

Pantry's bare shelves force Tahoe residents to go hungry

By Kathryn Reed

When people start lining up outside St. Theresa Catholic Church this afternoon for their bag of food to sustain them, they will receive nothing. Instead, a note on the door will say the shelves are bare and there is nothing to hand out.

This is the first week the South Lake Tahoe pantry has nothing to give to those who need one of life's basic necessities – food.

Usually the church supplies a bag or two of staples to about 80 people each Tuesday and Friday from 1:30-3pm. Those bags feed several more depending on how many are in a family.



Shelves at St. Theresa's pantry are literally empty.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

"I've never seen it like this. You'd be surprised how many sleep in cars," said Beverly Sass as she sat in her office at the church rectory. "We are feeding more families these days than singles."

The demand for food in these economic times is greater than what people can give. It used to be people would go to Costco, buy in bulk and bring something by St. Theresa as a donation. But those days are gone. Those givers no longer have extra food.

Sass said the Tuesday farmers' market vendors have been generous with fresh produce. This is a treat for recipients are so used to only receiving dry goods.

It's usually pasta, beans, cereal, macaroni and cheese, and peanut butter that fill bags. These items fill up an empty belly, are things children will eat and have some nutritional value.

To donate to the pantry, call Beverly Sass at (530) 544.3533 or drop items off at the rectory on the corner on Lyons Avenue just off Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.