

## **Metro Catholics raise \$1.1 million for Philippines**

*Parishes across Canada collect more than \$9 million for relief efforts*

VANCOUVER (Jan. 7, 2014) - Catholics across the Archdiocese of Vancouver donated more than \$1.1 million, second only to Toronto, in last month's special collection for Philippines relief after Typhoon Haiyan.

The money was collected following an appeal from the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. Across the country, Catholics donated more than \$9 million, which will be matched by the federal government.

Evelyn Vollet, director of the Archdiocese of Vancouver's Office of Service and Justice, which coordinated the local collection, thanked local Catholics for their generosity. "Time and time again, we seem to be able to go to the local community with great needs, and they never fail to respond with charity and kindness. Pope Francis called for us to help our brothers and sisters in the Philippines concretely, as well as through prayer, and I'm so encouraged to see this generosity."

Development and Peace has been working with its Philippines partner Caritas Philippines-NASSA to distribute food, water and other essential items in areas that were hardest hit by the storm.

Development and Peace is also working with Church World Service - Asia/Pacific in supporting the local organization People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network, which is focusing on helping families return to their homes in the regions of Biliran and Eastern Samar. They are providing 2,500 families (approximately 15,000 individuals) with materials to rebuild their homes, as well as with household items that were lost in the storm.

The Archdiocese of Vancouver is British Columbia's largest Catholic diocese, roughly encompassing the Lower Mainland. It is home to 460,000 Catholics and 77 churches, with Mass celebrated in 20 languages each week. There are 50 Catholic schools and two Catholic colleges.

More information:

Khoudia Ndiaye, D&P Communications Officer  
514-257-8711 ext. 318  
ndiaye.khoudia@devp.org

Paul Schratz, Archdiocese of Vancouver Communications Director  
604-683-0281 (cell) 604-505-9411  
pschratz@rcav.org