



Cross

Cross Catholic Outreach

ROADS

Parish Newsletter

SPRING 2020



Cardinal Ramazzini Visits Cross Catholic Outreach

Cross Catholic Outreach was recently blessed to receive a visit from His Eminence Álvaro Leonel Cardinal Ramazzini Imeri. Elevated to the College of Cardinals just a few months ago by Pope Francis because of his love for the poor, Cardinal Ramazzini led devotions at our office, met individually with our staff and concluded his visit with a Mass at St. Coleman's Catholic Church in Pompano Beach, Florida. This year, Cross Catholic Outreach began providing food and medical supplies to the poor in Cardinal Ramazzini's Diocese of Huehuetenago in Guatemala.

An Interview With Cardinal Ramazzini

What is the connection between love, joy and helping the poor?

I have found in many communities of poor people in Guatemala a great sense of solidarity toward others who are poorer than them. Jesus said it is better to give than to receive. That is to say, the dynamic of the Christian spirit is always to forget myself and to think about others, and when I do, that others must do it, not to take advantage of others, not to be liked by others, but to truly seek the good and the well-being of others because the most important commandment is to love God and love your neighbor. When I live in this dynamic of forgetting myself because I want to live the love of God by loving others — because I can't see God, but I can see my neighbor — that results in the presence of one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives is joy.

Tell us about the poverty in your country of Guatemala.

Guatemala is one of the countries where one can find the greatest contrasts between being well and living under conditions that I can even call subhuman. When I speak of subhuman living conditions, I am thinking of the thousands of thousands of children who are condemned to suffer chronic child malnutrition... This is dramatic, it is tragic and it really makes me angry to have to say this, because Guatemala has many natural resources.

Pope Francis and several of his predecessors have spoken about "integral human development." How would you define that phrase?

The concept of development that we manage from the social endowment of the Church is, in the words of Saint Paul VI, in the encyclical, in the development of peoples to move from less human life conditions to more human life conditions. This then means that people have a healthy, nutritious diet. That they have a stable, well-grounded job with all the social security conditions. That they have decent housing, that they have access to formal education, and that they also have the ability to develop their qualities, to develop their capabilities and talents. That is the concept that I follow when we talk about integral human development.

Watch the complete interview at the CrossRoads website, CrossCatholic.org/crossroads.



The “Backpack Bishop” Brings Hope to the Dominican Poor



Last year, Cross Catholic Outreach partnered with Bishop José Grullón Estrella in the Dominican Republic to build six water systems to serve disadvantaged communities throughout the Diocese of San Juan de la Maguana.

Working with Bishop Grullón and his social outreach organization, FUNDASEP, has been a joy. He is a legendary figure in the region, beloved for his ability to inspire and mobilize the poor, and well deserving of his nickname, “Backpack Bishop,” for his many visits to the most remote corners of his diocese, traveling by donkey and sleeping on dirt floors. Even at his advanced age, he still occasionally does overnight visits in the communities, and the people receive him with open arms.

Bishop Grullón told us, “Everything we do for the poor, God is going to reward us in health, in welfare and above all, in spiritual peace, and one day we can all come together in the kingdom of God.”

We recently got to join the bishop for the dedication of the

completed water system in the rural village of Yacahueque. The families who live here had been relying on a shallow stream for drinking and washing. The filthy water often made them sick, and there was never enough. But now, by God’s mercy, their need for clean, abundant water has been met!

The event also included a Mass held under a tent on the site of what will soon be the first Catholic church in the area. The Mass was celebrated by Father Christian, a local parish priest who has been working with the community.

“A year ago, this community had little faith. They didn’t pray. They didn’t practice their faith and they didn’t even have a church,” Fr. Christian said. “Now, this village is a deeply spiritual community.”

This project is just one example of the transformation that is possible when Catholics support the Church’s many dynamic poverty relief and development projects around the world.



Our Catholic Identity

The mission of Cross Catholic Outreach is to mobilize the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ. Our work is accomplished with the support of local Catholic bishops in the developing world who supervise Catholic missionaries serving the needy. These priests, nuns and lay Catholics engage in frontline work such as feeding the hungry, bringing water to the thirsty and providing a Catholic-based education to the next generation.

Oversight of the ministry of Cross Catholic is provided by our Board of Directors, comprising eight Catholic archbishops and bishops from around the United States. Their episcopal oversight guides Cross Catholic in where we provide aid and how we do so effectively, always honoring the intention of our donors.

The oversight of the bishops on our board is just one facet of our Catholic identity. In a historic designation on September 18, 2015, at the Vatican, the Pontifical Council Cor Unum decreed the conferral of private canonical juridical personality on Cross Catholic as an **international Catholic charitable organization** and granted approval of our statutes along with the bylaws of Cross Catholic that were duly authenticated by the Pontifical Council.

Pontifical Council Cor Unum stated that our approved statutes offered firm and secure guidelines for the fulfillment of the mission of Cross Catholic.

Later this year, Cross Catholic will celebrate the fifth anniversary of this historic designation.



Board members, left to right: Bishop Alfred A. Schlert, Bishop Carl A. Kemme, Bishop Joseph E. Strickland, Mr. Jim J. Cavnar, Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi, Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone, Bishop Ronald W. Gainer, Archbishop Robert J. Carlson. Also pictured, observer to the Board: Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito.

**Note: In 2017, Pontifical Council Cor Unum was reorganized into the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.*



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
« COR UNUM »

DE HUMANA ET CHRISTIANA
PROGRESSIONE FOEVENDA

Prot. 83.570/15

DECREE

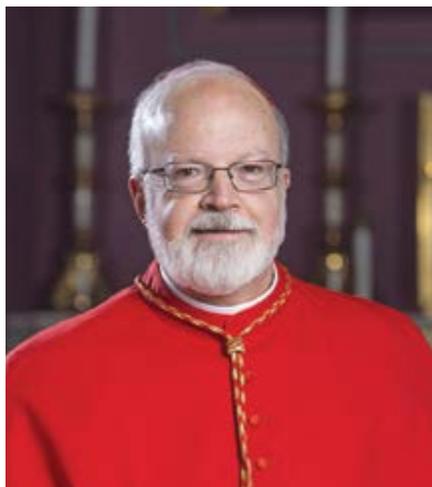
Cross Catholic Outreach was founded in 2001 in the Diocese of Palm Beach, Florida, USA. Bishop Sam G. Jacobs, the then Bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana, USA and now retired, was the founding Chairman. James J. Cavnar was the founding President, and Brian Schutt was the founding Vice President.

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Milestone Year for Bishop Endorsements



*His Eminence Cardinal Seán O'Malley
2012 Pilot photo/George Martell*

In everything we do, Cross Catholic Outreach remains focused on the Gospel message of mercy. With our Catholic missionary partners around the world, we put Catholic social teaching into action by feeding the hungry, giving care to the sick and housing the homeless. As our ministry continues to expand, U.S. Catholic bishops are joining in solidarity with us to encourage us in this mission. In the past 12 months, a record number of bishops have testified to our collaboration with the Universal Catholic Church through endorsement letters.

His Eminence Cardinal Seán O'Malley of the Archdiocese of Boston wrote, "Allow me to share my appreciation for the Cross Catholic Outreach ministry its bringing desperately needed relief to impoverished communities throughout the world, always carrying out this mission in service to the Catholic Church."

Bishop Peter Baldacchino said, "Having served in South Florida for the past five years, I am familiar with the good work done by Cross Catholic Outreach and pleased to endorse the charitable work done across the areas of greatest need in our world... I commend the mission of Cross Catholic Outreach to invite others to join in their good work for the sake of the Gospel and would welcome receiving information about the Host a Priest program. In this missionary Diocese of Las Cruces, in one of the poorest states in the United States, I feel it is important that our parishioners recognize that, in the midst of their own need, we are all called to reach out to our suffering neighbors."



Bishop Peter Baldacchino

Bishop Douglas Lucia of Syracuse said, "Your organization's heart for the poor is encouraging... The work of Cross Catholic Outreach is endorsed in the Diocese of Syracuse. May the Lord continue to bless your work... for which you have my support."

Bishop David Talley of Memphis, in his letter, said, "I am pleased to endorse Cross Catholic Outreach and your mission of mobilizing the Catholic Church to transform lives of the poor materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ."

"I thank you for your outreach to those who are poor and marginalized and live in the peripheries of our communities throughout the world," said **Bishop Daniel E. Garcia** of Monterey, who concluded his endorsement by saying, "Thank you for the work you do and the service you provide to the least among us."



Bishop Douglas Lucia

Bishop Donald Hying of Madison reflected that "despite all the progress of the 21st century, still millions of people across the globe suffer from lack of food, clean water, health care and decent shelter. The work of Cross Catholic Outreach, through Catholic missionaries throughout the world, answer these needs in practical and inspiring ways."

Bishop Robert Gruss of Saginaw said, "Jesus, in the Sacred Scriptures, has challenged us to seek ways to attend to the needs of the poor. The Lord is the one who 'hears the cry of the poor' and calls us to minister to them in his name. Your ministry embodies the Gospel mandate to love our neighbor."



Bishop Donald Hying



Bishop Robert Gruss

Most Rev. Barry Knestout of the Diocese of Richmond wrote, “I am grateful for your collaboration with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Your work provides vital resources to all those you serve as you respond to the call of the Gospel and Pope Francis.”

Bishop Louis Kihneman of Biloxi wrote, “Your ministry to the poorest of the poor worldwide is an admirable response to the call of Pope Francis to remember the poor and show them God’s love.”

“It’s encouraging to see your outreach to the poor throughout the world. It’s touching hearts and changing lives. I take this opportunity to commend Cross Catholic Outreach for providing food for the hungry, medicines for the sick and housing for the homeless in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa,” said **Bishop Joseph Brennan** of the Diocese of Fresno.



Bishop Louis Kihneman

Host a Cross Catholic Outreach Priest

Increase your parish’s awareness of our Church’s works of mercy around the globe and inspire your parishioners to become involved. This service is free to your parish, and no second collection is taken. Cross Catholic Outreach Priests are exceptional orators in the English language, and many are fluent in other languages. All are Roman Catholic priests in good standing and are VIRTUS/Child Protection-certified.



For more information about hosting an Outreach Priest, please contact Cross Catholic Outreach at priests@crosscatholic.org or call 800-914-2420, ext. 220.

CrossCatholic.org/host-a-priest

Cross Catholic Outreach Makes Donation to Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami

Tens of thousands of children living in poverty in Central America and the Caribbean are being blessed each year with Cross Catholic Outreach’s Box of Joy® ministry. In 2019, 908 church and school groups signed up to participate. Tens of thousands of Catholics from around the United States packed our Boxes of Joy, which were then shipped to our Miami warehouse to be prepared for overseas shipment. As part of our screening process, items such as food and certain types of toys are not allowed to be shipped, and therefore, to follow our guiding principle of always honoring the intent of our donors, we made sure these items went to the needy.

For the second year in a row, we teamed up with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami to distribute the items — blessing poor children without incurring any additional shipping expense.



Pictured, left to right: Peter Routsis-Arroyo, Dawn Kaszubowski, Keith Lopez and Gustavo Cruz.



Over 75,797 Children Blessed With Box of Joy

Each year, the Box of Joy ministry sponsors a Christmas gift program on behalf of the poor, organized by local Catholic schools, parishes and groups across the United States and facilitated by Cross Catholic Outreach. Box of Joy provides teachers, parish leaders and other Catholic groups a unique opportunity to participate in a simple and tangible service experience that has both a material and a spiritual impact on the poorest of the poor in developing countries. The ministry also provides a unique opportunity for Catholics to engage in service with others in their local communities who share the same desire to spread Christmas joy and the story of Christmas — the Good News of God’s love — to children worldwide. In 2019, the Box of Joy ministry sent Christmas gifts to over 75,797 children in developing countries such as Haiti, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Grenada, the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic. For many, a Box of Joy — filled with toys, clothing, school supplies, a rosary and the Story of Jesus — was the first Christmas gift they ever received.

Participating in Box of Joy is fun and simple.

- **Sign up:** The project leader from your parish registers your group and the number of children you want to bless. Visit boxofjoy.org for group sign-up information.
- **Organize:** Cross Catholic Outreach sends materials and directions for a successful faith-in-action activity.
- **Shop & Pack:** In October, your group shops for gifts and packs your Boxes of Joy.
- **Collect:** Boxes of Joy are delivered to an area drop-off center during Box of Joy week, Nov. 7-15.
- **Ship:** Cross Catholic Outreach ships your Boxes of Joy around the world.
- **Bless:** Thousands of children are blessed by your love and generosity.

Seminary Students Experience Box of Joy Packing Event and Mission Trip



Deacon Elmer Herrera-Guzman organized the students and helped raise funds to purchase the gifts. Within an hour, nearly 100 Boxes of Joy were ready! The students then got to personally deliver the boxes to the children during a Cross Catholic Outreach mission trip to the Diocese of Santa Rosa de Lima in Guatemala.

Michael Kieler, a seminarian from the Diocese of St. Augustine, participated in both the packing and the mission trip. He shared that he was motivated by his desire to experience the needs of the poor and by his interest in foreign cultures. For him, this was more than just a simple volunteer opportunity. He set out with the mindset that he and his fellow seminarians would grow in holiness as they learned from Guatemalan families’ simple way of life, and he considered the trip an important part of his continuing formation in preparation for the priesthood.

Last Christmas, seminarians from Theological College in Washington D.C. were blessed with the chance to serve as Christ’s hands and feet to poor Guatemalan children.

The effort began with a Cross Catholic Outreach Box of Joy packing event, where they helped prepare gift boxes of toys and other special items for children who might otherwise get nothing at all for Christmas.



To learn more about the mission trip with Theological College, visit CrossCatholic.org/crossroads



Cross Catholic Outreach Takes Vision of Helping the Poor to U.S. Seminaries

Cross Catholic Outreach depends greatly on the openness of pastors throughout the country to host an Outreach Priest at their parishes, thereby inviting parishioners to unite with its mission partners through their prayers and financial support. These parish visits are crucial to the ability of Cross Catholic Outreach to carry out its fundamental mission and ministry. In order to ensure the continuity of this aspect of the ministry, Cross Catholic Outreach endeavors to educate the men currently in priestly formation about the history, mission and work of the organization. Two seminary visits recently took place.

At the invitation of Reverend Gladstone Stevens, PSS, Vice Rector and Academic Dean of **St. Mary's Seminary and University** in Baltimore, Maryland, about 50 seminarians learned of the mission and ministry of Cross Catholic Outreach in a presentation by Fr. Bernard Olszewski, a full-time Outreach Priest and an associate in the Clergy Diocesan Relations office. This was incorporated into the daily schedule of the seminarians as part of their spiritual formation program.

Fr. Olszewski also traveled to Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon recently at the invitation Msgr. Joseph Betschart, Rector,

and Rev. Terrence Tompkins, Vice Rector. He spoke with about 60 seminarians during a day the seminary had devoted to spiritual/human formation. The presentation traced the history of the development of the concept of charity in recent papal encyclicals and showed how the work of Cross Catholic Outreach aligns with that vision.

In the minds of these seminary leaders, presentations such as these are crucial to the overall spiritual formation of the future leaders of parish communities in the Church. According to the description contained in the Mount Angel Seminary catalog, it is crucial to provide ministerial experiences, pastoral skills training and opportunities for theological reflection for seminarians so that they can become effective pastoral ministers who model and live servant leadership. Fr. Tompkins stressed to the seminarians in the chapel that it is not enough simply to know the theological framework of the concept of charity. It is also crucial to see how that concept relates to real situations of the people of God throughout the world and the concrete response of Catholic organizations such as Cross Catholic Outreach.



Cross Catholic Outreach at a Glance

28	285	4.55	\$9,202,056	\$318,896,220	\$328,098,276
the number of countries that received our aid	the number of projects we supported with the help of generous Catholics	the percentage of expenses used for overhead costs	the total value of grants in aid given to the poor	the total value of goods shipped to the poor	total aid provided to the poor

DATA PRESENTED REFLECTS ACTIVITY FROM FISCAL YEAR 2019 (JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019).



An Interview With Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi, Chairman of Cross Catholic Outreach



Recently, our Clergy and Diocesan Relations department (CDR) had the opportunity to speak with Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi, the Archbishop of Mobile, who also serves as Chairman of Cross Catholic Outreach's Board of Directors. He shared with us his thoughts on the importance of helping the poor and how every gift we receive can make a difference in the lives of those suffering the bondage of poverty.

CDR: Archbishop Rodi, thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to talk with us today about Cross Catholic Outreach and the needs of the poor. Today, Catholic missionaries around the world are bringing the love of God to the poor through the generous support of donors. Can you give us your thoughts on the call of the Gospel to help the poor?

Archbishop: As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to put our faith into action, to care about our neighbor... and Cross Catholic Outreach is outstanding in receiving donations from so many people that come together to make a difference... in the poorest countries in the world. Cross Catholic Outreach brings hope and brings the love of Christ and makes God's love visible by helping with education, schools, job training, clean water, housing, medicine, making a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters.

CDR: Every donation makes a difference, right? No matter how small?

Archbishop: Because of our baptism, we're called to do our best to help our brothers and sisters. Love of God, love of neighbor summarizes scripture according to the Lord Jesus. And our donation may seem insignificant with the great needs that are present around the world. But a raindrop is insignificant...you put enough together

and it makes a mighty river. And so if everyone would just do what they can and we put them into the hands of the Lord and let the Lord make a difference because of our efforts.

CDR: The ministry of Cross Catholic Outreach would not be possible without the support of our donors who love the poor. What would you like to say to those who answer the cry of the poor?

Archbishop: I would just like to thank our donors for their generosity and their commitment of faith. Cross Catholic Outreach, because of our donors, changes hearts, changes lives and transforms communities. You are a blessing to so many. I pray that God blesses you.

CDR: Archbishop Rodi, thank you so much for your time.

Archbishop: You're welcome.

To see interviews with bishops from around the world about serving the poor, visit CrossCatholic.org/crossroads



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OUTREACH**

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Delivering Food, Shelter and Hope to the Poorest of the Poor

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