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Miami prepares for Haiti orphans, child refugees

by Catholic News Service

MIAMI -- The Catholic Archdiocese of Miami, Fla., has announced that it "stands ready to receive, house and find permanent homes for Haitian children who may have been orphaned by the disaster; similar to what was done for Cubans in the 1960s."

In an operation known as Pedro Pan in the 1960s, the Catholic church in Miami helped resettle 14,000 Cuban children who were sent from their homeland by their parents to get them away from that country's political strife. They later were reunited with their families as their parents were able to emigrate from Cuba.

Teresa Martinez, a spokeswoman for the Archdiocese of Miami told Catholic News Service Jan. 19 that the new orphan resettlement program, being called Pierre Pan, was expected to be approved by the U.S. government soon. Meanwhile, the archdiocese was fielding calls, e-mails and Web postings from people around the country offering to take in Haitian children, either temporarily or to adopt them.

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