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## **Diocese of the Philippines and Vietnam organises hot meals for underprivileged children in Bacoor**



In the early February 2021, the Department of Charity of the Diocese of the Philippines and Vietnam started rendering humanitarian aid to destitute families in the city of Bacoor - a suburb of the Philippine capital. Now children from these families can receive hot meals and clothes and footwear once in three months. Local volunteers joined the charitable project. With the assistance of the diocesan department they are now studying child nutrition and hygiene standards. "Our charitable programme is aimed to help families with children from a very poor district in the city of Bacoor. People here live in slums, illegally. They have no job, no income, so many families are experiencing hardships, they are simply starving," says Rev. David Grubbs, head of the Department of Charity of the diocese of the Philippines and Vietnam, director of Family Missions International. "As far as we know, in this district alone 700 families are in constant need of help. Despite the lockdown and other restrictions still in force in the Philippines, staff members of the diocesan department started coming here in order to feed children from these families," Fr. David continues. Since the early February, representatives of the Department of Charity have been coming to Bacoor once a week. Every Saturday they cook hot meals for children. On a weekly basis they, together with local

volunteers, distribute up to 200 hot meals. Children can also take away with them food supplies and get multivitamins. "This is not the first area wherein we render aid to poor families. Thanks to our benefactors, such relief programme is carried out in several cities. On the island of Luzon, needy families receive aid in nine localities, and on the island of Mindanao eleven child nutrition centres have been opened. Unfortunately, due to the lockdown many centres have been closed, but we hope that soon the work will be resumed," Fr. David adds. During the lockdown, Orthodox priests in the Philippines, supported by the Synodal Department for Charity, have delivered food packages to starving families many times. The first distribution took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020.

Since June 2020, about 49 thousand destitute people in 60 dioceses in Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Kazakhstan, the Philippines and East Timor received food aid. Funds for that were raised by the Synodal Department for Charity with the assistance of the website Miloserdie.ru.

To contribute to the fundraising campaign for purchasing foodstuff and essential supplies for destitute people, please go to <http://eda.help>.

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