

Children of the Prairie

Your seasonal newsletter from St. Joseph's Indian School

Fall 2026

*"I feel amazing
that I get to be
here for the 100th
school year!"*

— Persais,
St. Joseph's student



From the Desk of Fr. Greg



Fr. Greg, Chaplain

celebration of Lakota (Sioux) culture, community and faith. This year was especially meaningful as students, alumni, families, staff and supporters gathered once again in a sacred circle during our 50th Annual Powwow.

“And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.”

— Galatians 6:9

As the seasons shift, we give thanks for two remarkable milestones at St. Joseph’s Indian School — our 50th Annual Powwow and our 100th year of mission.

For five decades, our **wačhípi** — *powwow* — has brought generations together in

Today, we see a harvest because faithful supporters like you never lost heart. Our students are growing, thriving and carrying their culture forward with strength and pride.

After 50 powwows and 100 years of mission, we are here because of faithful hearts like yours.

Philámayaye — *thank you* — for walking with us and making moments like this possible.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Greg

Fr. Greg Schill, SCJ
Chaplain

SPOTLIGHT: Lakota Mass

Each month at St. Joseph’s Indian School, students and staff gather for Lakota Mass, a powerful blend of Catholic faith and Lakota (Sioux) culture. Many students wear ribbon skirts, ribbon shirts and regalia honoring culture and identity. The Mass begins as dancers move with grace down the aisle of Our Lady of the Sioux Chapel, and the scent of smudged sage fills the space.

Throughout the Mass, the steady drumbeat from the Chalk Hills Singers replaces the sound of bells, echoing through the chapel and reminding all God is present in every culture and every tradition.

“Our students look forward to singing, dancing and praying at Lakota Mass,” shared

LaRayne, St. Joseph’s Native American Studies teacher. For many, it is more than worship, it is a living expression of faith, culture and belonging.

We invite you to witness this meaningful Lakota Mass video by visiting stjo.org/LakotaMass.



Because of You: 50 Years of Powwow, 100 Years of Mission

St. Joseph's Indian School celebrated its 50th Annual Powwow — a meaningful milestone made possible by faithful supporters.

On September 19, we celebrated a milestone few places ever reach: the 50th Annual Powwow at St. Joseph's Indian School. As we also reflect on 100 years of mission, the moment carried even greater meaning. For five decades, the drumbeat has resounded across campus, calling generations together. And this year, surrounded by students, staff, alumni and supporters like you, it felt like a full-circle moment.

At St. Joseph's, the circle represents unity, life and connection. During powwow weekend, that circle became visible in a powerful way. Students proudly shared their Lakota (Sioux) culture. Alumni returned home. Staff welcomed guests like family. And supporters stood alongside them, in one sacred space — the circle completed itself.

This year, you helped make that connection even more meaningful. During a special Circle of Culture workshop, alumni returned to share traditions they carry forward. They taught quilting, beading, drumming and storytelling, offering hands-on learning and heartfelt conversation. It was living proof of what your generosity makes possible.

Throughout the weekend, guests explored campus and experienced the many ways students are supported each day. From the Equine Therapy Center, where children find healing through horses, to Our Lady of the Sioux Chapel, a place of prayer and reflection, every stop told a story. Visitors also toured the school, health center, Rec Center, Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center and student homes, each reflecting the care surrounding every child. In between, friends gathered over food and coffee, reconnecting and making new memories.

At the heart of it all was the dancing.

(over, please)



“Our powwow was an awesome day. I danced like my grandma and I prayed for my family ... I’m dancing for my ancestors who couldn’t,” said Margaret, a St. Joseph’s student.

As the drum began, people gathered in a great circle. Regalia shimmered in the sunlight. Grass dancers moved with grace. Jingle dress dancers carried healing. Fancy dancers brought vibrant energy. Traditional dancers honored stories passed down through generations.

None of this happened overnight. As we celebrate 100 years of mission and 50 years of powwow, we reflect on the faithful and generous donors who helped build this school. Every building, every program, every laugh shared by a child exists because of your belief in this mission.

People often ask what makes this place so special.

It’s YOU.

Thank you for believing in our students. Thank you for being part of something sacred and lasting. **Philámayaye** — *thank you* — for helping complete the circle.



DID YOU KNOW?

St. Joseph’s Indian School hosted its first powwow in 1976 as a way to celebrate and honor Lakota culture on campus. What began as a small gathering has grown into a huge cultural event. If you missed this year’s **wáčhípi** — *powwow* — in person, you can watch highlights at stjo.org/powwow.



BLESS OUR LAKOTA CHILDREN

What is your favorite thing
about Powwow?



*“My favorite thing
is the drums
because of the way
they sound.”*

— Zenneth



*“My favorite is
mostly the food
and the drum
because it sounds
like a heartbeat.”*

— Marlana



*“My favorite thing is
watching the
dancers because
they tell a story.”*

— Jay

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



Earn Income for Life

Are you looking for attractive income rates? A St. Joseph's Charitable Gift Annuity offers wonderful rates and helps provide a brighter future for the Lakota (Sioux) 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 denise.hyland@stjo.org.

To establish an annuity, you must have your check, money order or securities postmarked by December 31, 2026, to receive a tax deduction for 2026.

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

