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City Officials Lend a Hand for Thanksgiving

City of Perris elected officials have once again stepped forward to help the hungry at Thanksgiving.

City Councilman Julio Rodriguez on Tuesday worked the pantry at St. James the Lesser Catholic Church, handing out turkeys to some of the dozens of underprivileged families who lined up to collect the gobblers and all the trimmings.

Earlier this week, Mayor Daryl Busch and Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough put on aprons and grabbed ladles to dish out a pre-Thanksgiving dinner to homeless veterans, men, women and children living in transitional housing programs operated by the March Joint Powers Authority. Busch and Yarbrough has volunteered on the serving line for more than a decade.

"A lot of people who are unfortunate want and deserve a nice dinner and time with their families," Busch said. "Our City is committing to helping people in our community. There is a lot of personal satisfaction in knowing that you have made life a little easier for those who really deserve it."

Mayor Busch, his wife, Kay, and Mayor Pro-Tem Yarbrough dished out assorted vegetables to the 260 recipients. They were joined by other elected officials and a group of Rotarians.

Yarbrough said politicians should do more than just talk about challenges facing their communities. They need to pitch act. "We have been blessed with so much," Yarbrough said. "Thanksgiving is the time to remind ourselves that not everyone is so lucky. It is a privilege to be able to lend a hand to help the least among us."

At St. James Church in Downtown Perris, a steady stream of families dropped by to pick up turkeys, dressing, vegetables and other ingredients for Thanksgiving dinner. Rodriguez spent much of the morning handing out turkeys to moms, dads and their children. The City of Perris donated \$500 to the food drive and 10 City employees made individual donations of cash and food. Assemblyman Jose Medina, D-Riverside, also contributed \$500. Catholic Charities of San Bernardino & Riverside Counties organized the event. More than 20 volunteers—students from 6 to 18 years of age—helped make the day an unqualified success.

When it was over, 85 families totaling 416 Perris residents received a helping hand.

"It's important for us to support the endeavors of our churches," Rodriguez said. "It's incredibly inspiring to know that we have active people in the City of Perris who are doing such great work throughout the entire year and even a little extra during the holidays. Actions speak louder than words."

Lazaro Silva came to the church pantry with his 6-year-old son, Enthany.

"This is the first time I will be able to make a turkey dinner," she said. "Thanks so much for providing this opportunity to have a great Thanksgiving."

Joanna Flores brought along her family of seven. Without the assistance of the City, church and community, she said there would be no turkey day.

"Thank you to everybody for helping us out," she said.



Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez hands a turkey to City resident Maria Olivia Gonzalez during a food drive Tuesday at St. James the Lesser Catholic Church.



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough serves up dinner to one of the 260 recipients who attended the Sunday (Nov. 24) Thanksgiving Dinner put on by the March Joint Powers Authority.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and his wife, Kay, have volunteered at the Thanksgiving dinner for more than a decade, serving up food to homeless veterans, families and children.