



Transforming the lives of the
poor through education.

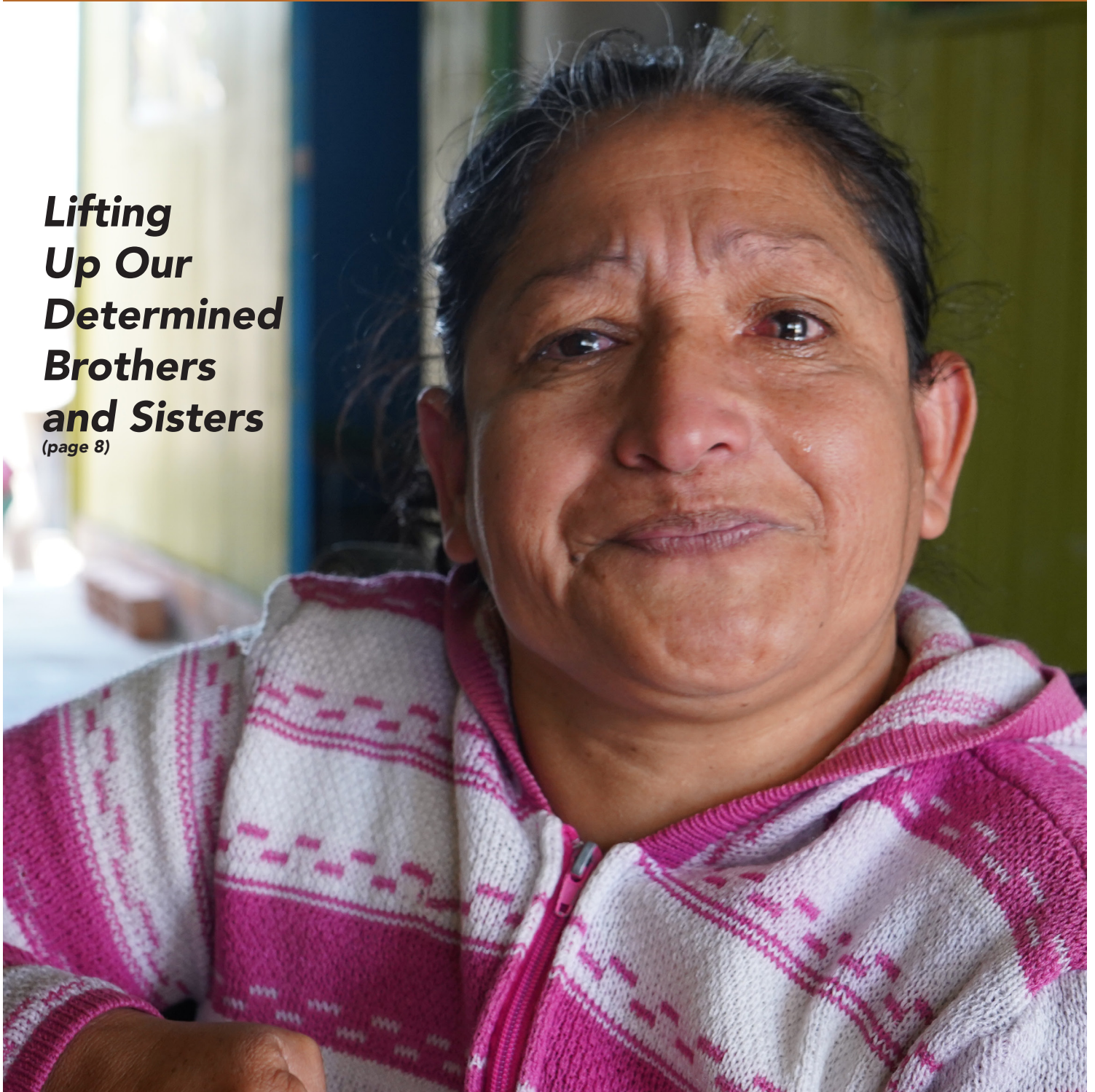
THE JOURNEY

A publication for the community of Friends of Chimbote supporters.

Volume 2 | Issue 1

Fall/Winter 2020

Lifting Up Our Determined Brothers and Sisters (page 8)



Friends of Chimbote Board of Directors

Lucho Espejo, Fargo, ND
Board Chairman

Eric Krueger, Fargo, ND
Vice Chairman

Brian Berg, Fargo, ND
Treasurer

Tammy Campbell, Fargo, ND
Secretary

Fr. Phil Ackerman, West Fargo, ND

Leona Fox, Newport Beach, CA

Michelle Jirik, Minneapolis, MN

Kelli Kester, Mpls, MN

Dan Kunkleman, Charlotte, NC

Dan Kuzlik, Minneapolis, MN

Deb Lalley, St. Joseph, MN

Dan Mahli, Fargo, ND

Margaret (Pook) Grathwol, Mpls, MN

Scott Sanders, Oxbow, ND

Hubert Seiler, Rugby, ND

Bill Seiler, Fairfax, VA

Linda Zespy, Minneapolis, MN

The Friends of Chimbote Board is deeply committed to the mission of transforming lives of the poor including an annual meeting in Chimbote engaging in our mission work. The broad and diverse nature of challenges facing our mission is met head on by the amazing skills, knowledge, advocacy, and passions of our Board Members.

Friends of Chimbote Staff

Todd Mickelson
Executive Director
toddm@friendsofchimbote.org

Julie Dolbec
Mission Visit Director
julied@friendsofchimbote.org

Cari Rauch
Accountant
carir@friendsofchimbote.org

Executive Director's Corner



More than any year in my life, 2020 has been a year of deep reflection. I returned from Chimbote on March 14th after an amazing mission trip with donors, staff, board members and young men and women. We were from all over this country and spent days serving our brothers and sisters in the poorest barrios of Chimbote. The day after we returned, the people of Peru started a 230 day quarantine and our country descended deeper into division and chaos.



The last 8 months have been the most tumultuous in my memory with economic, medical, political, financial, racial and international turmoil. These challenges have fostered fear, anxiety and division.

However, in the midst of this turmoil, I am deeply grateful and hopeful. Our Mission has faced equally great challenges. The poor we serve are overwhelmed with economic and medical calamity. Our Peruvian staff risk their lives each day to relieve suffering. Charitable giving is deeply impacted by our own economic pain. In all of this, we have truly been United Together!

Our Mission is the epitome of where we need to be as a nation. We are black, brown, white, blue, red, foreign, wealthy, poor, all denominations and agnostic working together as brothers and sisters against overwhelming odds. We are so thankful our donors are generous, caring, loving people who have heeded the call to relieve the suffering of the poor in Chimbote. Gratitude abounds for our team in Chimbote whose hearts and faith overcome their fears. Our decades of experience and working for a higher purpose bring us together to rapidly deploy our resources for the greatest good.

We are thankful you have made the miraculous stories told in this newsletter possible! We are both hopeful and confident that our impact will be even greater as we stay United Together. As you experience this 2020 Thanksgiving and Christmas season, know in your heart that you are a part of a blessed, greater good. Let us pray our nation can travel a similar path.

Yours in Service

Todd Mickelson





“FoC Welcomes New Board Members”



Margaret (Pook) Grathwol

Margaret “Pook” Grathwol joins the Board of Friends of Chimbote with her first visit to the Mission in 1980. Witnessing the heart of the poor, that first visit changed her life forever.

Pook is an attorney in Minneapolis, MN with extensive experience with non-profits, boards and fundraising. She has been instrumental in Rotary support for the Mission including funding, container shipments and mission trips. Pook is excited to renew and deepen her involvement with our Mission and to grow our impact and service for the poor of Chimbote.

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

1 Peter 4:10

Michelle Jirik

Michelle Jirik joins our Board after witnessing the passion and commitment to the Mission of her mother and father, Norma and Pat Klein. Michelle manages a multi-generational care facility in Prior Lake, MN. She is deeply involved with the Prior Lake Rotary as a Board Member and Chair of the club’s Lakefront Musicfest, a massive success and revenue generator.

Michelle has experienced numerous trips to Chimbote including to witness the implementation of a Rotary grant she helped secure. Her direct and family involvement with our Mission fuels her passion to impact the lives of beneficiaries and benefactors.



FOREVER GRATEFUL THANK YOU PAT KLEIN

Pat Klein has completed his nine years on the Friends of Chimbote Board including seven years as Chair. Our Mission was blessed with Pat’s wisdom and skills from forty years managing major projects including construction of the Mall of America, other non-profit experiences and a burning faith.

In his retirement he committed his considerable knowledge, effort and heart to guiding, discerning and leading this Mission forward in our transition from our dynamic founders, Father Jack and Sister Peggy. Pat facilitated our Mission’s changes in structure and sustainability while maintaining our legacy to love, empower and transform the lives of the poor we serve. It was all done with laughs, tears, hugs and especially prayer as he drew forth the strengths of board members, staff, consultants and volunteers during many challenges.

We are pleased to now have the Pat Klein Boardroom at ACAF in Chimbote to thank and recognize Pat for his fifteen years of service in time, talent, treasure, heart and faith.





Asociacion Civil Apoyo Familiar
(Civil Association Supporting Families)

The Peruvian faith-based, civil association was created in 2005 to administer Mission programs. Over 90 Peruvian employees of ACAF utilize the donor funding secured and managed by Friends of Chimbote to combat the daily affects of poverty while empowering the poor through education and transformation opportunities. Meeting the diverse needs of the poor are a dedicated staff of social workers, psychologists, teachers, attorneys, lenders, construction workers, carpenters, trainers, guards and maintenance personnel.

ACAF leaders are in the community each day to assess needs, manage employees and visitors working in the programs and collaborate with community leaders. The ACAF Board is a qualified group of community leaders and a Friends of Chimbote liaison. Friends of Chimbote and ACAF staff and leaders interact dynamically each week to effectively deliver Mission programs.



Jorge Villar ACAF Exective Director



Working to help the neediest is something wonderful but I must confess that it has been no easy task during this pandemic.

At the start of the lockdown in March many staff members insisted on going out to help. I knew in my heart that we had to do something, and in between my fear and frustration, I asked God to guide me to go on. A few days later the Head of the Police force gave us a special permission so that, with all of the necessary health and safety protocols, we were able to go and take food to hundreds of vulnerable families who were suffering. I must say that we have been blessed and we are fortunate because we have continued to help from that day until now.

It was very gratifying to feel such happiness and excitement when seeing children smile again, and the 15 mothers who received their prefabricated wooden houses with a mixture of tears and smiles, after having lost everything in a devastating fire.

Without a doubt this will be one of the most memorable experiences, one that I will never forget. Our brave staff, the community and its leaders working together as a team. I have no doubt that this will strengthen my commitment. We are very proud of the work we do and are grateful, to God and to all of you, for continuing to support us and for believing in our work.

Of course I am also grateful to our dedicated staff. In helping those in the greatest need in our community, over half of our staff have been infected with COVID. They continue to persevere because the needs of our brothers

and sisters are so great. They have inspired me. I know you would be proud of them. I have witnessed their love and solidarity every time they go out to take help to our brothers and sisters who put their hope in us. Their commitment truly makes a difference!

In these difficult times we are convinced that "there are great blessings in the midst of darkness" and that together, thanks to your support, we will overcome this.

Thank you for your prayers and your generous support. We hope to see you soon. Stay safe and have a blessed Christmas season.

Take great care

Jorge Villar





On Friday, July 24th a devastating fire engulfed part of the Nuevo Chimbote community leaving over 60 families homeless and losing the few belongings that they had. Despite all the hardships that have come along with the COVID pandemic, ACAF sprang into action providing supplies for immediate relief to our brothers and sisters in need. With all this tireless effort ACAF knew that more needed to be done!!

Working with community leaders, ACAF, FoC and friends at St Michael Parish in Prior Lake, MN a plan was developed to help the families that were in dire need.

In Less than 25 days...

- 15 wood homes were built
- 20 families received beds, a table and chairs, stove and a water tank. All furniture was built by the ACAF carpentry shop.
- 60 families received health packages that included food, masks, gloves and cleaning supplies.

Our prayers continue for all of the families that were so greatly impacted by this unfortunate event.



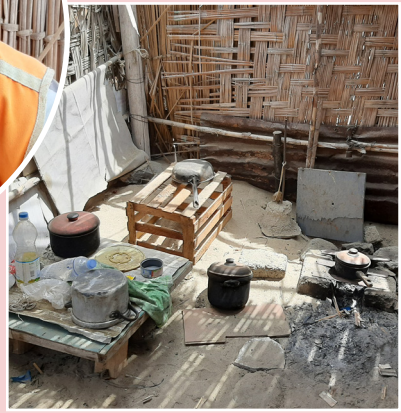
Young Hearts Make a Difference THANK YOU...Highland Catholic School

Francisco Trigoso left his home in Tocache in the Peruvian rainforest as a teenager, over 40 years ago. With hearing and cognitive disabilities, he has traveled alone throughout Peru, working odd jobs, without a home or his family.

Francisco finally established a home in the Puerto Bello invasion outside Chimbote six years ago. His humble dwelling made of estera and cardboard with a cardboard bed in the dirt, is the first place he has called home since leaving Tocache. He continues to do various jobs in the neighborhood including keeping watch over houses and his true passion, fixing shoes with his ever present, contagious smile.

When ACAF located Francisco during their campaign to provide help during the COVID quarantine, he thanked God for the blessings he was receiving from the generous, loving people of our Mission. Highland Catholic School completed fundraisers during Catholic Schools Week in January that provided Francisco with his own bed with mattress, table and chairs, stove, cooking supplies, clothes, food and shoe repair tools. Highland's mission to be the light of Christ was shining brightly on Francisco, 4,000 miles away in the barrio sands of Chimbote.

The students and staff sold raffle tickets and donated creative prizes including Principal for a day to raise the funds to lift-up their brother Francisco. His gratitude and joy for the blessings from his new family in faith show in his even brighter smile.





COVID 2020

Our Response..



As a global pandemic spread throughout our world much fear, uncertainty and helplessness controlled all of our thoughts and actions. With a mandated quarantine in place for over 230 days in Chimbote, families struggled to put enough food on the table just to stay alive, let alone try to navigate through all of the unknowns and disease. Dire living conditions in the barrios and the inability for family members to work to provide the basic essentials to survive has caused great sadness, depression, abuse and helplessness within these communities.

With the help of so many generous donors, FoC and ACAF sprang into action. ACAF staff were deemed essentials workers in the community and have stood on the front lines risking their own lives helping the poorest of the poor. Not only has food been provided...each week staff meetings would take place and new ideas would come forth on how to empower and assist surrounding communities and use each donation dollar to make the greatest impact.

We are proud of the work that has been accomplished and the impact that has been made in the community and surrounding barrios. There continues to be so much work to be done but we remain optimistic and grateful due to the continued support received by so many of you!

GARDEN BOXES

During the pandemic ACAF continued to explore methods on how to empower families to gain resources and skills to help themselves. ACAF recognized the positive impact of home gardens which addressed food insecurity and malnutrition as well as provides additional benefits such as income and livelihood opportunities for resource-poor families. Garden boxes along with rich fertilized dirt and seeds such as cilantro, tomatoes, onions, carrots, and lettuce are being delivered out into the barrios.



BAKERY

ACAF bakery staff, following the strictest safety protocols have been baking rolls for the food packages throughout the 2020 pandemic. With nutrition being one of the primary needs, ACAF has delivered 2,445 bags of food which was made up of essential groceries and a bag of 20 rolls which adds up to over 44,900 rolls. These bags have benefitted over 8,980 of the most vulnerable beneficiaries in the surrounding barrios.



HYGIENE PACKETS

ACAF recognizes the massive importance of personal hygiene and sanitation. ACAF staff has been heading out to surrounding barrios and handing out hygiene packages that included soap, alcohol, water, cleaners, face masks and towels. With each package delivered each family received step by step guidance from ACAF staff on the ways to protect their families from diseases with proper hygiene



WHITE BOARDS

Educating our youth has become a global challenge. Schools remain closed after the quarantine was lifted, which has provided huge challenges for families that lack resources to study online. Friends of Chimbote and ACAF continue to commit to education as a high priority. With this in mind, the ACAF carpentry shop has built white boards that are being distributed into the barrios to assist in the distance learning stage.





CARPENTRY SHOP

The carpentry shop has reopened and is operating 5 days a week. The ACAF carpentry shop was blessed with a donation of 26 tons of wood from the Sider Peru Company. The shop has been extremely busy building furniture for the victims of the devastating fires, white boards, garden boxes and they recently were allowed to go back into the barrios to build homes and the latest soup kitchen.



COMMON POTS (Olla Comuns)

Due to the increased poverty and unemployment, many new community soup kitchens have started up in the barrios. Community neighbors have decided to gather together and prepare meals for the most vulnerable in their surrounding areas. ACAF has provided over 70 bags of food. Each bag provides enough food for 40 people.



FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of essential food packets was a priority after the mandated quarantine began in March. This continues to be a weekly effort and as the ACAF staff walks on the front lines continued need is recognized. The packets contain a bag of rice, sugar, milk, oil, oatmeal, noodles, beans and a bag of 20 rolls from the ACAF bakery. Over 9,000 families have received this blessing. \$18 feeds a family of four for one week.



NUTRITIONAL PACKETS

As the distribution of the essential food packets continued. The ACAF staff took things to a different level and wanted to provide education on the importance of nutrition and how to make the food supplies that they were receiving be used properly and provide the most nutritional benefits. These packets include recipes and ingredients to prepare health sustaining meals.



MEDICAL

Hospitals in Chimbote are collapsing with the staggering number of people trying to get medical care. The loss of so many lives and the sense of great desperation has developed due to the lack of equipment and infrastructure. During these past few months, the ACAF medical services has provided aid to over 440 beneficiaries with medicine, medical supplies, exams and support.



SOUP KITCHENS

ACAF continues to operate 4 soup kitchens and they have remained open during the lock down and the number of beneficiaries continue to rise. Since the COVID outbreak 37,735 portions of food have been served to our brothers and sisters in Chimbote and surrounding communities.



The pandemic in Peru and especially Chimbote has been among the worst in the world. Peru has the highest mortality rate from the virus in the world even after a 230+ day quarantine to control the spread. They have double the mortality rate of the United States. In addition to the medical calamity, Peru's economy has declined over 30%, worse than all but a few developed countries.

This combination of factors has been disastrous for the poor we serve. 72% of Peruvian workers are in the informal economy, without benefits, unemployment protection or bank accounts. The cash they earn each day is what they have for food, water and medicine. The small governmental aid of \$1.00 per day during the 230 day quarantine did not reach the poor we serve because they don't exist in the government system. There aren't enough resources to get them registered. No near-term help is expected from the government.

The Mission continues to be a critical resource to those in greatest need in Chimbote. The major international agencies report that the poorest of the world, who are part of the informal, cash economy will be impacted for years until the virus diminishes and economies recover. They forecast that the barely subsistence earnings of the poor will be cut in half.

As we plan how to have the greatest impact with your help, our beneficiaries are sharing their stories.

Maura Silvestre



Maura Silvestre is a microloan recipient of ACAF and runs a vegetable stand in the market. Sales have really dropped and she is the sole provider in her family with her husband on dialysis and her children having lost their jobs. ACAF has rescheduled and expanded her loans but her husband still has to walk alone to his dialysis with no funds for taxi fares.

Giuliana Saavedra



Giuliana Saavedra now earns \$6-8 a day. A recent widow and mother of 8 children, she sells fish in the public market each day. Her earnings are about one third of pre-pandemic with no government aid and no additional work. Her children cannot participate in the "I Learn at Home" national education program with no access to electronics. ACAF is supporting her with necessities and helping with her living conditions and education for her children. Giuliana's greatest concerns are her health so she can continue to work and to get her children an education.

Olga Torres



Olga Torres is living on \$6 a day selling cakes and combinados in her neighborhood. She is a single mother with disabilities due to polio and a traffic accident. Her future earnings can more than double if she can resume therapy and buy cooking supplies. ACAF is helping with food supplies and medical assistance. Olga had COVID and now needs to regain her mobility so she can increase her sales and income.

These three families paint the picture of what we are seeing and hearing each day. The great need for short term help while they work hard to recover and be independent. With little to no safety net in Peru, our Mission is changing lives more than ever and lifting up our determined brothers and sisters.

Making an Impact

San Miguel Soup Kitchen



Over the past few decades, our Mission has invested hundreds of thousands of employee and volunteer hours and millions of dollars in improving the lives of the poor in the barrios surrounding Our Lady of Perpetual Help. These barrios now have schools, water, sewer, paved roads, markets and commerce. There is still poverty in the area and we will always serve there where ACAF, our mission visitor program and Our Lady of Perpetual Help are located.

Hearing the call of the poor has taken us out to the periphery of the Chimbote community over the past few years. This pandemic has expanded and accelerated our services in the poorest invasion barrios to the north, south and east of Chimbote and Nuevo Chimbote. We have been working with community and faith leaders to understand where we can have the greatest impact in empowering and transforming the lives of the determined people in these communities.

One such area is the Bella Vista neighborhood in the Cambio Puente community to the east near the prison. This invasion neighborhood is 7 years old and has an active local commission and leaders. The community lacks water, sewer, schools, markets, medical services and worship facilities. The children are unable to participate in the "I Learn at Home" national program since they lack electronic devices, connection to the internet and school supplies.

What they lack in resources and assets, they make up for in eagerness and commitment to a better life. The people of Bella Vista are just looking for a hand up. With the meager earnings of the families and the economic impact of the pandemic, there is a great need for food and nutrition.

With our commitment to empowerment, the goal is to expand our capacity to serve more people by engaging this community in feeding those in greatest need. With the financial support of St. Michael's Parish in Prior Lake, MN, the ACAF team and community leaders, we built and supplied the San Miguel Soup Kitchen.

We built the structure and provided the stoves, pots, utensils, tables and other equipment necessary to make meals to help feed the over 250 people who live in Bella Vista. The neighborhood commission will operate the kitchen with help from ACAF through nutrition training, food supplies and mentorship. We will also work with the leaders to identify the national government and church agencies who can help provide food supplies.

With improved nutrition in place, we are excited to progress further in transforming the lives of Bella Vista. We are working to identify more communities who are in need of and ready for empowerment and a path out of poverty.





In the Darkness, Some Shining Lights

HOSPICE and CHAPEL DEVELOPMENTS

HOSPICE

The residential hospice facility that was an integral part of our Mission to care for and provide a dignified death to the poorest in the Chimbote community was closed in June of 2017. Declining revenue and donations, increased regulatory rules and required capital repairs and upgrades were the primary factors in the closure.

Over the past 3 years, we have worked extensively with our collaborators of Hospice, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, and donors to examine potential ministries and utilization of the facility. We will continue to collaborate with the Sisters, ACAF and the community to identify and implement multi-purpose uses of the facility to benefit the poor of Chimbote including medical and hospice ministries through sustainable funding sources. Friends of Chimbote and ACAF will resume ownership, management and operation of the facility in agreement with the Sisters. We are very enthused to bring key ministries and programs back to life in this beautiful facility.



CHAPEL

The past few years have been filled with our Mission exploring and serving the people in emerging communities and invasions on the periphery of Chimbote and Nuevo Chimbote. The needs analyses include engaging with the people and leaders in these areas and a familiar story emerges. A story that drove the development of our Mission services in the communities around Our Lady of Perpetual Help decades ago.

The severe poor are missing and crave safety, education for their children, economic opportunities, access to food and clean water, health services and a faith community. It is inspiring to bring the knowledge, competencies, passion,

commitment and resources that we have developed over the past 30+ years to people in great need. These people are determined, hopeful and hungry for opportunities.

Last Fall, many of these needs were witnessed and discussed in a new community in Nuevo Chimbote. While our Mission contemplated and discerned how to meet these needs, a foundation of an active faith community resonated with some generous donors. They decided to fulfil the request for a Chapel.



Mission visitors in March were blessed to feel the joy of the community as construction progressed. Amazingly, this Chapel was built for \$18,000. It was recently completed after a long delay due to the COVID quarantine.

If you are interested in providing a hospice bed to allow a person to die with dignity or be part of the building of a chapel in a community allowing neighbors to gather and pray. Please contact Friends of Chimbote at 701-364-0162.

BRING HOPE this HOLIDAY SEASON

"It's the most wonderful time of the year!" The Holidays remind us to be thankful, reflect on our blessings and do acts of kindness that bless us in return. Christmas shop below at these heartfelt gifting selections. Whether you need that perfect gift for a loved one or are looking for an opportunity to make a difference. Give one of these special gifts that will benefit our brothers and sisters in Chimbote. Placing them one step closer on the path out of poverty.

PROVIDE SHELTER

\$4450

Item # H1

3 bedroom wood home with concrete floor

\$4000

Item # H2

2 bedroom wood home with concrete floor

\$2550

Item # H3

3 bedroom wood home with compacted dirt floor

\$1950

Item # H4

2 bedroom wood home with compacted dirt floor

\$700

Item # H5

Build a new eternit roof on an estera home

PROVIDE COMFORT

\$265

Item # F1

Bunk Beds

Includes 2 mattresses, 2 blankets, 2 sheets and 2 pillows

\$140

Item # F2

Double Bed

Includes a mattress, blanket, sheet and 2 pillows

\$109

Item # F3

Single Bed

Includes a mattress, blanket, sheet and pillow

\$125

Item # F4

Table with 6 chairs

\$80

Item # F5

Gas Stove and Tank

PROVIDE EDUCATION and OPPORTUNITY

\$40

Item # S1

Garden box with dirt, fertilizer and seeds.

\$400

Item # S2

Microloan to an aspiring entrepreneur to start their own business

\$50

Item # S3

White board, a wood school desk with chair for remote learning

\$2100

Item # S4

One month of meals for 200 people at the soup kitchen

\$50

Item # S5

A pair of egg-laying Chickens





As we enter into the Thanksgiving Season we reflect on what we are grateful for and the people who have been part of our journey. We are sincerely moved by the continued support we have received during these trying times by so many gracious donors who have continued to support our mission in prayer and monetary donations.

We also are so very thankful for the support of the numerous organizations and mission teams that have created life-lasting relationships with the people of Chimbote during their mission visits. We eagerly await the time to announce the date when teams can safely reunite with their Chimbote families and friends. Many preparations and improvements have taken place for your anticipated arrival.

Have a Blessed Thanksgiving



HOPE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON ORDER FORM

Item #	Description of Item	Qty	Price Each	Total Gift	Dedicated to...

Please place in the enclosed newsletter envelope. Attach additional pages if needed! **TOTAL**

Name: _____
 Address: _____ Email: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

PAYMENT METHOD
 Enclosed is my check payable to "Friends of Chimbote" for the amount of \$ _____
 Bill this purchase to my credit card. Mastercard AMEX Discover
 Card# _____ Expiration: _____ Amount \$ _____
 Phone # _____ Signature: _____

DEDICATED GIFT
 YES! Please let my special person know I am sponsoring this gift in their honor with a card!
 Name: _____
 Address: _____ Email: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Comments: _____

**Gifts made through the "Bring Hope List" represents a gift to the entire Friends of Chimbote Mission. Friends of Chimbote does not use its limited resources to track individual gifts. We use gifts where they do the most good. Your contribution to fight poverty, illness, abuse and homelessness are fully tax-deductable.