



HOPE House Repairs

Bringing much-needed relief to the indigent elderly

— Punta Gorda, Belize —



By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.

PROVERBS 24:3



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 renovates homes for the elderly poor, most of whom are alone and isolated.

Purpose

To lift up the impoverished elderly, provide spiritual support and make their lives more meaningful.

Our Partner

HOPE (Helping Older People Equally) is an organization established by the Pallottine Missionary Sisters in conjunction with the Red Cross. The goal of HOPE is to promote good physical, mental and social well-being in a caring environment for elderly people.

Location

Punta Gorda, located in Belize's Toledo District — sometimes called the "Forgotten District."

Cost

\$6,600 is needed to cover the costs to repair homes for six elderly citizens. The funds will be used for materials and contractor services.

Highlights

- The HOPE program entails much more than just repairing homes. In total, HOPE cares for 140 elderly citizens, who all live in and about the Punta Gorda region.
- The sisters bring these elderly beneficiaries together for monthly sessions at the local Red Cross Center to participate in medical checkups, exercises, health education and socialization (Project 0472).
- Home repairs are the specific focus of this project, however. The Pallottine Sisters choose a handful of participants to receive these repairs.
- A volunteer mission team from San Antonio, Texas, wants to travel to Belize to serve and work alongside an in-country contractor to repair the homes chosen by the HOPE staff.



Your generous gift is needed to fund this lifesaving and transformative program to help the elderly!



Many of the elderly poor in Belize live in houses that are in complete disrepair.

The Need

A camouflage of beauty covers desperate needs...

Belize is a small Caribbean country roughly the size of the state of Massachusetts. Bordered by Mexico to its north and Guatemala to its south and west, it has a beautiful coastline popular with tourists — but it is also plagued with areas of extreme poverty. For example, more than half of its people live in rural areas and have little access to jobs, medical care or important social services.

This poverty has produced a series of other problems for Belize and its people. Unemployment is high, and according to the latest UN statistics, Belize has among the highest crime rates in the world. Nearly a quarter of the country's adults are illiterate, and 41% of the population live below the poverty line.

As one would expect, all of these factors are especially stressful on the elderly who know their fragile lives leave them vulnerable.

Within the Punta Gorda region, one of the poorest in the country, is the Toledo District, also called the “Forgotten District” because of its geographical isolation and poverty. Toledo is marked by rugged, mountainous terrain that is blanketed with rainforests and is populated with many Mayan villages. The elderly there often live a lonely existence, surviving hand to mouth with little or no means of support.

A great majority of these forgotten men and women live in small rural villages accessed via unpaved roads by foot, while other villages are accessible only by boat. In most cases, the living conditions there are deplorable. Most of the houses are in complete disrepair. Most still lack electricity and running water. And the chances of these houses being repaired are almost nonexistent.

Given the extreme need, the Catholic Church should make services to help the poor a priority there — *and that is where you can help.*



The Ministry



The Pallottine Missionary Sisters, who has established the HOPE House Repairs ministry, bring joy and comfort to the elderly of Belize.

To respond to the needs of this forgotten generation, Cross Catholic Outreach funds HOPE House Repairs, a project it undertakes through the Pallottine Missionary Sisters, who work with the Red Cross and others to provide services to aging men and women in their area.

The name HOPE — Helping Older People Equally — signifies that there are no economic, racial or religious barriers to the participants who are to be served. These ministry partners are passionate about fulfilling the call of Leviticus 19:32 to “rise before the aged, and defer to the old.” They are intimately acquainted with the needs of their communities, and are excited to tell the elders about Jesus’ love for them.

The House Repairs ministry in particular is a godsend for many of these seniors. In the past, it was common for Belizean families to live in multigenerational households, with grandparents, parents and children all living under one roof, but in recent decades, the situation has changed significantly. But now, even in best-case scenarios, elderly family members are often left alone during the day because the adults must work to provide for the family. In other cases, elderly men or women face a solitary existence because their spouses have passed away or their children simply don’t have the means to take care of them. Eventually, these precious elders become lonely and isolated, and the wisdom of their life experience is wasted — never to be passed on to the next generation. As they become weaker or fall prey to disabilities, their homes also become dilapidated and unsafe.



The Program

To make the most of their partnership with Cross Catholic Outreach, the Pallottine Sisters have also developed a fruitful relationship with a Catholic mission group in San Antonio, Texas. Their people are eager to make volunteer pilgrimages to Belize and to provide critical house repairs for a few of the neediest HOPE participants. ***The funding you provide supports this act of mercy and demonstrates the potential of combined Catholic charity.***

For those who receive the home renovations, the changes represent a priceless blessing. Many have feared for their safety in the crude dwellings they occupy, so restoration work creates a lot of excitement and hope. With their homes restored, they also regain a sense of pride and can look forward to a brighter future.



A Catholic mission group from Texas wants to travel to Belize to provide critical house repairs — but they need funding for materials and contractor services.



Help Now!

In Matthew 8:20, we learn that Jesus had no place to lay his head for much of his earthly ministry. The Bible also reveals how he relied on the hospitality of believers as he traveled throughout Judea. This calling of the Church — to care for Christ who lives in our midst as the poor — is still possible today, and we can manifest that compassion for others when we serve the needy elderly in Belize.

By choosing to support HOPE House Repairs, you fulfill this heavenly calling, and your actions provide the greatest gifts of all: security, dignity and hope.

Safe shelter is an obvious and practical human need, but it is also much more than that. When elderly citizens are blessed with a sufficient home, it makes their lives more meaningful. They no longer feel powerless, and they can begin to open their hearts to new possibilities. They are blessed with a dignity that changes the way they see the years ahead.

Please — join us today and make a difference in the life of a precious elder! Together we will take up the cause of the weak and the helpless, extending shelter, hope and love to those in desperate need!

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.

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