



Vitafood Meals for the Hungry

— Dominican Republic —



Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

JOHN 6:35



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 send nutrient-rich Vitafood meals to feed the hungry through Fundacion Ciento por Uno, an important outreach to the poor in the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo.

Purpose

To reduce hunger, strengthen Catholic missions, and demonstrate Christ's love for the poor and vulnerable.

Location

The Dominican Republic, which borders Haiti on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Cost

Our goal is to send about 1.5 million meals to the Dominican Republic at a cost of \$120,000. Every dollar sends 14 meals!

Highlights

- Cross Catholic Outreach has been given access to millions of nutrient-rich meals — we just need the funds to ship them to feed the hungry!
- These fortified rice meals, called Vitafood, are loaded with vitamins and minerals and are specifically designed to energize, strengthen and improve the health of malnourished children and families.
- The meals are sealed in airtight packets to maximize shelf life and fit as many as possible in shipping containers.
- Your generous gift will help send Vitafood meals to Fundacion Ciento por Uno, a Cross Catholic Outreach ministry partner that is an outreach of the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.
- These meals will fight hunger in vulnerable communities such as the *bateyes* of Barahona, where destitute Haitian immigrants work the sugarcane fields.
- Please give today to end the hunger pangs of Christ's poor and fan the flames of hope in the Dominican Republic!



You can satisfy the hunger of poor Dominican children!



Deep poverty persists among Haitian migrant workers in the Dominican Republic.

Dominican Republic at a Glance

- About **21%** of Dominicans live below the national poverty line.
- While the Dominican Republic is wealthier than its next-door neighbor, Haiti, deep poverty persists, such as in undeveloped rural areas.
- The need is most severe in the country's **230 bateyes** — communities built on sugarcane plantations to house Haitian migrant sugarcane cutters.
- Anemia, a condition associated with malnutrition, affects **28%** of Dominican children under five.

Sources: World Bank, UNICEF.

The Need

At first glance, the Caribbean island of Hispaniola's two countries seem like night and day. Haiti is known for financial gridlock, while the Dominican Republic has a growing middle-income economy. One is plagued by civil unrest. The other enjoys relative stability. Haiti struggles with the effects of deforestation. The DR is known for its lush green countryside.

Catholic priests and lay workers are aware of these dramatically different images, but they work with a more complex reality: a poverty that exists without clear borders. In that sense, the two countries are intertwined.

Even through the Dominican Republic's reputation is characterized by resorts and pristine beaches, many of that country's farmers survive without basic infrastructure such as running water or paved roads, and they struggle to feed their families. Then there are the Haitian migrant workers who spill across the border looking for opportunity, but finding little more than a different form of poverty and the toil of the sugarcane industry. Most of these families live in *bateyes* — a collections of dirt-floor shacks adjacent to the fields, where they labor from dusk till dawn, cutting cane by hand with machetes. The reward for their efforts: the equivalent of a few dollars for a full day's work.

With little income, infrastructure or resources, many families eat just one meal a day. In these harsh conditions, children fail to thrive. Their growth is stunted, they fall behind in school, they suffer frequent illness and they lose hope of escaping poverty. **But with your help, we can revive that hope!**



Ministry Description

The Response: Vitafood

To combat hunger in the Dominican Republic, Cross Catholic Outreach has a simple but effective plan: Vitafood.

This fortified rice product, specifically designed to energize, strengthen and improve the health of malnourished children and families, can be packed in large shipping containers and cost-effectively sent to Catholic schools, orphanages and other local partners serving the poorest of the poor. A single container can make a big impact, keeping crucial feeding programs running or providing immediate relief when disasters strike.

Vitafood is an extremely flexible resource. It comes in several different varieties and can be prepared with additional spices or ingredients to suit local tastes. No matter how it is prepared, its nutritional value remains the same, providing the optimal balance of vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber, fat and carbohydrates that a child's hungry body needs. This tried-and-tested formula is suitable for more than just severely malnourished children. These meals are also important to the health and physical well-being of children and adults who are healthy but at risk of becoming malnourished.

What's more, because Vitafood meals are donated to us by respected faith-based organizations, we only need to cover the cost to ship the meals to the hungry. This means that **for every dollar you give, about 14 nutritious meals can be sent to the Dominican Republic!**



What is Vitafood?

- Vitafood is a fortified rice product loaded with vitamins and minerals and scientifically designed to meet the needs of malnourished children.
- Because the Vitafood meals are donated to us, we only need to cover the cost to ship them to the hungry. *Your generosity will help make that happen!*

How do the Meals Get into the Hands of People Who Need Them?

Vitafood is packed into 40-foot containers, placed on a cargo ship and sent to international ports. Once the shipment arrives at its destination, our staff relies on a global network of trusted partners to get these products into the hands of priests, nuns, Catholic schools and orphanages that pass them on to needy families in impoverished communities.





Our Dominican Partner

Our distribution network in the Dominican Republic begins with Fundacion Ciento por Uno, an outreach of the Catholic Archdiocese of Santo Domingo.

Founded in 2011 by a Spanish priest named Father Domingo Legua, this local ministry partner shares our own vision of empowering the poor to chart their own future and achieve self-sustainability. It supports efforts ranging from the rehabilitation of drug addicts to the running of a Catholic food bank that depends on donations of over 170,000 Vitafood meals each year.

One especially urgent area of support is in the Diocese of Barahona, home to many Haitian immigrant cane cutters. Barahona is one of the poorest zones in the country — and as such, **a place ripe for compassionate intervention by the Church with support from friends like you.**

Juan Ramirez, who handles the distribution of Vitafood in the diocese, explained the value of sending meals.

“When you can solve someone’s problem with food or housing, when they say they are hungry and you say here, here is food — for me it’s like solving a small part of humanity’s problems, being that one grain of sand that makes a difference. There are many people, even the people we help, who don’t always understand the spiritual part of what we do. And when we provide food or housing, they suddenly understand and they give thanks to God.”



Your gift will help Fr. Legua feed the hungry.



You can play an instrumental role in this outpouring of God’s love by supporting Cross Catholic Outreach’s Vitafood program!



With your support, meals will reach the hungry!

Help Now!

Cross Catholic Outreach is eager to satisfy the hunger of the Dominican Republic's most vulnerable children and families. Millions of meals have been offered to us for distribution, but we can only deliver them if we can obtain the funds to ship them overseas.

That's where you come in!

Your generous gift will send nutrient-rich Vitafood to our friends in the Dominican Republic so that the poor can get relief from hunger. The meals will be distributed by Fundacion Ciento por Uno of the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo to supply critical programs essential to the lives of "the least of these." This includes, for example, migrant sugarcane cutters who struggle to feed their families while trapped in abhorrent conditions in the *bateyes*.

The need for intervention in the Dominican Republic is great, but God's mercy is greater — and the Spirit of Christ compels each one of us to carry that mercy to the vulnerable. **Please help us reach our \$120,000 goal so that an incredible 1.5 million meals can be sent to the children and families who need them most.**

Please — be an answer to prayer! Provide food for the hungry in Christ's name!

Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.

PROVERBS 22:9

Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2023, 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

@CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic /CrossCatholic Blog.CrossCatholic.org

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