

U.S. Catholic relief agency gets grant to help Haitian AIDS victims

POMPANO BEACH, Fla. – Cross International, a Catholic relief agency based in Pompano Beach, was awarded a \$4.8 million grant from the U.S. government for a new program to prevent the spread of AIDS in Haiti and provide care to orphans and children.

“This is the biggest single grant in the history of Cross, a real landmark in the seven years since we began serving the poor,” said Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International. “The competition was tough, and the fact that we were chosen says a lot about our work and how much we have matured as a ministry.”

The grant was awarded through the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, known as PEPFAR, an initiative spearheaded by the Bush administration in 2003. Since its inception, the program has provided \$19 billion to support the treatment of millions globally, to provide health care workers, and to carry out educational programs that focus on prevention, monogamy, fidelity and abstinence.

Cross International was one of 19 nonprofit organizations to be awarded funds in 2008 through PEPFAR’s New Partners Initiative.

Cross International plans to use the grant money to begin a comprehensive AIDS awareness and care program that targets teens, AIDS orphans and children. The three-year project will reach an estimated 5,000 orphans and children, providing them with care and medical services.

The relief agency will open a field office in Haiti’s capital, Port-au-Prince, to oversee the new AIDS project and other programs it supports in Haiti.