

Children of the Prairie

Your seasonal newsletter from St. Joseph's Indian School

Fall 2022



*“Thank you for all that
you do for St. Joseph’s
Indian School!”*

— Aveyon, 8th grade

From the Desk of Fr. Greg



Fr. Greg, Chaplain

Greetings to all! **Iblúškin waŋčhíyanke** — *I am happy to see you!*

I hope this autumn season finds you well. In August, St. Joseph's Indian School began its 95th school year, followed closely by our 46th Annual Powwow!

It's an immense blessing to be able to say our mission is alive and well after over nine decades. I am in the beginning of my second year here, and even in that short amount of time, more and more accomplishments and milestones have been reached.

While it is easy to point out the "big stuff" — the things like new buildings, expanded programs and services — we have small moments every day equating to success for our students. Successes such

as a boy learning to read; a hungry girl receiving nutritious food; a sleepy child having a safe place to rest their head at night.

Over 95 years of big and small accomplishments would not have been possible without the care and kindness of others ... people like you!

Philámayaye — *thank you* — for being such a blessing to Lakota (Sioux) children and families.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Greg

Fr. Greg Schill, SCJ
Chaplain

P.S. If you'd like to hear the Lakota phrase I used above, visit www.stjo.org/LWWCOP or scan the QR code! →



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Aveyon



Aveyon may only be in eighth grade, but she has a knowledge and passion for her Lakota culture that far exceeds her years. It is a knowledge and passion she enjoys sharing with others, particularly her peers at St. Joseph's Indian School.

"I've always been that 'tradish' (traditional) kid that would go around everywhere telling my friends all the stories that my grandma told me," said Aveyon.

Recently, Aveyon did not have to go very far to reach her

peers. Instead, she had their full attention as she led lessons in hand games in her Native American Studies class at St. Joseph's Indian School. Hand games are traditional games of chance and have been played in Native American communities for as far back as their origin story.

What is this Lakota origin story? What are hand games? Can I watch a video? Each is a really good question and each has an answer at www.stjo.org/handgames.

Oh, there is something extra special at that link: a sound clip of Aveyon singing the beautiful song that goes with hand games. Scan the QR code to listen now! →



95 Years of Serving Lakota Children and Families

In August, St. Joseph's Indian School began its 95th school year!

Ninety-five years is quite a triumph, and we are humbled to know we have been caring for Native American children and families for over nine decades.

In the spring of 1927, Fr. Henry Hogeback, SCJ received permission to purchase the Columbus College campus in Chamberlain, SD, for \$40,000. That same year, Fr. Hogeback opened St. Joseph's Indian School with 53 Lakota boys and girls. Since then, St. Joseph's has provided a solid education and a safe, loving home-away-from-home to thousands of Native American children from families who seek our assistance.

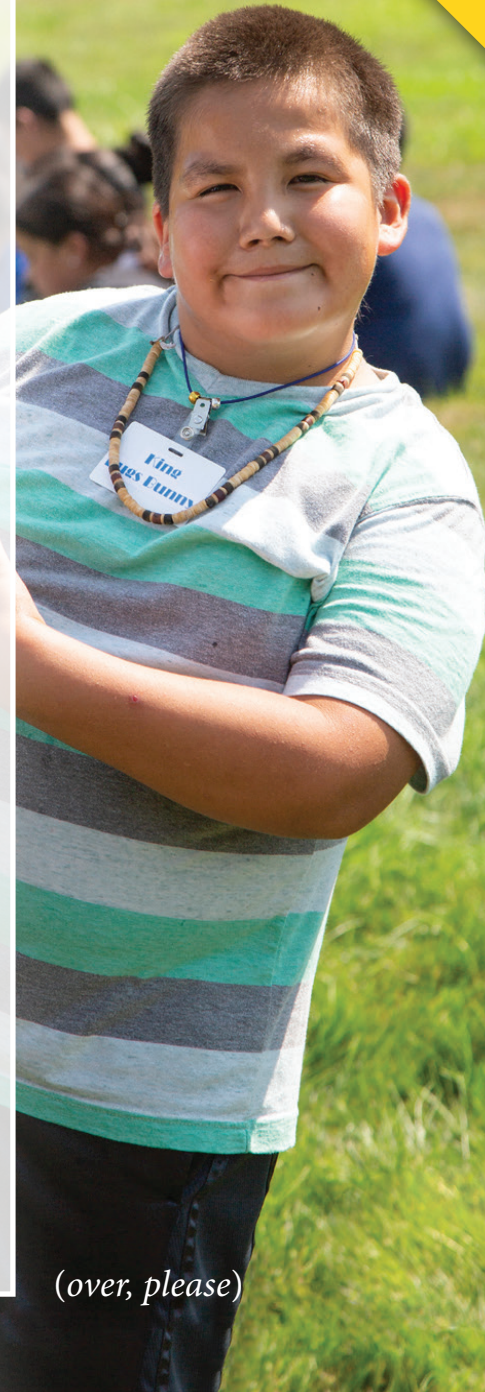
Times were tough back then. Diaries kept by the Sisters in those early years describe brutal winters, milk and food shortages, fires, grasshopper plagues and dust storms that lasted for days on end. The Great Depression years hit St. Joseph's hard, as they did across the country.

Diary excerpt from January 1, 1937

The New Year starts with much snow and high winds. The roads are blocked and we go into the new year without funds. All we have left is a houseful of children and faith.

Like so many others, we had immense financial struggles during those years. It would have been easier to give up. It would have been easier to find a mission to serve that wasn't so hard. But, we did not.

Why? **Our faith was stronger than our circumstances.** Faith kept



(over, please)

this school going: faith in our mission, faith in our donors and faith that God would provide ... and 95 years later, we are still standing. St. Joseph's continues providing life-changing services, programs and an education to Lakota (Sioux) children, who are so thankful.

"I have been at St. Joe's for three years. My favorite classes are math and science. Thank you for what you do for St. Joe's and the students. [When I grow up] I want to become a firefighter and donate to St. Joe's." — William, 8th grade

"What I like about St. Joe's is seeing my friends and my teachers. I want to be a teacher because I want to teach kids new things. Thank you for giving us things." — Aleighya, 4th grade

"Thank you for all that you do." — Everardo, 10th grade.

You can see by their words why this mission matters so much. William not only dreams of becoming a firefighter, but he also wants to be a future donor to St. Joseph's. He wants to give back to the school that has given him so much. Aleighya loves her school so much that she wants to work in one when she grows-up, possibly even here at St. Joseph's. And Everardo? He is so grateful, all he wishes to say is thank you.

We echo all three sentiments and say, **philámayaye** — *thank you* — for helping provide a safe place for Native American children to grow.

DID YOU KNOW?

St. Joseph's provides safe homes, counseling, nutritious meals and clothing for Lakota (Sioux) children in need. But, at the heart of everything we do, St. Joseph's is a school. In Lakota, the word for *school* is **owáyawa**.



95 Years of Milestones

Because of our steadfast faith and your support, St. Joseph's has realized many accomplishments in 95 years. For instance:



- **1970:** The Dining Hall is built, providing lunch during the school day for students. Today, it also serves as a small grocery store to get essentials for campus homes.
- **1980:** The conversion from dormitories to family living units takes shape. Each home houses 10-12 students. Family living units changed the way St. Joseph's operated by providing a holistic approach of care for the students.
- **1985:** Our Lady of the Sioux Chapel is completely remodeled. The Catholic and Lakota traditions are blended together in the chapel design.
- **1992:** Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center opens to the public, showcasing and embracing Lakota culture.
- **2017:** The campus Health and Family Services Center opens. Our healthcare and counseling staff provide comprehensive, holistic care for students and their families.
- **2021:** The Sacred Heart Chacon Family Safe Shelter, an outreach program of St. Joseph's on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, opens to provide essential services to domestic violence victims.
- **2022:** Construction begins on the Equine Therapy Complex. Also, planning unfolds for the renovation and expansion of the campus Recreation Center.

To view our full historical timeline, visit www.stjo.org/about.

BLESS OUR LAKOTA CHILDREN



Earn Income for Life

Are you looking for attractive income rates? A St. Joseph's charitable gift annuity offers wonderful rates and at the same time helps provide a brighter future for the Lakota children in our care.

Here are three easy ways to request additional information on charitable gift annuities:

1. Fill out the included form and return it in the enclosed envelope.
2. Visit online at stjo.org/annuity.
3. Call toll-free at 1-800-584-9200 or email Denise Hyland at dhyland@stjo.org.

To establish an annuity, you must have your check, money order or securities postmarked by December 31, 2022 to receive a tax deduction for 2022.



WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO SHARE IN THESE HAPPY TIMES!

