The UN calls it a “trend of a deterioration,” and it’s a situation Church leaders are very concerned about. For the fourth consecutive year, extreme hunger has increased — affecting an astounding 258 million people — and that acute food insecurity is exacerbating the suffering of the poor.

That’s the cold hard fact. Now here is the ground-level experience. Children are dropping out of school to work for their next meal. Mothers are going hungry so their sons and daughters don't starve. Young boys and girls are suffering from muscle weakness, fatigue and frequent illness, missing developmental milestones because there is never enough to eat. It is a daunting situation, but thankfully, the Church can do something about it.

Cross Catholic Outreach has Catholic ministry partners positioned in at-risk communities around the world to address this crisis and satisfy the hunger of the most poor and vulnerable in society. Last year, for example, we were able to fund 23 feeding projects in 17 countries with cash grants, and we shipped 25.9 million meals to 18 partners in 10 countries, serving thousands of families.

Join us today to lift children and families out of hunger through outreaches that will also nourish these needy communities emotionally and spiritually!

CrossCatholic.org/feeding
Faces of Hunger

Impeded by Disability

Seven-year-old Jose Angel Muño clings to his father’s arm outside his family’s deteriorating, one-room house in a rural corner of the Dominican Republic.

Jose isn’t just showing affection. He is there to guide his father, Juachin, who is almost completely blind. Later, his 9-year-old sister, Jareidi, takes their father’s other arm, and together they lead him past an empty animal pen (it held goats until the animals escaped and were killed by dogs) and back to the house. Both children had to grow up fast after their mother passed away, leaving them in the care of a parent whose impairment limits his ability to provide for the family.

Jose and Jareidi do have some reason for optimism about their future. For one, their house sits on enough land to cultivate a decent garden. Another positive is that they live next door to the elementary school.

Jose’s favorite class is Spanish; Jareidi’s is math. Like many Dominican boys, Jose dreams of becoming a professional baseball player, while his sister has a more practical ambition: finish school and become a doctor. Still, it’s hard to plan for the future because they are struggling to put food on the table today.

No Safe Path

Nearby, Aribeli Rosso is raising two young children. It’s a challenge complicated by the fact that her husband lives and works in the capital city, Santo Domingo — the best place to find jobs. It is a long way for him to travel just to work at a convenience store, but it’s necessary because there is nothing better for him in the rural community they call home.

When asked if she is getting enough to eat, Aribeli describes the food situation as “complicated.” She says she gives what she can to her children, 4-year-old Albert and 1-year-old Shelanny. She tries to make use of the mangoes and plantains that grow on her land, but she isn’t really a farmer, so her options to live off the land are limited. Dominican schools often provide daily meals, but that raises another issue. The dirt road one must use to reach the nearest elementary school intersects with a creek that rises to dangerous levels during the rainy season. Aribeli worries about her children having to cross that rushing stream. Stories of drownings have circulated in her area, and just last year, a pregnant woman and her two children were swept away at a crossing.

Aribeli struggles to meet her children’s nutritional needs.
Uniting Against Malnutrition

Cross Catholic Outreach was created to empower Catholic ministries around the world and provide those programs with the resources they need to serve vulnerable children like little Jose and his sister Jareidi. One of our top priorities is ensuring young boys and girls receive the nutrition their growing bodies need, but to succeed in this mission of mercy, we need your support.

When you join us in this effort, you will help provide life-sustaining and lifesaving services, including:

- Emergency nutrition programs.
- Catholic school lunches.
- Orphan and elderly feeding programs.
- Meals for hospital patients.
- Monthly food distributions to families.
- Humanitarian aid during natural disasters.

One way your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach can fight hunger is through FUNDASEP, the social outreach of the Diocese of San Juan de la Maguana in the Dominican Republic.

Its projects range from building houses to improving water access to supporting early childhood education. By offering agriculture training, improving irrigation systems and providing other material support to farmers, FUNDASEP gives them the chance to increase their crop yields and improve their economic position in the long term. While this goal is important to pursue, many of these families need help in the interim because they have immediate nutritional needs as well.

Cross Catholic Outreach addresses that urgent need by sending shipments of Vitafood, specially formulated meal packs designed to meet the needs of the malnourished. These meals include a rice, potato or lentil base, a protein (usually soy or beans) and key vitamins to energize, strengthen and improve the health of vulnerable children and families. We have access to the meals. What we need is your support to provide that life-sustaining food. It takes an average of just 15 cents per meal to provide local as well as shipped food so the vulnerable do not go to bed hungry.

Juachin and his son, Jose, receive nutrient-enriched Vitafood through FUNDASEP.
Be Christ’s Hands and Feet to the Hungry

St. Teresa of Avila said, “Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

As global hunger rates continue to rise, you can be God’s vessel to answer the prayers of the vulnerable. Your generous gift to Cross Catholic Outreach will empower priests, sisters, lay missionaries and other ministry partners around the world to respond to the nutritional needs of children and families. The food you will provide is critical not only for emergency nutritional support but also to resource broader social outreaches aimed at improving health, supporting educational efforts, fostering economic empowerment, and supplying spiritual nourishment to those in need.

Your gift today will satisfy hunger and make Christ’s love more visible to our struggling brothers and sisters around the globe. Our Lord once said, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). Stand with us so the power of the Church’s love will be recognized by the watching world and Jesus Christ will be glorified!

Serve Christ today by answering the cries of the poor in the Dominican Republic and around the world for relief from hunger. The food you provide could be the beginning of a life transformation!

Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2024, 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.