



Our Lady of Health Catholic Church

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Our Lady of Health Catholic Church
1178 N. Mesquite
Las Cruces, NM 88001

**Mass Times/
Horarios de Misas**

Saturday/Sabado
5:00 PM English
6:30 PM Español

Sunday/Domingo
8:00 AM Español
10:00 AM English
12:30 PM Español

Weekdays

Entre Semana:
Tue-Fri 8:00 AM English
Mar-Vier 6:00 PM Esp

Confession/Confesión
Fri/Viernes 5:00 PM

**Eucharistic Adoration/
Adoración Eucarística:**
Thursday/Jueves
8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

**Office Hours/Horario
de Oficina:**
Tue-Fri/Mar-Vier:
9:00 AM-12:00 PM
1:00 PM-5:00 PM

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History

[Presione aquí para leer la historia en Español.](#)

The origins of Our Lady of Health parish began in 1940 when the children from the Mesquite area in Las Cruces were in need of receiving religious education. Doña Teofila Lopez, Carmen Contreras, Cuca Muñoz and a few other women were teaching catechism and religious education in Doña Teofila's home. As the city began to grow, the home became too small for the religious classes being held there, so they saw a need for a larger building in which to hold their religious education classes and Sunday Mass.

In 1953 to 1954, father David Kirgan, pastor of Saint Genevieve's church, took a neighborhood survey to determine if the North Mesquite area was in need of a chapel or a community hall. The people first wanted to build a hall because their main priority was a place to give the children religious education. This resulted in a hall being built in 1954. Meanwhile, Father Kirgan obtained Primitivo Cardón's permission to use the Montezuma dance hall for Sunday Mass. The dance hall would be decorated with floral arrangements and a table and a Franciscan priest from the old Visitation Convent gave Mass.

On August 25, 1956, the Bishop of El Paso, S.M. Metzger ordered that the mission of Our Lady of Health be established independently and separately from St. Genevieve in order to better serve the faithful Spanish speaking community. The Bishop was in need of Spanish speaking priest so at his request Father Jose Saez came from Spain. Fr. Jose was assigned to St. Genevieve as associate pastor, and then later he became the administrator of Our Lady of Health Church. On October 13 1956, Bishop Metzger blessed the small chapel hall and the surrounding area of the mission and elevated it to the category of a Parish. Father Saez worked tirelessly to improve the building and facilities.

The history of the dedication of the mission, and later parish of Our Lady of Health is as follows: Fr. Jose had made a promise that he would dedicate the first mission in which he served to the Virgin of his home town, Rotova, Valencia, Spain, where the Virgen of Health represents an ancient devotion which originated in a monastery of the religious order of St. Gerome in Rotova. God has performed many miracles in and around this monastery. For this reason Fr. Jose bid the famed sculptors of Valencia, Spain to create a copy of the original statue of Our Lady Of Health for this church. He placed the statue in the first humble mission and today it is located in a niche in the wall to the right as one enters the new church. The Parish began to grow thanks to enthusiastic parishioners, who began with verbena fiestas and food sales which transformed the small hall into a church, and allowed the purchase of a house which served as the rectory and priests' home.

Father Jose returned to Spain in October of 1960. He was replaced by Father Vicente Morera, who had been his acting assistant. Father Vicente was substituted by Father John Osikiwshi in July 1962. and in March of 1964 Father Arnold H. Finochieto was named pastor. Father Arnold constructed a new rectory, extending the original church and adding a sacristy and a small hall for the children. Fr. Richard P. Lynch was assigned to take the place of Father Arnold. Fr. Richard improved the church with a new roof and had the parking lot paved. When Father Richard left Father Joaquin Resma took his place.

The Diocese of Las Cruces was established in 1981 under the new Bishop, Ricardo Ramirez. Father Joaquin Resma died as pastor in Las Cruces in May of 1983, his substitute was his brother, Father Luis Resma. The two brothers were from the Philippines, and were members of the international brotherhood of Magicians. They worked very well with young children and youth. Father Paulus Kao, came in 1985, he was originally from China and completed his formation as priest in Valencia's seminary, he is remembered for having a very well organized CCD program.

In October of 1988, the Augustinian Recollects, represented by Spaniards Father Narciso Rivera as pastor and Father Antonio Martine as assistant pastor, took possession of the parish. On Monday, October 8, 1990 the church caught fire, parishioners believed it was a case of arson. Masses were held in the parish hall for the next eight months. The church was remodeled with the insurance payments and the Diocese's permission. The remodeling included a new sanctuary floor, classrooms for CCD, a new kitchen, and a small sacristy. The first Mass in the remodeled church was held on July 20, 1991. The church soon became too small for the growing community, and soon a new church was needed. Fr. Narciso gathered opinions from the parishioners, the majority of them wanted a new, larger church, and so the meetings and permits for construction were started. Bishop R. Ramirez held the official ceremony to begin construction on December 19, 1993 and in May of 1996 he blessed the church, accompanied by many religious and diocesan priests. The solemn dedication was held

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on May 10, 1998. The architect of our new church was Mr. Lorenzo Aguilar. Fr. Narciso was the soul of the construction, he was always accompanied by the finance committee the maintenance department and the majority of the parishioners who worked very hard with bingos, food sales, raffles, and donations, to make real a wonderful dream. Nowadays, Our Lady of Health Church is one of the most beautiful and admirable churches in New Mexico, and is considered a main attraction in the monuments route in NM.

The old church was converted into a spacious parish hall with facilities for catechism, confirmation classes, meetings and community celebrations. Around this time bingo was cancelled. On September 17,2000, Fr. Narciso Rivera was substituted by Father Ricardo Hinojal, OAR., and has been assisted by Fr. Dionisio Gutierrez, Fr. Andres Alava, Fr. Francisco Oviedo, Fr. Miguel Echeverria, Fr. Jose Luis Garayoa, and Fr. Jesus A. Martinez de Espronceda, all belonging to the order of Augustinian Recollets.

In early 2016, due to a shortage of priests and the advanced age and declining health of their priests, the Superiors of the Order of Augustinian Recollets decided to return the parish to the care of the Diocese of Las Cruces. The Augustinians in charge of the parish at the time were Fr. Ricardo Hinojal and Father Andres Alava.

Bishop Oscar Cantú appointed Fr. Ruben Romero to be the new parochial administrator; he began his role on July 1, 2016. He was briefly assisted by Fr. Francisco Díaz for a few months before Fr. Francisco was assigned to a new parish.

This is the simple and humble history of this parish community. Let it serve as testimony in appreciation, first to God and His Mother, Our Lady of Health, and then to the many people whom with their sacrifices and hard work have made these 50 years a wonderful event and celebration.

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