

CRS SOLIDARITY TOUR



Meet Cassandra. A native of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, she spent many of her formative years in the United States—New York, New Jersey, and Florida, where she graduated from Florida International University with a degree in international relations.

But her heart never left her home, Haiti. Despite fleeing with her family from the island nation during a time when killings and kidnappings were common, she was determined to return, to work to build a better Haiti.

There is much work to do. As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, 80% of Haitians live on less than \$2 a day. Illiteracy is a real problem, especially among first and second graders. And political and socioeconomic instability is a daily reality.

All this is made worse by frequent natural disasters. Still recovering from the 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck in January 2010, Haiti was pummeled by Hurricane Matthew in October 2016. More than 2 million people were affected, and entire areas of the island were destroyed.

Cassandra Bissainthe CRS HAITI

CHURCH PARTNERSHIP AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

That's where Catholic Relief Services and our partners have been able to make a real difference. And Cassandra, whose primary responsibilities include managing CRS' partners—especially those associated with the Catholic Church—gets to see that difference up close and personal.

"It is truly amazing to see the results of the work of so many," she says. "These results are contributing to a much larger objective and mission: to make this world a better place."

From hurricane relief to education programming, Cassandra's experience in Haiti runs deep. Before joining CRS in 2015, she worked in Haiti for Trocaire, CRS' sister agency based in Ireland—and another member of Caritas Internationalis.

After her time with Trocaire, she began with CRS. "I wanted to continue working for an organization that had a similar mission and values to help the poor and most vulnerable, and to me, CRS does that."

Cassandra looks forward to taking you on a journey of encounter with the people of Haiti this Lent.