

BINGO & RAFFLE Success Stories

Holy Cross Catholic Church

The lives of residents in over 52 villages in the Philippines will be markedly improved thanks to the efforts of bingo volunteers at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Thornton.

“People had warned me of the conditions of the people living in the Philippines, but when I arrived and saw it for myself, there was no way to prepare,” Delcie Runco said as she sorted through pictures of the village where she resided for a month. Delcie is the bingo manager for Holy Cross, and she is one remarkable woman that has worked tirelessly to create change and make a difference in the lives of others. The church has used funds raised through its successful bingo operations to build and provide financial support to a sister parish in the Philippines. Over time, Holy Cross has shipped over 432 boxes filled with items such as clothing, canned meat, children’s vitamins, shampoo and conditioner, tooth brushes, toothpaste, soap, school uniforms, school supplies, stuffed animals, and wooden cars for Christmas.



Holy Cross’s primary focus in the Philippines is on health and nutrition programs. The first time Delcie visited a village, she noticed that many children could not pick up their heads, and seemed to be non-responsive. She began to wonder why these poor children were unable to perform simple daily tasks, and began questioning local villagers. She soon realized that the children suffered from severe malnutrition. Holy Cross made it their mission to help these children live a normal, healthy life. They ship vitamins and vegetable seeds to ensure that children get the proper nutrients—nutrients that they were not getting before.

Another focus for Holy Cross is education, and providing children with the resources they need to succeed. The church ships a large amount of school supplies for a village school that was built by the Knights of Columbus, and has also provided clothes for children’s school uniforms. Many families can barely support themselves and their children, let alone pay costs for school uniforms and supplies. Holy Cross makes it possible for children to attend school, and even goes beyond secondary education. For instance, the

church's charitable gaming funds ten students' tuition for college, allowing them to obtain valuable higher education.

It may seem unbelievable that a church in Thornton, Colorado can maintain such a significant presence in a country halfway around the world. And it may appear even more unlikely that they are able to fund these programs using revenue from one fundraising source: bingo. But the church didn't come by this success overnight. In fact, the organization has spent over 20 years honing its charitable gaming model. As a result of this fine-tuning, Holy Cross raised over \$327,000 last year through their weekly bingo occasion at Turn II Bingo in Denver, over \$73,000 of which went directly to support the church's activities.

At this point, you may be asking yourself, "What is the key to their success?"

Holy Cross goes beyond just hosting weekly bingo. They save costs by providing their own security for bingo, using a church volunteer rather than paying a private security guard. This saves them about \$75 per session, money that they can put towards the cost of shipping boxes of supplies to the Philippines. Secondly, Holy Cross occasionally covers bingo for other organizations. They are able to dedicate all of the profits from these extra games to assist their sister parish, rather than having to split it between both parishes.



Holy Cross runs successful bingo games in part because they take the time to listen to their players. They take it upon themselves to play bingo with groups at other bingo halls and listen to the players about what they like and do not like. Then, they adjust the format of their own games to stay current with the expectations of their players. For instance, according to Delcie, they "heard from customers who do not like to be hounded by people selling more than one kind of pickle on the floor. As a result, we decided to only sell Golden Goose pickles, rather than multiple types."

Bingo clubs have always been known for using their reach to give back to the community, and aid those in need. Holy Cross is a great example of how charitable gaming in Colorado is a success. Please come out and support Holy Cross at Turn II Bingo located at 7139 Pecos St Denver, CO 80221, on Tuesdays at 7:30pm.