

Stewardship Process for CRS Rice Bowl Revenue

CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services' Lenten program for families, parishes, schools and other faith communities in the United States. Through the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, participants learn about Catholic social teaching and the work of CRS around the world, and give donations to help those most in need.

This document is intended to provide information on revenue stewardship for CRS Rice Bowl.

How are CRS Rice Bowl donations used?

Donations given to CRS Rice Bowl are used to alleviate hunger and poverty around the world and in the United States. Seventy-five percent of gifts go to CRS and are used to support humanitarian programs in more than 100 countries. Twenty-five percent of gifts remain in the local (arch)diocese to support local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts.

Diocesan Stewardship of CRS Rice Bowl Donations

Catholic Relief Services allows (arch)dioceses in the United States who participate in CRS Rice Bowl to keep 25% of the collection to be used for local hunger and poverty alleviation programming.

Purpose: Catholic Relief Services believes that the 25% of CRS Rice Bowl contributions remaining in the dioceses illustrates the importance of our global responsibility as Christians to assist those in need in our local communities and in other countries. These funds not only support local anti-hunger programs but also can help strengthen relationships between the (arch)diocese, parishes and local communities.

Procedure: The participating parishes and schools in your (arch)diocese may send their CRS Rice Bowl contributions either to a designated (arch)diocesan office, directly to the CRS mailing address below or online at crsricebowl.org/give. (CRS will return a portion of funds sent directly to Catholic Relief Services from communities in your (arch)diocese in order to complement the amount retained by the (arch)diocese and make up the full 25% of the total funds collected from your (arch)diocese.) Be sure to let your parishes and schools know where they should send their contributions.

Once your office has collected all CRS Rice Bowl contributions, the (arch)diocese should keep 25% of the total and send the remaining 75%, clearly marked as “CRS Rice Bowl contributions,” to:

Catholic Relief Services
CRS Rice Bowl
P.O. Box 17090
Baltimore, Maryland 21297-0303

Any local administrative costs must be taken out of the (arch)diocese’s 25%. CRS should receive 75% of the total amount collected, before any administrative fees are assessed.¹

Reporting: Your office should complete the [CRS Rice Bowl Revenue Reporting Form](#) by August 31. After receiving this form and your diocesan remittance, CRS will return a portion of funds sent directly to CRS from communities in your (arch)diocese in order to complement the amount retained by the (arch)diocese and make up 25% of the total funds collected from your (arch)diocese.

Suggestions for use of the local 25%

In keeping with the purpose of the 25% allocation, Catholic Relief Services requests that the 25% be used to support hunger and poverty alleviation programs. The following are suggestions based on how some (arch)dioceses currently use their 25%.

- Establish a small grant program to distribute funds to a variety of local charitable organizations.
- Help support a diocesan soup kitchen, food pantry or homeless shelter.
- Support other Catholic organizations (e.g. Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, etc.).
- Support CRS Parish Ambassadors in their efforts to increase CRS Rice Bowl participation.

Many (arch)dioceses have found it helpful to publish information on 25% projects to raise awareness and support of CRS Rice Bowl and local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts.

¹ Diocesan Financial Management: A Guide to Best Practices (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002) <http://dfmconf.org/resources-and-publications/diocesan-financial-issues/file>, pages 130-131 discusses revenue stewardship for Special National Collections, including CRS Rice Bowl. “All proceeds should be remitted within five (5) months of the collection date. Unless contributors have been so informed in advance, no part of the proceeds may be withheld at the parish or any other level; not to turn over the entirety of the collection immediately is to violate the intentions of the donors. In addition, as such withholding becomes known, it seriously compromises the perceived integrity of fund-raising in the Church.” CRS Rice Bowl donors are informed that 25% of donations remain in the local (arch)diocese, and 75% is sent to Catholic Relief Services.

Helpful References

Here are some additional references that may be helpful in stewarding CRS Rice Bowl donations.

[USCCB's Office of National Collections](#)

- [National Collections Collection Administration](#)
- [Guidelines for Administering USCCB National Collections in Dioceses](#)

[Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference](#)

- [Diocesan Financial Management: A Guide to Best Practices](#)

Differentiating CRS Rice Bowl and the USCCB's CRS Collection

CRS Rice Bowl is a separate initiative from the USCCB's CRS Collection. Find information about the differences between these two initiatives in our *CRS Collection vs CRS Rice Bowl* resource.

Questions?

Please feel free to contact CRS Rice Bowl staff at crsricebowl@crs.org for more information.