Mission Trip

TOHONO O’ODHAM NATION
DIOCESE OF TUCSON
1. To come to know the people and history of the Tohono O’odham nation,
   A. Their history
   B. their traditions,
   C. their strong Catholic heritage,
   D. and their current situation.
2. To increase our sense of solidarity with the people of the Tohono O’odham nation.
3. To unite our gifts and lives with the gifts and lives of the people of the nation to address current needs.
TOHONO O’ODHAM NATION

Their History
The name of the tribe literally means “desert people.”

The people of the nation have their origin in the Sonora Desert areas.

Currently the nation is located in southwest Arizona and the Sonora Desert area of Mexico.
TOHONO O’ODHAM NATION HISTORY

- The people of the nation thrived in the desert for centuries.

- Originally, the nation extended from
  - Sonora Mexico to Phoenix, AZ
  - the Gulf of California to the San Pedro River.
TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION

Their Traditions
As a people, they have their own myth.

Central to that myth is their sacred mountain, Baboquivari, and the god, I’itoi.
The "Man In The Maze" is a visual representation of the Tohono O'odham Indians belief in life, death and the life after death.

http://www.earthart.org/happenings/kiva/labyrinths.html
The man at the top of the maze depicts birth. By following the pattern, beginning at the top, the figure goes through the maze encountering many turns and changes, as in life. As the journey continues, one acquires knowledge, strength and understanding.

http://www.earthart.org/happenings/kiva/labyrinths.html
Nearing the end of the maze, one retreats to a small corner of the pattern before reaching the dark center of death and eternal life. Here one repents, cleanses and reflects back on all the wisdom gained. Finally, pure and in harmony with the world, death and eternal life are accepted.

http://www.earthart.org/happenings/kiva/labyrinths.html
TOHONO O’ODHAM

Strong Catholic Heritage
Fr. Eusebio Kino, S. J.

- Began missionary work to people of the Sonora Desert in 1687.
- Founded San Xavier Mission in 1692.
San Xavier del Bac Mission

Founded 1692

Still serves Tohono O’odham and Yaqui peoples in Tucson area.
TOHONO O’ODHAM – CATHOLIC HERITAGE

San Xavier Mission

- Current church
  - Construction 1783-1797
  - Workforce of O’odham peoples
SAN XAVIER DE BAC
- Widely considered to be the finest example of Spanish Colonial architecture in the United States.
- The oldest intact European structure in Arizona.
TOHONO O’ODHAM – CATHOLIC HERITAGE

SAN SOLANO MISSION

- 40 churches in towns and villages
- Covering area the size of Connecticut
- Currently served by the Franciscan community at Topawa – 2 priests and 4 brothers.
Since Fr. Kino’s time:

- O’odham people have maintained their Catholic faith and tradition
- Catholics without clergy for most of those 325 years
- Still use Latin songs and prayers taught to their ancestors by the early Jesuits and Franciscans.
SAN SOLANO MISSION
The Current Situation
CURRENT SITUATION

- Poverty
- Underemployment
- Institutionalization
- Family system breakdown
CURRENT SITUATION

- Abnormally high rate of:
  + Alcoholism
  + Diabetes
  + Suicide

- Border Issues
  + Drug Smuggling
  + Coyotes
  + Border dividing nation
CURRENT SITUATION

- Lack of resources
  - Human
  - Financial
  - Physical

- Gangs

- Apathy to hopelessness
OUR MISSION TRIP

Come to know the people and their traditions
OUR MISSION TRIP

Join in solidarity with the people
OUR MISSION TRIP

Join our gifts and lives with theirs
PREVIOUS MISSION TRIP ACTIVITIES

- Physical Labor
  - Re-roof church
  - Restore playground
  - Restore retreat center courtyard
  - Put in a garden
  - Build a ramada for a shrine area
PREVIOUS MISSION TRIP ACTIVITIES

- Catechetical Work
  - Youth Day
  - Adult Retreat Day
  - RCIA classes
  - Children’s catechesis

- Liturgical Training
  - Training of musicians
  - Teaching liturgical songs
PREVIOUS MISSION TRIP ACTIVITIES

- Pastoral Care
  - Assistance at the Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Facility
  - Visitation of families
OUR MISSION TRIPS

Joining the Franciscan Community
JOINING THE FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY

- Franciscan Community at San Solano Mission – Topawa Monastery
  - Fr. Ponchi
  - Brother Martin
  - Brother David
  - Brother Hajime
  - Brother Chris
JOINING THE FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY

- Serving from Covered Wells
  - Fr. Ignatius DeGroot
OUR MISSION TRIPS

Not all work!
TIME TO JOIN IN LOCAL TRADITIONS

Helping cook the meal for our farewell dinner with the community
TIME FOR LEISURE

Evening campfire with time for reflection and relaxation
Msgr. Lyle enjoys free time with a seminarian’s guitar
TIME FOR BREAKING FRIED BREAD WITH FRIENDS
DINNER WITH THE BISHOP
US MISSION TRIP
San Solano Missions in Diocese of Tucson