The novel corona virus disease (Covid-19) that has been ravaging the world has thrown normal life out of gear for millions of people in India too with mounting number of infections and casualties. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had clamped a national lock down on 24 March in a bid to protect the country and the citizens from the virulent virus. The national lock-down helped significantly to containing the spread of the virus and preventing the dreadful community spread. However, the lockdown turned out to be the beginning of the misery for hundreds of thousands of vulnerable communities, including workers of the unorganised sector whose lives were upended by the sudden lock-down. India is fighting the war against the pandemic on two fronts: the campaigns against the virus and the pervasive hunger and starvation.
In the wake of the wave of misery that is lashing the country's poor, Catholic Church in India is rallying, as a collective, to provide succour to the hundreds and thousands of poor people. Catholic Church in India stands together in solidarity with the government in its firm resolve to overcome the unprecedented challenge of defeating the virus. Catholic Church has opened relief distribution points across India to provide preventive equipment, health care support, food and dry ration to the most vulnerable sections of the community. Several schools and Churches have transformed as relief distribution points and many hospitals have thrown open doors for accepting the infected people. The main segments of population that receives aid from Catholic Church are slum dwellers, migrant labourers, households with persons with special needs, transgenders, widows, people living on the streets and the homeless.

1. FOOD SUPPORT: Church-supported agencies have started food distribution centres and community kitchens in slums, city peripheries, transit points of migrants, villages with considerable migrant population, localities with vulnerable and marginalised communities like transgender, trafficked women, and the others for distributing food and food supplies. Culturally appropriate food and provisions were procured locally and safely packaged before distributing them to families and persons living in distress.

2. PROTECTION AND PREVENTION: Prevention and protection solutions like masks, sanitizers, hygiene kits are still not accessible, especially for the poor, due to issues related to availability and affordability. Church-supported agencies are distributing sanitizers, masks and hygiene kits freely to vulnerable communities. Several such agencies have started units to manufacture masks for free distribution to vulnerable communities.

3. AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS: Church-supported agencies, with the permission of administration, have been promoting and popularising prevention measures like personal hygiene practices, disinfection, social distancing, etc among communities.
4. SHARE THE JOURNEY WITH THE MIGRANTS: A large section of vulnerable communities, including migrants, wage labourers, the homeless and the destitute suffers the most due to Coronavirus. Catholic Church is supporting these vulnerable communities with masks, sanitizers and food supplies.

5. SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENT HEALTH CARE SYSTEM: Catholic healthcare and educational institutions have proactively been extending support to government at a time when public health facilities are experiencing stress. Many church hospitals have offered their premises as quarantine and care centres and several schools have offered their facilities for setting up isolation centres. Church institutions have also donated health care equipment and supplies, including masks to government hospitals and set up hygiene and drinking water points in government-run isolation camps.

6. PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT: For helping communities overcome the trauma of the pandemic, Church agencies have activated online and tele-helpline and counselling services with professional counsellors to offer psychosocial support to the corona-affected communities. These services, with dedicated hotline numbers, are aimed at the general emotional well-being of communities and helping them cope with the ordeal and distress that normally occur in a time of disaster.
Church agencies in India, under the aegis of Caritas India, have been working selflessly and in close partnership with local administration in identifying and reaching the relief to the needy communities. Caritas India partners have so far mobilised 23,902 volunteers for leading the relief distribution activities and reaching to the unreached. A summary of the coverage of the relief activities of Caritas India partners across the country is given below:

- **507** Church agencies in action at Covid-19 relief works
- **130** Community kitchens started by Church institutions
- **68.63 Million** Spent by Catholic Church for Covid-19 response so far
- **32,58,959** (3.26 Million) Total Population Supported
- **5,000** Migrants Sheltered
- **21,70,486** (2.17 Million) Food supplies
- **2,56,120** (0.26 Million) Sanitizers Distributed
- **8,27,353** (0.83 Million) Masks Distributed
- **23,902** Volunteers Engaged

Catholic Church in India, true to her calling be the Good Samaritan for the afflicted, is committed to stand with the poor in the time of this pandemic-triggered crisis that has few parallels in the human history. Diocesan Social Service Societies and the Catholic Religious Orders of India are working collectively to defeat the Covid-19 pandemic and reaching relief to the most marginalised and impoverished communities.