God, children are increasingly becoming victims to the ravages of HIV/AIDS as they experience orphanhood and sickness of family members, and contract the disease themselves. Please help us to stand up for the most defenseless, particularly children in Africa and other areas with high prevalence of AIDS. Inspire us to work with CRS and other organizations for policy that better addresses the AIDS epidemic.

