

**CARITAS PHILIPPINES URGES PNOY TO CERTIFY AS URGENT ‘ZERO HUNGER BILL’**  
**By Gerard Anthony M. Naval**

Caritas Philippines yesterday called on President Aquino to certify as “urgent” the passage of the so-called “Zero Hunger Bill” or House Bill 3795, which is presently pending in the House of Representatives.

In an article by CBCP News, Caritas Philippines Chairman Archbishop Rolando Tirona said they are hoping that Aquino would help attain the goal of ending hunger in the country within 10 years.

“The early passage of the bill could save many of our brothers and sisters from hunger and death, which is the number one cause of mortality,” said Tirona as quoted by the official news agency of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

“The right to food is a basic right that must be upheld and fulfilled by the duty holder our government,” he added.

Last year, Akbayan party-list Reps. Ibarra Gutierrez and Walden Bello, Dinagat Islands Rep. Arlene Bag-ao, and Quezon City Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte proposed the passage of the Right to Adequate Food Framework Act of 2014.

Under the said measure, the right to food as a government priority will be established and, thus, will entail a comprehensive program to address hunger.

And in order to show the strong support of the Catholic Church to the measure, Tirona has tapped the help of all the dioceses in the country in gathering signatures in their respective parishes to push for the passage of the proposed measure.

“Let this be part of our efforts and commitment to work in solidarity with the poor. Let it be our concrete expression of our mercy and compassion as we celebrate the Year of the Poor,” the prelate said in his letter to all dioceses.

The support to the passage of the said measure, Tirona said, is part of Caritas Philippines’ commitment to the Caritas Internationalis’ campaign on “One human family, food for all”.

Presently, HB 3795 remains pending at the House Committee on Human Rights. ###