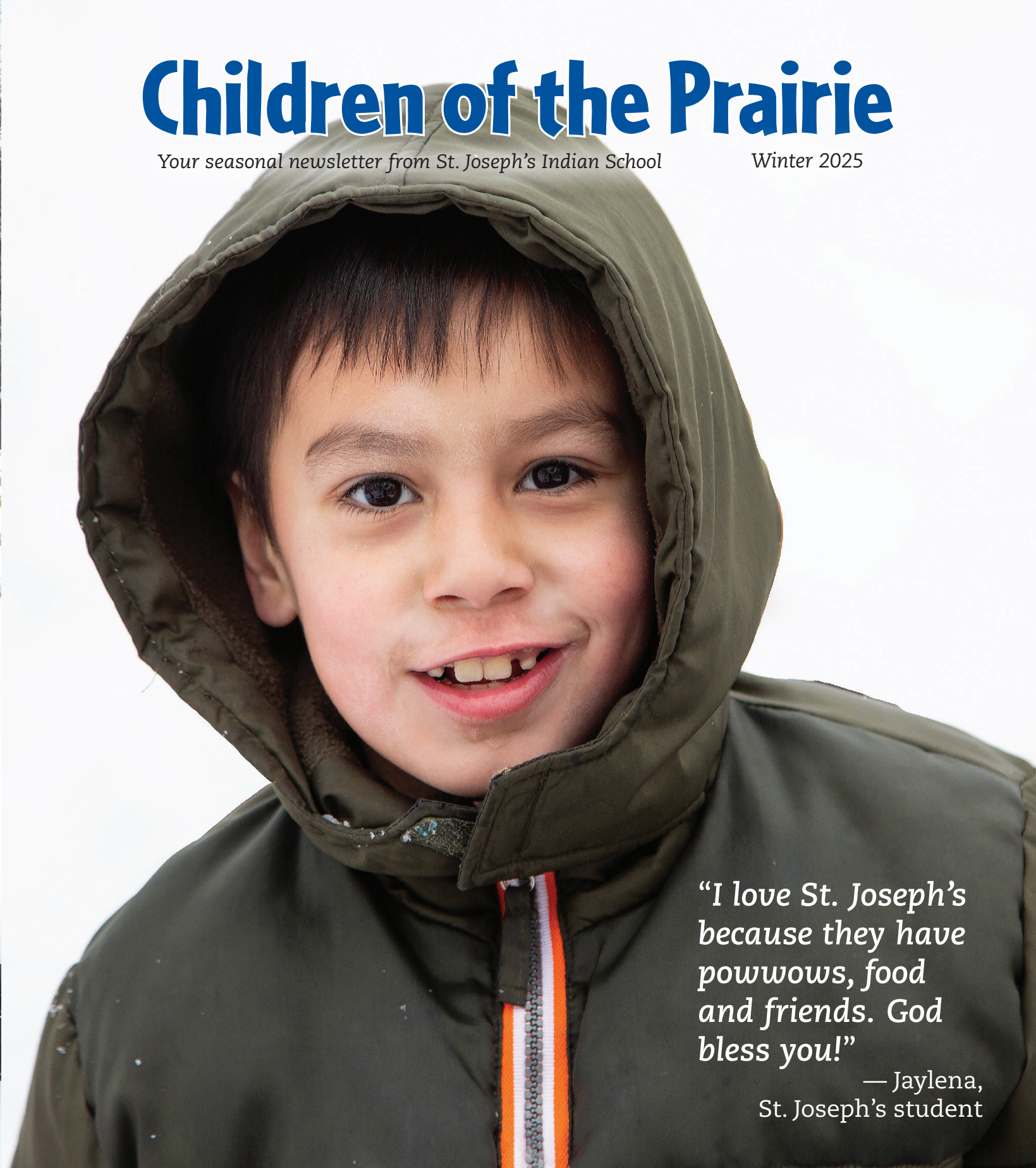


Children of the Prairie

Your seasonal newsletter from St. Joseph's Indian School

Winter 2025



"I love St. Joseph's
because they have
powwows, food
and friends. God
bless you!"

— Jaylena,
St. Joseph's student

From the Desk of Fr. Greg



Fr. Greg, Chaplain
Indian School.

Winter has a way of making people want to hole up and be still. While stillness has its time and place, action is required to do God's will. We must move. We must act. Even when it's cold and we may be feeling winter fatigue, the Lakota (Sioux) children need St. Joseph's

But, we don't do it alone. We have a **khola** — *friend* — like you in our corner. This brings me so much peace. Sometimes, I think we forget that God's power is limitless and that, through faith, we can achieve more than we can imagine — especially when we work together.

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we

can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." — Ephesians 3:20-21

As you'll see in the following Year in Review, 2024 was a busy year. It was a year of accomplishing the abundant. It was a year of doing more than we ever imagined we could.

Thankful doesn't begin to describe how I feel about you — how the children feel about you. As we head into 2025, let us join hands again, fueled by the power within us, and create a legacy of compassion, resilience and transformation.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Greg

Fr. Greg Schill, SCJ
Chaplain

SPOTLIGHT: The Rec Center

Whether it's as simple as a basketball game or a dip in the pool, St. Joseph's Indian School's Rec Center provides endless wellness opportunities for Native American students, families and staff.

In support of the children's physical health today and for years to come, we are remodeling our Rec Center to meet today's needs. What was once a model facility when it was built in 1975 needs a complete redo. The renovated and expanded Rec Center will include: a second full-sized basketball court; a new entryway with storage for coats and backpacks; two new locker rooms; office space and conference room; on-site



equipment storage; separate workout areas for staff and students; and the whole building will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We've created a timeline to keep you updated on construction updates as this project is completed. To view it, please visit stjo.org/RecCenterUpdates. **Philámayaye** — *thank you!*

2024: A Year in Review

Some really wonderful events took place at St. Joseph's this year ... thanks to YOU!

2024 ... what a year! As we look back on the year 2024, St. Joseph's Indian School is proud to celebrate a year full of achievements, growth and community spirit. From academic accomplishments to cultural celebrations, our students and staff have worked tirelessly to make this year one to remember.

January: As winter break came to an end, students returned to their campus homes, eager to reconnect with friends and dive into 2024. Meanwhile, construction crews continued Phase I work on the Rec Center Renovation and Expansion project.

February: St. Joseph's made history by awarding an impressive \$233,214 in college scholarships to Native American students pursuing higher education. The campus buzzed with excitement as deserving scholars received this life-changing support.

March: Students put their creative talents to use and on display during an art show at the Aktá Lakota Museum to celebrate Youth Art Month.

April: A Thiyóšpaye Challenge took

place on campus. The challenge put our students' knowledge of Lakota culture to the test in a fun-filled learning environment.

May: Seventh-grade students embarked on the annual Cultural Trip, visiting sacred sites that connected them to their ancestors. Meanwhile, the month marked a significant milestone for 17 eighth graders and five seniors who proudly graduated.

June: Rising Eagle Day Camp was hosted on campus! Each day, kids immersed themselves in Lakota culture, enjoyed hearty meals, created arts and crafts and swam — a memorable summer experience.

July: Outreach efforts flourished. Families on reservations received food boxes filled with nutritious essentials. Simultaneously, the St. Joseph's Bookmobile delivered thousands of free books to reservation communities, sparking joy and learning.

(over, please)



August: Students returned from summer break and were welcomed with a parade, officially beginning the 2024-25 school year! Phase II of the Rec Center project began.

September: The 48th Annual Powwow drew visitors from far and wide. Cultural activities, powwow dance competitions and campus tours celebrated the Lakota heritage, fostering connections and understanding.

October: Native American Day took center stage, honoring traditions, heritage and stories. Prior to this, an animal blessing ceremony included campus dogs and the Equine Therapy program's four-legged companions.

November: During Native American Heritage Month, students proudly wore moccasins on Rock Your Mocs day. They also created prayer ties on All Souls Day to honor loved ones who had passed away.

December: Students selected presents for their siblings, parents/guardians and grandparents from our campus Christmas Store before leaving for winter break to spend valuable time with their families.

As we look back on 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the vibrant community that makes St. Joseph's Indian School a special place. We look forward to the adventures and successes that await the Lakota children in 2025.



BLESS OUR LAKOTA CHILDREN

What was your favorite
Christmas gift?



"I love all my gifts and
my favorite one was
my blue race car."

— E'Maryion



"I like all of my
presents but my
favorite was my seal
stuffed animal."

— Jasleen



"I like all of my
presents but my
favorite was my seal
stuffed animal."

— Jay

Do you have a question to ask the Lakota
children? Email it to saintjosephs@stjo.org.



Are you looking for an easy, cost-effective
and convenient way to support St. Joseph's
Indian School? You may want to consider
sharing a gift through your IRA or Donor
Advised Fund. You can help make a
difference for approximately 200 Native
American children who call St. Joseph's a
home-away-from-home.

Please contact Denise Hyland at
1-800-584-9200 or dhyland@stjo.org for
more information! Or visit our website at
stjo.org/plannedgiving for easy ways to give.

Special giving options should always be
researched and discussed with qualified
individuals, so friends are encouraged to call
St. Joseph's Planned Giving Department or
contact their own legal representative.

THANK YOU  FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

