

Holy Spirit's Social Concerns Committee chooses a number of outreach programs each year to which parish funds are donated. One program we have donated to the past few years is a food outreach program in El Golfo de Santa Clara, founded by parishioners Chuck and Maggi Teague.

## FOOD OUTREACH PROGRAM IN EL GOLFO



El Golfo de Santa Clara is a small fishing village, population about 10,000, about 100 miles south of Yuma, Arizona, at the north end of the Sea of Cortez, where the Colorado River empties into the sea. It has mostly sand streets with small water lines (3/4" PVC pipe) and electric service now to most of the town. Two years ago they got phone service to some central areas with high speed Internet, and weekly garbage service to central areas. There are no banks so it's very difficult for people to save and it's not a learned trait. When fishing is good, everybody eats and does well. In closed seasons, windy weather and poor fishing, people suffer. With few social support programs,

the family can suffer if the wage earner gets hurt, leaves his family because he can't support them, gets sick or dies. There is only sympathy and the kindness of neighbors so we help as we can. We also help older folks who can no longer work and have no family support.



A small clinic treats the sick for little or no cost and birth control is free. Medicines and surgery can be very expensive. Wages are low for hired workers--\$20 a day is good and fishing boat owners pay fishermen a percentage of the value of catch, but only if they catch fish.

We found El Golfo to be a very pleasant, friendly, non-touristy town with hard working, kind, and friendly people. The RV park is an international mix of Canadian, American, Scottish and Swedish RV'ers. Our park has a small Sunday non-denominational group that meets to pray together, sing hymns and share our faith.



Since the Park Church group first started meeting years ago, they used their collections to buy food for village families in need. Non-churchgoers also make donations. To raise money for our "El Golfo Food Outreach Program," we have waffle breakfasts, silent and live auctions, sell drinks, especially during live auctions. The food and clothing program is coordinated by us and carried out by Park volunteers who sort member donated clothing, shoes, blankets, coats, household items like pots, dishes, silverware and toys, balls etc., donated by the Park members who also help in the food-buying and delivery.



Maggi and I have coordinated the program and served as treasurer since 2009 when we sold our RV and bought a lease on a lot adjacent to the park and built a small modular casa. We have the help of regular volunteers and a warmhearted longtime Mexican friend, Maria, who grew up poor and knows when need is real. She visits families to assure need and get clothing sizes of family members to guide us each week. We buy food locally and deliver food boxes of staples, flour, rice, beans, a little meat, lard, tomato sauce, hot sauce, eggs, veggies, toilet paper and soap, all of which costs about \$50 a family for 5 or 6 families a week. We also take bags of clothing sized

for the families from our store room and take boxes of shoes, coats, etc., for them to try on to fit. Toys and balls are given as we have them. Holy Spirit parishioners donated nearly 20 soccer balls this year.



The Park has a warm relationship with the village, which recognizes the non-judgmental help we provide to families in need. Last season, October 2013 to March 2014, we took food and clothing to 76 families with a combined 438 adults and kids for a cost of \$3,835. The Holy Spirit Parish contribution of \$525 this year will greatly help. We thank you for your consideration. We also thank Holy Spirit for the rummage sale source of inexpensive shoes, coats, pots as well as donated blankets and items we have gathered and are taking down again this year.

Chuck and Maggi Teague, Program Coordinators

