


# Children of the Prairie

Your seasonal newsletter from St. Joseph's Indian School

Spring 2025

A close-up photograph of two young girls with dark hair, smiling and hugging each other. The girl on the left is wearing green-rimmed glasses. They are outdoors in a grassy area with trees in the background.

“I have been at St. Joseph’s since first grade. You have helped us with everything possible here. You are very wonderful!”

— Melissa,  
St. Joseph’s student



## From the Desk of Fr. Greg



Fr. Greg, Chaplain

As the chill of winter recedes and the promise of spring begins to bloom, we are filled with a sense of renewal and hope. The beauty of the prairie is coming back to life, mirroring the growth and excitement we see daily among our students and staff.

In this edition of our *Children of the Prairie* newsletter, we are thrilled to share an inspiring story of one of our alumni, Trin. His journey is a testament to the lasting impact of the education and values nurtured within our school. Trin has returned to St. Joseph's, not just as an alumnus but as a skilled carpenter dedicated to giving back to the place that shaped his future. His commitment and craftsmanship are more than just contributions to our physical surroundings; they are a living, breathing symbol of the growth and resilience we strive to instill in all our students.

Spring is a time of planting seeds and witnessing the miracle of growth — a process that beautifully parallels our mission at St. Joseph's. Every child is a seed of potential. With love, education and support, we nurture these seeds, helping them grow into confident, capable individuals ready to face the world with strength and grace.

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*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven ..." — Ecclesiastes 3:1*

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We are deeply grateful for your unwavering support, which makes stories like Trin's possible. Your generosity and faith in our mission help sow the seeds of a brighter future for all our students.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Greg

Fr. Greg Schill, SCJ  
Chaplain

## SPOTLIGHT: The Rec Center

The Rec Center at St. Joseph's Indian School brings joy and wellness opportunities to Native American students, families and staff. Phase I of the renovation project was completed early Fall 2024, and we jumped for joy! The expanded facility is already enhancing our campus. The new space has thrilled Lakota (Sioux) children and staff. Now, we venture forward as we work toward what will be a fully updated facility by the end of Summer 2025 if everything continues going as planned!

The Rec Center renovation will provide a lasting impact on the physical and mental well-being of our students



and staff, creating a safe, accessible and welcoming space for all. When fully completed, the enhanced facility will include a second basketball court, expanded locker rooms, a designated workout area for both staff and students and improved accessibility that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Stay updated on the progress by visiting [stjo.org/RecCenterUpdates](\"http://stjo.org/RecCenterUpdates\").

# From Student to Carpenter: Trin's Journey with St. Joseph's Indian School

*At St. Joseph's Indian School, we take pride in our students' journeys, especially when they come full circle to contribute to the community that nurtured them. Trin's story is one of resilience, growth and connection, beginning as a young student and leading to his present role as a valued adult employee.*

### A New Beginning

Trin arrived at St. Joseph's Indian School in first grade from a large family facing financial struggles. Though the transition was challenging, with homesickness and behavioral issues to overcome, the school quickly became a place of comfort. A hug from a caring teacher during his first moments helped ease his fears, marking the start of a supportive journey.

### Cherished Memories

As he adjusted to life at St. Joseph's, Trin developed lasting memories, including cultural trips, donor luncheons and campus activities. Two memories stand out especially. One was learning to snowboard at Terry Peak, where he discovered a hidden talent and sense of accomplishment. The other was dancing at powwows, an experience that connected him spiritually to his Lakota (Sioux) culture. Now, as he designs his own regalia, he looks forward to revisiting these memories as an adult dancer.

### Journey Comes Full Circle

Thanks to the encouragement he received at St. Joseph's, Trin became the first in his family to graduate high school. He then studied

*(over, please)*





building trades at Lake Area Technical College, maintaining contact with St. Joseph's throughout his college years. When he graduated, he was offered a job as a carpenter at St. Joseph's. Today, Trin takes pride in his work, helping to maintain the place that helped shape his life. He also cherishes being able to visit his younger siblings, who are currently students at the school.

## Reflections and Gratitude

Reflecting on his journey, Trin appreciates his time as a student and is confident his younger self would be proud of who he has become. His message to young students is simple: "Keep going, and everything will be alright." He is grateful for the donors who support St. Joseph's, marveling at the generosity of people who contribute to creating opportunities for students like him.

"They don't even know us, and they're very helpful," he said. "I want to thank them for all they do to make this place possible."

To our generous supporters, we extend a heartfelt **philámayaye** — *thank you*. Because of your kindness, stories like Trin's are possible.



## DID YOU KNOW?

"Walking the Red Road" is a deeply spiritual and meaningful way of life for the Lakota people. It represents living with purpose, integrity and a deep connection to all living things.

Not every details about Trin's story made it into this story. However, Trin's story is documented in video format on our YouTube Channel! Visit [stjo.org/Trin](https://stjo.org/Trin) to watch Trin tell his full story. As you watch, we think you'll appreciate how Trin tries his best to follow the Red Road.





# BLESS OUR LAKOTA CHILDREN

What are you learning about  
in school?



“Lakota/Dakota  
Culture”  
— Jevjuan



“Multiplication”  
— Jaylena



“Bone Structures”  
— Nikolai

Do you have a question to ask the Lakota  
children? Email it to [saintjosephs@stjo.org](mailto:saintjosephs@stjo.org).



Are you looking for a 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 their  
home-away-from-home.

Please contact Denise Hyland at  
1-800-584-9200 or [dhyland@stjo.org](mailto:dhyland@stjo.org) for  
more information! Or visit our website at  
[stjo.org/plannedgiving](http://stjo.org/plannedgiving) for other ways to give.

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





THANK YOU  FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!