

**FROM FATHER JOHN:** "Whoever cares for the poor lends to the **LORD**, who will pay back the sum in full."  
(Proverbs 19:17)



It is obvious to me that the people of our parish think it's important to help poor people around the world who need our help. We have been supporting the Navajo Mission for approximately twenty years and have been supporting a Mission Appeal for the poor people of Chipata, Zambia for the last three years. We were able to send approximately \$4,000 to the Navajo Mission this year as well as sending one of our parishioners to the mission to help them in their need.

We will have a Mission Appeal for the poor people of Chipata this year on the weekend of July 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

But, have you ever wondered why it's important to help the people of Chipata, Zambia and the people of the Navajo nation who live on the reservation in Arizona? Have you ever wondered why our parish conducts two Mission Appeals? Or, why the bishop asks each parish to conduct Mission Appeals for impoverished areas of the world? Or, why the Diocese has a Missions Office, with all its associated costs, to help coordinate parish Mission Appeals?

It could be because our Lord Jesus gave us the parable of the king, "And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'" (Matthew 25:-40) This is essentially the "because I said so" argument my father used to use with me when I was a young child with God being the Father in this instance. It could be that they simply need our help and we recognize that we are very fortunate to have all that we have and should share some of our wealth to help people who are impoverished. Or, it could be that it would be scandalous to live as well as we do and not care enough about the poor to offer them a helping hand

The Church actually gives us an answer to these questions as well as marching orders in terms of what we should be doing to assist the poor. The answer is found in the Second Vatican Council's pastoral constitution (*Gaudium et Spes*) on the Church in the modern world. The section it is in is entitled **The duty of Christians to build peace**. And this is what our Mission Appeals are all about, "the duty of all God's people ... to do all in their power to relieve the sufferings of our times."

*“Christians should co-operate, willingly and wholeheartedly, in building an international order based on genuine respect for legitimate freedom and on a brotherhood of universal friendship. This is all the more urgent because the greater part of the world still experiences such poverty that in the voices of the poor Christ himself can be heard, crying out for charity from his followers. There are nations, many of them with a Christian majority, which enjoy an abundance of goods, while others are deprived of the necessities of life, and suffer from hunger, disease and all kinds of afflictions. This scandal must be removed from among men, for the glory of Christ’s Church and its testimony to the world are the spirit of poverty and the spirit of love.*

*Indeed, it is the duty of all God’s people, with bishops giving a lead by word and example, to do all in their power to relieve the sufferings of our times, following the age-old custom of the Church in giving not only what they can spare but also what they need for themselves.*

*Without being uniform or inflexible, a method of collecting and distributing contributions should be established in each diocese and nation and on a world-wide level.”*

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.