



YOCAMA photo

YOCAMA participants deliver food to members of the Navajo tribe.

Albuquerque Chapter, Young Orthodox Missionaries Aid Navajos

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. - St. George Philoptochos chapter on July 9 welcomed missionaries from YOCAMA (Young Orthodox Christian American Mission Adventures), which serves people living in poverty across America, in a partnership to aid local Navajo Indians.

Through YOCAMA, Orthodox youth share their love of Christ through good works and learn more about their faith. YOCAMA has been serving reservations in New Mexico since 2008. They perform construction (this year included roof repairs to their school), offer medical assessments (including vision, hearing, and developmental testing), and social services support.

In 2015, the YOCAMA participants came from the Metropolises of Pittsburgh, Boston and Chicago. St. George Philoptochos has been welcoming fellow Orthodox Christians from across the United States the past five years.

This year, they welcomed more than 70 missionaries to the St. George community center.

A short service was held, asking for blessings for the missionaries, then a delicious Lenten spaghetti dinner was provided.

St. George Philoptochos provided a week's worth of meals for 50 families on the Navajo reservation. Each shopping bag contained: 5.5 pounds of flour, 2.4 pounds of rice, 4 pounds of masa, 6 pounds of pinto beans, 3 pounds of sugar, 5 pounds of non-fat dry milk, 1 pound of elbow macaroni, 1 quart of rice cereal, 1 quart of Cheerios, and eight potatoes. During the week of YOCAMA's mission trip, Fr. Conan Gill and Philoptochos members received a guided tour from Darlene Arviso, a Navajo. Philoptochos members, together with the YOCAMA mission team, delivered the bags of groceries to the families.

Every year, St. George Philoptochos looks forward to the arrival of YOCAMA. Working together, the Philoptochos members and young Orthodox Americans are able to assist those in desperate need within their community.