



## “Ruthless, Chaotic, Callous” Freeze on USAID Puts Millions of People at Risk

The future of U.S. humanitarian aid remains uncertain weeks after funding of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was frozen by the administration. A recent Supreme Court [decision](#) ordered that \$2 billion worth of promised funds be released to pay for previously completed projects. However, current contracts and projects are said to be under review and probably set to be cut, while 5600 USAID employees have been fired or placed on leave.

Why should Catholics care about this issue? A [statement from Caritas Internationalis](#), the confederation of 162 Catholic national relief, development, and social service organizations operating across the globe, expressed it this way:

***“...the ruthless and chaotic way this callous decision is being implemented threatens the lives and dignity of millions. Stopping USAID will jeopardise essential services for hundreds of millions of people, undermine decades of progress in humanitarian and development assistance, destabilise regions that rely on this critical support, and condemn millions to dehumanizing poverty or even death.”***



Catholic Relief Services, the international development organization of the U.S. Catholic Church, was receiving 60% of its funding through the U.S. government before the funding freeze. Because of the freeze, CRS has been forced to lay off 1200 staff members, and is already seeing the destructive effects for people in the Global South.

### What Catholics Can Do

1. Use CRS' online petition to contact your members of Congress at this [link](#). (Even if you've already sent a message, do so again!)
2. Then contact the president at this link [www.whitehouse.gov/contact/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/)
3. Contribute generously to the CRS Rice Bowl this Lent! Think “Now more than ever”. Visit [www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org) for stories of people served by CRS

Photo by Randy Radeno Haniel  
for Catholic Relief Services



### Meet Amina from Nigeria

“Amina Bukar, a lead mother in Nigeria, shows a bowl of Tom Brown flour, a food supplement made up of yellow corn, soybeans, millets, groundnut and cloves. It is fed to malnourished children to aid their recovery. Amina and her family participate in Catholic Relief Services' THRIVE project. She receives monthly food rations to supplement their feeding. She also serves as a lead mother for nutrition activities in the community, coordinating the production of a nutrition supplement amongst a select number of women in her neighborhood. *Transitioning Households to Recovery from Vulnerability* is [or was] a two-year multi-sectoral, integrated program funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. Its area-based approach advances participants from [relying on] lifesaving assistance to [accessing] life-building support.”

Learn more about Amina's courage at [www.crsricebowl.org/stories-of-hope/week-2](http://www.crsricebowl.org/stories-of-hope/week-2)



"A change of attitude towards migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone. Let's move away from defensiveness, fearfulness, indifference and marginalization towards a healthy attitude underlying the culture of encounter."

Pope Francis

## National Novena for Migrants and Immigrants

March 14-March 22, 1:00pm EST  
15 Minutes Each Day Over Zoom

Catholic Theological Union, a graduate school of theology and ministry in Chicago, is sponsoring a novena to pray for immigrants this month. Over the course of the nine days, Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago, Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, and several archbishops and bishops will lead the prayers.

The novena days will include the feasts of St. Patrick and St. Joseph, traditionally joyfully celebrated by Irish, Italian, and Polish immigrants in the U.S.

Stephen Millies, executive director of Catholic Theological Union's Bernardin Center, which is organizing the novena explained: "Both Patrick and Joseph not only call attention to the American immigrants, they are stories that help us think about the situation of migrants and immigrants today."

Register at this [link](#) to join in these much needed prayers for newcomers to our country who are being maligned and marginalized.



Cardinal Dolan Shows Support for Immigrants

Click [here](#) to listen to Cardinal Timothy Dolan's short, common sense, Gospel-based message on immigrants, immigration, and what "gets his Irish up"!

## Six Children of God Are Scheduled To Be Executed This Month.

One of them by firing squad.

In the United States of America. Not North Korea.

In his [Jubilee Year statement](#), Pope Francis exhorted: "In every part of the world, believers, and their Pastors in particular, should be one in demanding dignified conditions for those in prison, respect for their human rights and **above all the abolition of the death penalty**, a provision at odds with Christian faith and one that eliminates all hope of forgiveness and rehabilitation."

Click [here](#) to join the national anti-death penalty organization Catholic Mobilizing Network in advocating that the lives of these death row prisoners be spared.



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