



No. 1 Central Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines
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THE SOCIAL CONCERNS OF THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO



Photo 1 The Iglesia Ni Cristo resettlement project located in Alang-alang, Leyte, which consists of housing units, eco-farm and other livelihood facilities built for the displaced victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan).

“For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Gal. 5:14, *New Living Translation*)

“Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.” (Gal. 6:10, *Ibid.*)

As commanded by the Lord God and the Lord Jesus and taught by the apostles, the members of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo (INC)* or *Church Of Christ* have a mission to love and care for their fellow human beings. This is their reason for



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fervently sharing their faith, inspired by the spiritual truth that the best thing one could do for his fellowmen is to share God's message of salvation. In addition, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo*, reaches out to all people greatly affected by these difficult times, helping millions through its various social services programs.

Beginning in 1952 with what was simply called *Medical and Dental Mission*, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo's* assistance, especially for the needy, has evolved and expanded. Today, the *Social Services Office (SSO)*, working closely with the *Felix Y. Manalo Foundation, Inc.* spearheads the *Iglesia Ni Cristo's* humanitarian undertakings.

The most extensive Church project in the field of social welfare is an integrated socio-civic service called *Lingap sa Mamamayan* (Filipino for "Aid to Humanity") launched in 1981. This program extends medical and dental services to both members and nonmembers and includes calamity and disaster relief. Working hand in hand with such relief efforts and also providing much needed assistance for search and rescue operations is the *Society of Communicators and Networkers* or *SCAN*, the organization of Christian amateur radio users.

The *Iglesia Ni Cristo* established a prototype land reform resettlement farm in *Barrio Maligaya* in Laur, Nueva Ecija in 1965. Beneficiaries of this land reform project were hundreds of *Iglesia Ni Cristo* farm workers and their families, who left Hacienda Luisita in the province of Tarlac because of intense religious persecution. The farm is complete with roads and bridges, a community school, a medical and dental clinic, and other public facilities. Similar agricultural settlement projects were later established in the provinces of Rizal, Batangas, and Agusan. At present, the Church has 17 eco-farming sites.

Other community development projects are the 20,000 square-meter Dasmariñas Community in Cavite, which opened in 1989; the Bagong Buhay ("New Life") Resettlement area in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, which benefitted thousands of brethren who were victims of the Mt. Pinatubo volcanic eruption in 1991; the Tagumpay ("Victory") Community in Rodriguez, Rizal, which was



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inaugurated on July 23, 1999 and comprises approximately 5,000 duplex units for volunteer workers serving in the various departments of the Central Office. The Church has been promoting and sponsoring programs in literacy, family planning, and health. On May 10, 1965, Brother Eraño Manalo inaugurated the Felix Y. Manalo Memorial Puericulture Center and Maternity Clinic in San Juan, Metro Manila. The Maligaya Medical Clinic was opened on May 1982 along EDSA in Quezon City. It was later absorbed by the New Era General Hospital, which was inaugurated on April 23, 1993. The hospital is situated along Commonwealth Avenue, not far from the Central Temple.

On the education front, the New Era Educational Institute was opened in Quiapo, Manila in 1975. Today, the main campus of the New Era University stands on a 160,000 square-meter plot of land in Quezon City. Its other campuses are located in the provinces of Batangas, Pampanga, and South Cotabato. Admission to the university is open not only to Church members but also to non-members. NEU provides low-cost private education in a peaceful Christian environment, molding its students to become productive members of society.

Through the *Job Placement Office*, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* provides livelihood assistance, which includes job referrals and coordination for recruitment with employers, along with sponsoring vocational training programs. Additional activities being conducted by local congregations throughout the world for their surrounding communities include blood donation drives and environment friendly drives, like tree planting and community clean-up.

In February 2014, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* organized its first-ever Worldwide Walk. That event had 519,221 participants from 129 sites across the world, situated in 16 countries. It was a multi Guinness World Record event, which was recognized as the largest charity walk across multiple venues held in 24 hours and was for the benefit of the victims of *Super Typhoon Haiyan* (Philippine name: *Yolanda*), the strongest tropical storm recorded in history. That global walk also helped finance the Church's resettlement and eco-farming community in Leyte, Philippines - one of the provinces hardest-hit by *Haiyan*.



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Photo 2 Up close, a model of the housing units in the Alang-alang settlement in Tacloban.

On May 6, 2018, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* will organize its second Worldwide Walk in selected locations all over the world. Among the beneficiaries of this *Worldwide Walk to Fight Poverty* will be the less-fortunate in selected communities, especially in Africa.

According to <https://www.worldhunger.org/africa-hunger-poverty-facts/>, poverty is the principal cause of hunger in Africa and elsewhere. The Church recently established an eco-farming project in Ladybrand, South Africa, aimed at helping address the pressing concerns of hunger and malnutrition in that area.

For the second Worldwide Walk, an expected 358 sites in 44 countries and 33 territories and across 18 time zones will simultaneously host participants, all of whom will be moved by what the Lord Jesus Christ taught, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Mt. 22:37-39, *New International Version*) □

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About the Iglesia Ni Cristo (INC) or Church Of Christ

The Iglesia Ni Cristo (INC) or Church Of Christ is a global Christian Church that upholds Bible-based Christian teachings. It maintains nearly 7,000 local congregations and missions grouped into 142 ecclesiastical districts in 143 countries and territories (around 370 local congregations and missions are in the US and Canada alone), and its membership consists of 133 ethnic groups and nationalities.

The INC continues to fulfill its pledge of sharing the gospel and extending help, to the best of its ability, through aid and services, promoting education, socio-economic well-being, environmental awareness and health improvement. This is done with the help of local governments and community establishments, through the Aid For Humanity Program of the Felix Y. Manalo (FYM) Foundation and also the worldwide volunteer force of the INC Giving Project.

See also:

<http://incmedia.org/inc/>

<https://incmedia.org/hunger-in-lesotho-and-south-africa/>

<https://incmedia.org/have-you-heard-about-the-church-of-christ/>

<http://www.eaglenews.ph/hope-for-a-new-life-inc-inaugurates-first-eco-farm-outside-phl-in-ladybrand-inspires-south-africans-in-the-area/>

<http://incmedia.org/fym-foundation/>

<http://incgiving.org/>

<http://iglesianicristo.net/50west/>



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Photo 3 Food distribution and medical mission to aid Typhoon Haiyan victims in Tacloban, Leyte, Philippines.



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Photo 4 Members and non-members alike receive relief goods during the relief mission in Tacloban, Leyte.



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Photo 5 An eco-farming project established by the INC for the Kabihug tribe in Paracale, Camarines Norte, Philippines.



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Photo 6 A section of the settlement project for the B'laan community in South Cotabato, Philippines.

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