



## SOME Summer Collections

Snack Bags to be distributed to those in need should be assembled in gallon Ziploc bags. Below are suggested nutritious contents for each bag (feel free to substitute similar items):

- 1 apple juice pouch / 6.75 oz. (Mott's sells boxes of 8 pouches)
- 1 fruit cup / 4 oz. (Dole sells packages of 4 cups)
- 1 whole grain / cheddar cheese sandwich cracker packet (Lance sells boxes of 8)
- 1 breakfast or granola bar (Kellogg's sells boxes of 8 nutri-grain bars)
- 2 fruit snacks packets (Welch's sells boxes of 8 packets)
- 3-4 sugar-free Starlight Mints peppermint hard candies or similar small candy

Toiletry Bags to be distributed to those in need should be assembled in gallon size Ziploc bags. Contents should include:

- 1 bar of soap
- 1 travel size shampoo
- 1 travel size lotion and/or sunscreen
- 1 stick of deodorant
- 1 tube of toothpaste
- 1 toothbrush
- 2 razors
- 5 maxi pads or tampons

Please drop off at the corner of 36th & N Street between 10am-12pm on **July 18**. Advance drop off locations will be available in VA, MD and DC. Thank you!

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Not unlike here, those who make their living by selling or reselling goods on street corners or on buses or who work in low-paying jobs, have been affected most - they cannot work and cannot pay rent, pay utilities, or buy food for their families. Additionally, those who have been receiving regular checks from family living and working in the States, are not, given our own unemployment and health crisis.

Cases of COVID have been identified in the La Chacra area and at least one father has died.

Unfortunately, that is not all. On May 31, El Salvador was hit by an unusually strong tropical storm Amanda which caused severe damage to the Maria Madre community, particularly in sectors II and III (there are 3 sectors). Roads were washed away or flooded; debris piled up in the streets, trees or houses; and hillsides disappeared. Many people lost everything. As of this writing, the rains continue and have the potential to become part of tropical storm Cristobal this weekend.

### **COVID-19 & Tropical Storm Amanda Response**

In response to the virus, Maria Madre de los Pobres staff purchases basic foodstuffs through the cooperative and distributes them to the elders, families in the Godparent program and others. The sisters also spend several days a week visiting homes to be sure everyone is safe. It is a fragile system of temporary relief.

The community's Violence Prevention Committee ("Mesa de Prevención") also makes and distributes food baskets, with priority given to elders, pregnant women and single parent families. Representatives from the Jesuit University in San Salvador (the UCA) assisted with this. The government (military or police) recently delivered food to vendors and/or families.

Needless to say, the situation has gone from bad to worse as a result of the storm. Padre Luis, Sister Betty and others have walked through the community to assess needs and have set up a donation and distribution center at the parish. The newly homeless are sleeping in the parish's two chapels and community members are preparing food for them. The UCA has started a food and clothing donation campaign for the parish (they are in a wealthier part of the city) and the mayor's office and others have sent representatives to La Chacra to assess and/or begin to repair damage.

### **Response from Holy Trinity**

Before the storm, we held two zoom calls with Padre Luis and/or parish staff and were in regular contact with members of the parish and the Violence Prevention Committee (Mesa) regarding COVID-19. We wired Madre three thousand dollars (\$3000) after our first call with \$2000 going to the parish and \$1000 to the Mesa. At least two other parishes also have wired money. The week before Easter we launched a last minute 'Basket Drive' where we suggested that people donate what they spend on their Easter baskets to Maria Madre for their emergency food baskets. We received \$300.

Members of Holy Trinity's Maria Madre Committee met with representatives of Food for the Poor, a US nonprofit that works in Central America and the Caribbean, to explore a food purchase/distribution collaboration. However, after discussions with Madre staff, we learned that our people in El Salvador were able to purchase goods through the local cooperative at an equivalent price; that was still the best option for them.

### **Looking Forward**

Food insecurity will continue to be an issue for our sister parish. How can you help?

### ***Spread the word.***

Given our country's own crises, most people in the US are not aware of the impacts of COVID-19 and tropical storm Amanda in Central America and El Salvador. Please share this information and let them know that we will continue to collect and send money online until the country reopens and the community can function. Donate at [www.trinity.org](http://www.trinity.org).

### ***Learn.***

Our Maria Madre committee meets almost every month to share information on the parish, learn about El Salvador past and present, plan parish activities and pray. You can also receive regular updates through our Maria Madre email distribution list. Email [margielegowski@gmail.com](mailto:margielegowski@gmail.com) to be added.

### ***Serve locally.***

Our group periodically hosts special events at Holy Trinity - movies, prayer vigils, pilgrimages to Sacred Heart church (Washington, DC), Simple Suppers, Spanish book drives, and Christmas fundraising sales. Spanish translators are often needed. Watch the social justice e-letter or Maria Madre listserv for opportunities to serve locally.

### ***Pray.***

Please remember our sister parish in your daily prayers.

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