



# Mount Carmel Primary School

## School lunch for poor children

— Benque Viejo, Belize —



“For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.”

PSALM 72:12-14



## **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 provide daily hot lunches for poor students, some of whom walk long distances every day to attend school on an empty stomach.

### Purpose

To provide students with the nutrition they need to stay focused in school and grow up healthy and strong.

### Our Partner

Mount Carmel Catholic Church.

### Location

Benque Viejo, the westernmost town in the Central American country of Belize, near the Guatemalan border.



*Students are grateful for their hot meals at Mt. Carmel Primary School.*

### Cost

**\$29,160** will fund a school lunch program for 100 poor students and the cook's salary.

### Highlights

- Mt. Carmel Primary School educates approximately 1,100 students from the local community.
- Its mission is to give poor and academically struggling students access to quality education.
- The school's reputation for discipline, character formation through Christ, and academic rigor has made it a popular choice with parents of all incomes, but Mt. Carmel remains faithful to its original mission of serving the poor.
- In spite of difficulties, many Guatemalan children travel over the border into Benque Viejo just to attend this school.
- Many students arrive at school hungry and have nothing to eat for lunch.
- Mt. Carmel's staff is focused on sharing the love of Christ and there is prayer several times a day; all grade levels attend Mass once a week, and some 50 students made their Holy Communion last year.
- Cross Catholic is committed to helping this important educational mission offer a free lunch program for poor students who would otherwise struggle to learn on an empty stomach.

Mount Carmel Primary School is a Roman Catholic institution whose mission is to impart in children the love of God, family and country by providing a cost-effective delivery of quality education providing the necessary skills for each child to develop into the finest human being possible.

— MT. CARMEL PRIMARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT —



## The Need

“It is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons.”

**POPE FRANCIS**

When the Pallotine Sisters started Mt. Carmel Primary School, their mission was to evangelize in the region by giving children a quality Catholic education. Although the school started with the effort of the Pallotine Sisters, today it is run by the SOLT (Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity). Their goal remains the same however, as they are still focused on providing poor children with an alternative to unaffordable public education in Belize. Their services have become a blessing to the area’s many economically disadvantaged families — parents who must use all of their money for food and shelter and have nothing for required textbooks, uniforms and miscellaneous fees.

Were it not for Mt. Carmel’s mission, the area’s poorest children might never attend school regularly and would have little chance of improving their future. Like their mothers and fathers, many would remain trapped in the cycle of poverty that has plagued their families for generations.

To break this cycle and offer hope, Mt. Carmel believes in “starting children off in the way they should go,” and works hard to prepare students for secondary school and, ultimately, a high school diploma. Their efforts are both admirable and effective, but there is a situation with student hunger that remains a concern to the school’s leadership, and they are seeking our support to provide a solution.

Mt. Carmel’s goal is to feed the neediest children attending the school a hot, nutritious meal daily so they have the energy they need to concentrate on their studies. These children will be selected for the program based on need. Some parents simply can’t afford to provide their sons or daughters with consistently healthy meals. Your support will provide this “daily bread.”

Please, help Mt. Carmel change the course of a child’s life and lift up families desperate for hope. The feeding program may seem simple, but it has a profound potential for good, and it cannot be provided without financial support from compassionate Catholics like you.

Make a difference in the lives of these poor children. End their hunger and provide the sustenance the school’s neediest boys and girls need to prosper and learn!



*A young student enjoying her lunch.*

### **Crossing the border for an education — and a nutritious meal**

Many of Mt. Carmel’s students cross the often dangerous border from Guatemala each day to go to school. With over half of Guatemalan children suffering from malnutrition and poverty, hot meals are their lifeblood! You can help prevent malnutrition in the young and break the cycle of poverty by giving the gift of Catholic education with daily lunches.



Students at recess at Mt. Carmel.

## Ministry Description: Feeding the Body and Mind

For this is the message you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

1 JOHN 3:11

Mt. Carmel Primary School never turns away a young person who seeks an education, even if he or she can't afford it. This philosophy has done more than earn the Catholic school a good reputation; it has opened hearts and minds to Christ and the power of love.

Since many of Mt. Carmel's students come from desperately poor families, going home during the school day for a healthy lunch is not an option, and that is especially true for the children who cross the border from Guatemala to attend classes each day. Knowing this, the caring staff at the school are eager to help. They want the children to get the most out of their educational experience, and they believe providing the kids with proper nutrition is part of the solution. Their goal is to institute a healthy school lunch program offering hot meals to 100 of the neediest students.

"To give lunch to those children who otherwise feel the pain of hunger immediately improves their chances of performing adequately in school," said Father John Robinson, the priest at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish. "It would be naïve to expect students to be able to study and pay attention in class without having that fundamental need met."

And Father John believes these meals will do more than satisfy hunger. They will meet a deep spiritual longing every child has.

"When we treat students with dignity and care for the basic need for food, their self-worth will directly be affected and affirmed," says Fr. John.

Like the education Mt. Carmel provides, the feeding program will address both material and spiritual needs in the community, because each child that participates will learn he or she is a valued person, loved by God and capable of greatness in the Lord. Support the food program, and you will become part of this important mission to nurture bodies, minds and souls. You will make a statement to the watching world — *the poor are loved and valued by God, and are brothers and sisters in Christ!*

"This meal program is not explicit evangelization, but rather implicit, in that Christ's esteem and love for each individual will be 'spoken' to them through loving care for their basic needs," explains Fr. John. "This care and concern will in turn extend to the families whose children benefit from the program."



## You can shape the future with a simple meal!



When Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two fish, he met both the physical and spiritual needs of those who had come to hear him preach. As his modern-day disciples, we should also concern ourselves with both the material and spiritual needs of those who hunger due to lack of food and spiritual guidance.

Your gift to help poor students at Mt. Carmel will ensure physical needs are met. A nutritious meal will be provided so the kids can focus on their studies, and you will be empowering a strong spiritual outreach too, because these meals demonstrate the love of Christ in a tangible way!

Please support this life-changing ministry today. One meal a day may not seem significant, but be assured it will have a bigger impact than you can even imagine. As it feeds bodies and encourages faith, it will also give these children hope for the future.

Give generously — *and change a child's life today!*

“What is the mission of the People of God? To bring into the world the hope and salvation of God: to be a sign of God's love which calls everyone to have a friendship with him; to be the yeast that leavens the dough, salt that gives flavor and protects from corruption, light that illuminates.”

**POPE FRANCIS**

### Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2022, 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

Copyright Cross Catholic Outreach. Cost-effectively written, designed and printed in-house. [dh1911][Udv2006][Udv2103][Ukg2106]