



# HOPE — Food for the Aged

**Freshly prepared meals for homebound elders**

— Punta Gorda, Belize —



How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods  
and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

1 JOHN 3:17



## **We are a Catholic ministry**

that mobilizes the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church's spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach.

We invite you to join with us as we seek to transform the lives of the poor materially and spiritually — ways that please the Father and glorify him in Heaven and on earth.



## Project Synopsis

### Description

This project will deliver twice-a-week hot meals to homebound elderly individuals and help them participate in monthly health-focused social gatherings at the local Red Cross.

### Purpose

To bring comfort, dignity and companionship to poor, elderly Belizeans who might otherwise live out their twilight years alone.

### Location

Punta Gorda, part of the Toledo District in the tiny Central American country of Belize.

### Cost

**\$8,728** will fund nutritious meals twice a week for one year, provide healthy snacks for the monthly gatherings, and also help cover transportation costs and the salary for staff members.

### Highlights

- Hearing Jesus' call to serve the poor, the Pallottine Missionary Sisters operate HOPE as part of their 70-year ministry to Belize's "Forgotten District."
- Your generous gift to Cross Catholic Outreach will fund the sisters' Food for the Aged program, which provides meals and socialization for elderly shut-ins with no one to care for them.
- Once a month, 140 elderly are brought to a social at the local Red Cross center, where they benefit from medical exams, health education and exercise.
- The HOPE program also serves the indigent elderly by providing house repairs and tending to their spiritual needs.
- Your support will help these vulnerable men and women experience Christ's love and feel they are not forgotten.





## The Need

The quiet seaport town of Punta Gorda in southern Belize may seem like a great place to “get away from it all,” but for the indigent elderly who live within its poorest neighborhoods, life can feel like a prison sentence without end — a place of isolation, squalor and indignity.

The sad truth is that Punta Gorda has long suffered from high rates of illiteracy and unemployment, and poverty plagues many in its elderly population. Disintegrating roads and ramshackle houses fill the “Forgotten District,” which receives few government support, and when that area’s residents become too old to work at all, they often end up in dire circumstances. A tragic number of them have no retirement savings, no benefits to fall back on, and no other means of support.

Even those lucky enough to be able to stay with family often suffer, spending most of their time by themselves while their relatives are out working. A cultural breakdown of the traditional family has weakened the bonds that used to tie the old and young together, with the result that needy elders are not close with their children.

Without a personal caretaker, these elderly men and women feel neglected and helpless and often go hungry. Simple activities such as going to church or visiting a friend down the road become too difficult, and they withdraw, resigned to living out their twilight years in solitude as they succumb to rapid physical and mental deterioration.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to this tragic fate. With your support, Cross Catholic Outreach can offer these precious men and women a better life through a compassionate local outreach appropriately named HOPE.



## Ministry Description

Founded by the Pallottine Missionary Sisters, HOPE seeks “to promote good physical, mental and social well-being in a caring environment for older persons in Punta Gorda.”

The name stands for Helping Older People Equally, signifying that the ministry’s door is open to any elderly man or woman, regardless of faith, creed or color.

Once a month, the sisters invite the indigent elderly to a social event at the local Red Cross center. At this event, participants benefit from medical screenings, health information, physical exercise, nutritious snacks and games. The program also offers special retreats and access to Mass for those who would otherwise struggle to participate in church life.

“Sometimes people don’t want to come out of their homes,” one sister told us. “They say, ‘I’m not ready; I’m not ready.’ But then they change their minds at the last minute and want to come.”

“Sometimes we’re the only ones they’ll see during the whole week,” another sister shared. “A sad situation.”

For the 25 most vulnerable individuals this project serves, the sisters also deliver hot meals twice a week. The home feeding outreach is a huge blessing to those who, for both financial and physical reasons, often go hungry.

HOPE relies to a large extent on volunteers and local donations. For example, community businesses give vegetables and fruit to feed the elderly. But more support is needed to reach all in need of aid. That’s why we are appealing to you today to join Cross Catholic Outreach in funding the Pallottine Missionary Sisters’ work with the indigent elderly of Punta Gorda. This is an effort that truly embodies the love of Christ for the “least among us,” and we invite you to help demonstrate that love!





## Help Now!

*To continue providing food and companionship for the indigent elderly in Punta Gorda each week, the Pallottine Missionary Sisters are relying on support from benefactors like you.* Your compassionate gift will help cover the costs of the twice-a-week meals, the food for the monthly gatherings, the wages of a part-time cook, and also transportation.

Care for the elderly is an important part of the Catholic life and a mark of a true follower of Christ. The Bible says that anyone who does not provide for the needs of an elderly relative “has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8). But when a family is too poor to take care of its elders, the task falls to others who have the means. It is no accident that one of the earliest known charitable programs ever established by the Church was a fund to support older widows during New Testament times. Care for the elderly is an act of Christian worship that is close to God’s heart.

The elderly should be able to live their final years with dignity, peace and comfort. You can give this to them today. Please join us in making a real difference in the lives of the most vulnerable elderly men and women in Punta Gorda — those who can only repay you with their smiles of joy and tears of thanksgiving. Your gift will make a difference!

**And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

### Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2021, the close of our ministry’s fiscal year. In the event that more funds are raised than needed to fully fund the project, the excess funds, if any, will be used to meet the most urgent needs of the ministry.

2700 N. Military Trail • Suite 300 • PO Box 273908 • Boca Raton, Florida 33427-3908

**800-914-2420 • CrossCatholic.org**

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