

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

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In collaboration with Catholic Extension, help the **parish community of Our Lady of Fatima**. Your efforts will assist and sustain this parish community so that they can continue their spiritual works of mercy and serve the community.

Support Our Lady of Fatima parish in the Diocese of Gallup, Arizona. Our Lady of Fatima church is built in the traditional Navajo hogan style in the heart of the reservation in the Diocese of Gallup, Arizona. The largest Native American reservation in the United States is Navajo Nation. Parishioners gather to celebrate their Catholic faith grounded in the context of their Navajo culture and traditions. Sister Theresa Chato, a Navajo woman and member of the sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, serves this parish community.



Although there is great beauty in this landscape, there is also great need. Small family clusters are spread out over vast distances among the arid deserts, mesas, and low mountains—making connections to the power grid and water supply difficult. About 30 percent of Navajo

households lack electricity or running water. People must travel great distances to get water and firewood to heat their homes.

Despite these circumstances, hope, love, and faith shine bright – enlivened by the likes of women such as Sister Chato. Mothers and grandmothers, especially, represent a very special role in society.

“They are the ones who also share the various traditions and history of the people. They set an example—what it means to care for one another,” Sister Chato said. “They really are the center of the family, the keepers of wisdom and traditional teachings. They are the example of what is best in the Navajo culture. They pass it on to their grandchildren—their granddaughters as well as their grandsons.”

Sister Chato also tirelessly responded to the incredible challenge of ministering to a population in crisis and with scarce resources and spread across vast distances. She set up Zoom classes to teach children religious education on Sundays and reached out to parishioners through email and phone calls to check in with them. Sister Chato and parishioners put together food and “prayer baskets” for those who lost loved ones.

Parishioners draw from their Catholic faith for guidance and strength. “They are the ones that have shown me that in spite of challenges and struggles, there is always hope,” Sister Chato said.



Thank you for your support and generosity!

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In collaboration with Catholic Extension, help St. Anthony Mission and school. Your efforts will assist and sustain this parish and school community so that they can continue their spiritual works of mercy and serve the community.



Support St. Anthony Mission and school in the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico. St. Anthony Mission and school serves the Zuni Pueblo. Father Patrick McGuire is pastor there. Fr. McGuire is a missionary priest from Scotland. St. Anthony Mission was founded in 1920 with the Catholic school being a source of hope and a unifying institution for the region.

With its ponderosa pines, desert and juniper shrubs, the vast landscape around the church is revered by the local people as "Mother Earth." Thirty percent of homes here lack access to potable water. Fr. McGuire always keeps parish facilities readily open and

available so residents could draw water.

"Our humanitarian aid continues throughout these difficult times," said Fr. McGuire. "The locals come to the mission to fill up their containers and trucks with life-giving water. One neighbor brings a container on wheels, filling it with his supply of fresh water for an entire week and then pulling it along the road all the way home. Many like him simply would not survive without our mission."

About 70 percent of the population is unemployed with more than a third living in poverty. Fr. McGuire recounted the suffering of a 17-year-old boy, orphaned when COVID-19 took the lives of both of his parents and leaving several young siblings in his care. The teen struggled to complete his education in a home without internet or electricity. "We do everything we can to bring some measure of relief," said Fr. McGuire. "Wrapping it in the mantel of God's love made visible through them."

In Zuni, there is a close-knit manner between the students, teachers, and parents. When asked what he likes most about the Zuni people, Fr. McGuire said, "The strength of family, the extended family. That would be the most obvious one. And then the sense of the divine in life."

He sees his ministry as reminiscent of apostolic times, "when witness and word were the means of evangelization. Each in his or her own way with our limited resources are finding some means to facilitate the Holy Spirit's action."



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