

# Indian Mission Seeks Christmas Help Priest Says Prayers, Donations Urgently Needed

THOREAU, NM -- Ask Brooklyn - born Father Douglas A. McNeill what he wants for Christmas and he answers immediately and simply, "Help for our Navajo neighbors!"

Urgency edging his voice, the priest explained, "There are 20 families right now needing our help on home repair in order to live through the winter. Their needs are critical."

Fr. Doug -- as he is affectionately known -- is director of St. Bonaventure Indian Mission here, where God called him 15 years ago. Today, he is joined in his work by a complement of 47 lay missionaries whose goal it is to "bring the presence of Christ" to this poverty-stricken corner of the world.

Hunger and illiteracy are two other threats to the American Indians to whom St. Bonaventure directs its extensive outreach and educational programs. And the corporal works of mercy that are carried out daily by the Mission's dedicated corps of lay missionaries have not gone unnoticed by the New Mexico community at large. In 1987, St. Bonaventure Indian Mission was awarded the prestigious Governor's Volunteer Service Award in



St. Bonaventure Indian Mission special projects during 1989 included providing materials for a new home for this child (pictured at top right in the dirt-floored shack that had been the only home she had ever known) and her family. Pictured above are a handicapped mother and daughter, Grace and Mary, whose need for indoor plumbing facilities resulted in a joint-venture between St. Bonaventure and an agency of the federal government, Indian Health Service. In photo at bottom, Fr. Doug is pictured with a group of children who are students at Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Academy, the fully-accredited school that is a project of St. Bonaventure Indian Mission. Fr. Doug said he sees the Mission school as "being the real hope for the future."

recognition of its "Mission to the Navajos."

Just what is St. Bonaventure's "Mission to the Navajos?" In the words of Fr. Doug -- who was born to Irish immigrant parents

47 years ago -- "it's following the commandment of Christ to show His love to all His children." He quickly adds, "But the help we can give is dependent on the help we receive from others."



Dear Catholic Courier Reader,  
I'm turning to you for your urgent help. I'm asking you to join me in a partnership of prayer, love and concern. My urgent and serious problem is the plight of our Native American neighbors on the Eastern Navajo Reservation. I wish you could see for yourself the poverty that is here. I am often asked by those who come to serve with us, "Is this America?" Winter can be devastating for our aging Navajo neighbors who live in crude dwellings with dirt floors, no electricity and no water. There are 20 families right now needing our help on home repair in order to live through the winter. Their needs are critical. Will you help?  
Christmas blessings,  
*Father Doug*  
Father Doug McNeill  
P.S. If you can't send an emergency gift for our First American neighbors now, please take a minute to pray for this need. I pray for your needs, too.

Clip and Mail Today

Dear Father Doug, here's my emergency Christmas gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Pray for my Intention: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Please check here if you would like to receive a specially-designed, gold-plated Good Shepherd Pin as a token of appreciation of your gift of \$100.00 or more. You will also be enrolled as a 1990 member of our Good Shepherd Club for whom Mass is offered on the 15th of each month.  
( ) Please check here if you would like to receive a sterling silver pendant with a genuine turquoise stone and cornflower design symbolizing good fortune, made by our local Indians, as a token of appreciation of your gift of \$35.00 or more. It is a unique piece of jewelry you will wear -- or give -- with pride.  
Send to: Father Doug McNeill  
% Christmas Help from Courier-Journal Readers  
St. Bonaventure Indian Mission and School  
P.O. Box 610 -- Eastern Navajo Reservation  
Thoreau, New Mexico 87323 - 0610



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