

Macuspana Cow Project

How You Have Helped

By JOHN DASH

The collection of the diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission, Operation Bread Box, was in major part disbursed by buying cows for a development project in a Mexican parish last year.

The office revealed recently that of the \$30,897.22 disbursed by the group, \$12,615.59 went to the Cow Project of San Isidro Parish in Macuspana, Tabasco, Mexico.

The project is part of a six-point development program for the parishioners of San Isidro, the commission said.

About half of the parishioners are Indian Choles, descendants of the Incas, and live in rural villages of 300 to 800 persons. Each family farms from 40 to 60 acres of rocky land given it by the Mexican government, with hand tools.

According to Father Mario Vizcaino, SchP, a Piarist Father stationed in Florida, who spends part of each year at the parish, "The parish is a center for these people, serving their needs in education, medicine and hospitality."

Father Vizcaino visited the diocese recently.

He said that it is not unusual for the villagers to make long treks and set up camp overnight at the parish center.

He said he considers the parish a prime example of "the Church of the Third World."

The commission, in a report, stated, "These people have more land than they can till. There is an abundant quantity of water in the region, and to



A fiesta outside the Parish Center.

prepare the remaining land for pasture is not a difficult task. Therefore a Cow Project has been developed to provide for an alternative source of food and income.

"During the next five years, 32 cooperative groups will be financed to acquire 20 cows each . . . The cooperative groups will return the monies lent to them in two years, either by selling the offspring or the adult cows after a period of proper feeding and development. This will allow the initial capital to be re-invested in other communities without any substantial loss of it. By 1982, we expect to have

substantially covered all the rural communities of the Parish of Macuspana through this plan."

According to Evilio Perez of the commission, "Whatever we do has to be educational. We don't give a gift. We demand a share of responsibility for the finances. We are brothers and sisters sharing."

Of the diocesans who contribute to Operation Bread Box, Father Vizcaino stated, "They are contributing to help other brethren in another part of the world, and affirming the message of the Love of Christ and the universality of the Church in a very real and concrete way."



A Choles family.



The Parish of San Isidro also operates, with volunteer help from the United States, a parasitology clinic. Father Vizcaino estimates that 90 per cent of the rural population is infested with intestinal parasites.



FATHER VIZCAINO



The men of the parish gather for catechetical classes.