

Miss Universe donates gifts for poor to Caritas Manila

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Reigning Miss Universe Pia Wurtzbach has donated some personal items to Caritas Manila to contribute to the Catholic Church's program for the poor this Christmas.

"We are all doing this out of pure love and good faith," said the 2015 international beauty queen after meeting Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila on Dec. 12.

"The country is going to the right direction, and of course the Miss Universe competition is [in the Philippines next year] so we feel like we want to give back as much as we can," she said.

Wurtzbach called on others to also "share their blessings" especially during the Christmas season.

"Let's share with one another. Let us give without expecting anything in return," said Wurtzbach, who expressed her intention to work with Caritas Manila after her reign as Miss Universe.

Cardinal Tagle thanked the beauty queen for her donation.

"We are here for one purpose and that is to serve our brothers and sisters with no other motivation but love," said the prelate.

"Miss Pia, you are a towering figure. We look up to you," said Cardinal Tagle in jest as he welcomed the Miss Universe to the bishop's "very simple residence."

The cardinal said he was "happy that a person like you and other celebrities ... are offering whatever you could to support, especially the young people in need of education."

In an hour-long closed door meeting, Cardinal Tagle gave Wurtzbach a rosary that was personally given to the cardinal by Pope Francis.

Father Anton Pascual, executive director of Caritas Manila, said Wurtzbach donated personal items such as branded shoes, bags, and gowns that will be sold off to benefit Caritas Manila's youth education program.

Caritas Manila, the Archdiocese of Manila's social services and development ministry, is looking to raise about US\$40,000 from the event.

Wurtzbach, a Catholic, also donated the proceeds of a recent charity gala to Caritas.

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