

Sentinel

Volume 9, No. 1

April 2019 www.blackandindianmission.org



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK



MERCY ABIDES IN ALL
TIMES OF STRIFE

SAINT OF THE MONTH:
ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

PARISH
UPDATES

Sentinel

News of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

WWW.BLACKANDINDIANMISSION.ORG
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WASHINGTON, DC 20006
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**ESTABLISHED IN 1874
BY THE BISHOPS OF
THE UNITED STATES**

Mission:

*To further the interests of the
Catholic Indian Missions in
the United States*

APRIL 2019

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**MERCY ABIDES IN
ALL TIMES OF STRIFE**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

In this issue of the *Sentinel*, we celebrate the many Catholic schools that are dedicated to the education of Native American and Native Alaskan elementary and high school students throughout the United States. Since its founding in 1874, one of the most important and rewarding activities of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions has been the awarding of grants to the Catholic schools that educate Native Alaskan and Native American students living in Native communities — and in urban settings, as well.

The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions has long recognized that receiving a Catholic school education can be a real game-changer for Native young people because Catholic schools provide them with a higher quality of education that improves their prospects for future success in college and in their chosen careers. Catholic schools challenge their students to excel by teaching them to be Christ-like in word and action, and by offering them a rigorous and well-rounded academic curriculum. These efforts lead to approximately 94 percent of Catholic school graduates pursuing post-secondary education. Catholic schools produce these kinds of results because they are caring communities that provide a safe and supportive environment where students are encouraged to develop self-discipline and to set and achieve goals that benefit themselves and others. Catholic schools also strive to help students understand that, as members of the body of Christ, they are called to be instruments of evangelization and of God's grace in their families, in the Church and in the society as a whole.

“
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS
CHALLENGE
THEIR STUDENTS
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TO BE CHRIST-LIKE
IN WORD AND
ACTION.”

“Good teachers affect eternity. You never know where their influence stops.”
I am happy to take this opportunity to thank parents, and teachers and staff for their generous and unwavering commitment to supporting our Catholic schools. Thank you for your engagement in a mutual effort in which the teachers and staff of Catholic schools are building upon the foundation laid at home by the parents who are the primary educators of their children.

As the most holy and joyous season of Easter draws near, I hope and pray that your participation in the celebrations that commemorate the Passion, death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ will fill your hearts with much joy and gratitude, and lead you to a greater sharing in the divine life. 🇨🇷

Yours in Christ our Redeemer,

Father Henry Sands

COVER
STORY

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Schools Week is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States that begins on the last Sunday of January. This year's Catholic Schools Week was held from Jan. 27 — Feb. 1, 2019. The theme of the week was ***Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.***

Schools typically observe the week with Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members. This annual event enables the schools to showcase how they serve the nation by providing a diverse student population from all regions of the country, and all socioeconomic backgrounds, with strong academic and moral foundations. +



CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF FAIRBANKS, *Fairbanks AK*

Catholic Schools Week at the Catholic School of Fairbanks was an opportunity for students and staff alike to celebrate having God as the center of the school's mission and focus. Each day of the week focused on one of the Jesuit pillars, starting off with a kickoff party for all the families in the community renewing their focus on the theme of "Love." On Monday, the focus was on "Commitment to Doing Justice," which was expressed by a prayer chain for the whole school. This was followed up by a focus on "Openness to Growth," where students wrote





thank you cards to express their gratitude to family and friends. Focus on “Religion” was demonstrated through a Catholic Schools Week Mass celebrated by Bishop Chad Zielinski in the school chapel. The week ended with team-building exercises and games focused on “Intellectual Competence.” Throughout the week, students learned generosity and caring by collecting donations for local community agencies, including books, socks, snacks and baking items. The community at the Catholic School of Fairbanks is blessed to be able to pray and worship together, to talk about God and our faith, and to teach about the whole person: body, mind, heart and spirit.

DE LA SALLE BLACKFEET SCHOOL, *Browning MT*

De La Salle Blackfeet School commenced the 2019 Catholic Schools Week with Sunday Mass hosted by the eighth-graders students at the Little Flower Parish. The congregation was invited to join a breakfast meal prepared by school staff and parents, where they enjoyed the class door decorations and essay contest submissions. The celebration continued throughout the week highlighting the school's identity as a Catholic, Lasallian and Blackfeet school. Brother Jim Krause, FSC shared with the students the foundations of our Catholic faith and the call of St. John Baptist de La Salle to take action in our communities through service informed by our faith. A community nutritionist, Destiny Anderson, spoke to the students about the importance of knowing their own bodies and seeking a balanced diet to prevent illness and create wellness throughout their lives. Robert Hall, a Blackfeet linguist, highlighted the importance of empathy and individual choice within the Blackfeet identity and cultural heritage. The Blackfeet Elder Patricia Devereaux witnessed to the students how Blackfeet traditions are complementary with the Catholic faith, and how by incorporating both she has enriched her life and faith. The Catholic Schools Week Mass was a particularly special event, with 11 students receiving the sacrament of first holy Communion. The celebration of the Mass also emphasized the importance of Catholic education and living out our faith. The De La Salle Blackfeet School community wishes all Catholic schools a blessed and successful school year.

ST. AUGUSTINE INDIAN MISSION, *Winnebago NE*

St. Augustine's Mission has served the Native American people and tribes since its founding in 1909. The school educates 110 children from the Winnebago and Omaha tribes in kindergarten through eighth grade. Of the 72 Catholic schools in the Omaha Archdiocese, they are the only institution that serves the needs of Native American students. St. Augustine's strives to create lifelong learners who respect others and contribute positively to their community. To celebrate the birth of Christ, the older and younger kids participated in a Christmas play.



RED CLOUD INDIAN SCHOOL, *Pine Ridge SD*

The mission of Red Cloud Indian School, a Catholic institution administered by the Jesuits and the Lakota people, is to develop and grow as a vibrant Church, through an education of the mind and spirit that promotes Lakota and Catholic values. Since its founding in 1888 and through an enduring partnership of the Jesuits and the Lakota people, the school continues to foster community engagement, innovative education, spiritual formation and social justice.

Students look forward to National Catholic Schools Week each year to participate in activities that celebrate the value a Catholic education provides. To celebrate the 2019 Catholic Schools week the school held special morning prayer reflections, poster art projects and writing contests throughout the week. A special essay was chosen each day to share with the school. In response to the theme “What does it mean to be a Red Cloud student?” a seventh-grader wrote, “This school gives us students a chance in life to be something great, break stereotypes, and show people that not only can Native Americans do great, but us young Catholic children can too. Being at a Catholic school has shown me that it is OK to believe and make mistakes because even if I’m not perfect, I am me, and that is glorious.” Tuesday’s theme was “What it means to be a school, who we are as an institution, individuals and a community?” An eighth-grader wrote: “Being taught at a school that celebrates Lakota tradition helps us lead because it shows us how the teachings of our ancestors still play a big role in today’s world because those traditions make up our culture, and they make us unique to other cultures that other people follow.” Finally, each day a new poster was added to the displays in the school lunchrooms with original student drawings illustrating themes to include “Where is your place of God?” “Celebrating Catholic Schools Week at Red Cloud” and the theme for the week: “Learn, Serve, Lead, Succeed.”



SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL, Shawano WI

Sacred Heart Catholic School celebrated National Catholic Schools Week with the theme of “God’s Winning Team.” The school kicked off the week with family Mass on Sunday at Sacred Heart Parish. Following Mass, the school opened its doors to the whole community for a family-friendly open house. The open house provided the school with the opportunity to share the school spirit and welcome newcomers. The event included school and classroom exploration, as well as fun activities for all ages and abilities, such as Kindness Rock painting and Friendship Bracelet making. Throughout the week, students engaged in classroom and schoolwide activities that demonstrated what being a member of “God’s Winning Team” truly means, which is being kind, loving, prayerful and serving those in need. Students engaged in a week-long “Caught Being Kind” Challenge, as well as decorated their classroom doors around the week’s theme.

The school welcomed the Diocese of Green Bay’s Bishop David Ricken to celebrate the all-school Mass and for his update on all Catholic schools in the diocese.



Staff and community members honored those who serve our government, such as local law enforcement officers, government leaders and retired/active service men and women during the Mass. The week concluded with a Special Persons Day. It was an amazing week to showcase why Catholic schools are so important! Sacred Heart Catholic School has shown great growth and development over the last few years, and works hard to continue that climb. Students are proud of how they Learn, Serve, Lead and Succeed!

ST. MARY’S CATHOLIC PARISH AND SCHOOL IN KODIAK, Kodiak AK

At St. Mary’s Catholic Parish and School in Kodiak, Catholic Schools Week was celebrated by spotlighting our connection to our faith and the community. The student body enjoyed a variety of activities throughout the week. Students dressed up for their future “dream jobs” and demonstrated their patriotism by wearing stars and stripes. Community members and dignitaries joined the school for Mass and a meal.



ST. PETER INDIAN MISSION SCHOOL, Bapchule AZ

The mission of St. Peter Indian Mission School is to educate children who are grounded in God’s love to become respectful, reverent and responsible citizens. The emphasis during Catholic Schools Week this year was “Honoring our Elders,” with each day of the week focusing on a specific set of elders: our elders, our tribal council, our veterans, our parents and our school. The children realize that if it were not for the hard work and patience of the elders the school would not be here. They kept the faith and worked very hard to keep the school OPEN — and now it is thriving. We continue to pray daily for our elders and for our warriors who risked their lives in the service of our freedom.



ST. MICHAEL INDIAN ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL, *Saint Michaels, AZ*

Daily themes were part of the celebration for Catholic Schools Week activities at St. Michael Indian Elementary and High School. Students were challenged and encouraged to work within their local parish. The Little Sisters of the Poor drive was held for paper goods and personal hygiene items as part of the “In Our Parish day.” The Little Sisters of the Poor serve the elderly in the neighboring town of Gallup, NM. The “In Our Community” theme saw students create gratitude cards and banners to thank local police, hospital staff, firefighters and senior centers for the work they do for the community. Upperclassmen ventured out into the community to pick up trash. One business was very proud of the students willing to clean up the community. Student recognition kicked off in “Celebrating Your Students.” The school administration gifted USB drives for middle and high school students and classroom books for each elementary classroom. The students enjoyed ice cream and were encouraged to wear their traditional outfits to school. The school “Celebrated Faculty, Staff and Volunteers” through the athletic program, which hosted their last home game during which faculty, staff and volunteers were recognized for their support of the school’s mission. “Celebrating Vocations” saw teachers arrange vocation speakers during religion class. Several members of the community visited the school to speak on their specific vocation, including parents, grandparents and alumni. “Celebrating the Nation” saw a focus on the Native American culture and where students displayed their research on presentation boards.



ST. ANN’S INDIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND MISSION, *Belcourt ND*

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated by St. Ann’s Catholic School with a Religion Bee, where students showcased their knowledge of the Catholic faith in a fun and competitive way. The older students experienced Catholic education from the teachers’ point of view by teaching the students of the lower grades. This activity helped to grow the students’ confidence and develop them as Catholic leaders.

St. Ann’s Indian Mission parishes held retreats for men and women, which provided the parishioners the opportunity to be reacquainted with God, examine their lives and make concrete and practical resolutions for improvement. Parishioners also took part in the convocation of Parish Leaders in Fargo. An immediate fruit of the Convocation is the REVIVE program. The program seeks to present the basic elements of the Catholic faith to those who are interested in learning more and those who have been inactive or away from the Church.





ST. PAUL'S MISSION GRADE SCHOOL, Hays MT

We at St. Paul's Mission Grade School are committed to providing our children with the teachings of Jesus. We strive to provide an excellent Catholic education to the children of this community, to discover the native talent hidden in each child and to help them develop their potential to the fullest. In the process, we also strive to nourish in each child a deep awareness of their Native American culture. Celebrating Catholic

Schools Week gave us the opportunity to “zero in” on our mission statement and to remember WHO we are and WHAT we are about here at St. Paul's Mission Grade School. We began the week with a schoolwide prayer gathering and a banner with this year's theme hanging in our front hall. Each student's name surrounded the banner, which made it very “special.” We had a day of service projects — the older students read books to the Head Start children in town and the younger students made cards for the elders in the community. We also had an afternoon of rotating “stations” where the students experienced mini-lessons in computers, science, music, cultural activities and physical education. Since we at the school also like to PLAY together, we ended the week with an afternoon of schoolwide games in the gym — followed by an ice cream treat. Despite the many challenges that Catholic education faces today, we are committed to maintaining a focus on excellent academics, religious formation, Native culture and service.

ST. ANTHONY'S INDIAN MISSION SCHOOL, Zuni NM

Each day of Catholic Schools Week at St. Anthony's Indian Mission School brought its own share of fun with Crazy Hair Day; Pajama Day; Bingo Day and the Faculty vs. Students basketball game. The most important event was the all-school Mass. At the beginning of Mass, each grade brought forward a banner with that class' goals, such as “No act of kindness is ever wasted”, “Do unto others”, “Love is ...”, “Trustworthy”, “Family”, and “With Heart and Helping Hand a Child Can Accomplish Anything.” These banners were all hung up in class as reminders of the goals the students had set for themselves. Amidst the fun and frolics, the fourth-graders held a bake sale. In January, the nearby home of an elderly

couple suffered fire damage. The Student Council sent out an SOS to help the couple, who had moved into one of our cabins while their home is being repaired. The fourth-graders decided that they wanted to help their classmate's family and hence the bake sale, which spread to the parking lot. It was indeed a week of celebrating our Catholic Identity, and putting that identity into action.



OUR CATHOLIC CHURCH

PARISH UPDATES

ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH, *Isleta Pueblo NM*

The St. Augustine Parish, through the support of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, purchased textbooks, supplies and various learning materials for students of the Religious Education

Program. With the support of the community members, a large number of students participate in the program and attend Mass. The program includes first holy Communion and Confirmation preparation, plus retreats for the students and their parents.



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND MISSIONS, *Pena Blanca NM*

The Religious Education Program in Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church and Missions is managed by Rev. Michael Garcia and a team of eight volunteers. The program teaches catechism for first holy Communion and Confirmation students. The teachers utilize their traditional teachings and integrate them with the Faith, Life, Chosen and Blessed curricula. Children with special needs have been afforded the opportunity for faith formation through a home program by parents working under the guidance of Father Garcia. The parish community



joined in a novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe and a day of prayer and renewal. The activities provided the parishioners with the opportunity to learn more about the power of prayer. Our Lady of Guadalupe



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH, *Dulac, LA*

At the Holy Family Catholic Church in Dulac, the Religious Education Program has been busy with students preparing for Confirmation and first holy Communion. Students also attended a retreat at the Holy Rosary Church in Houma.

ST. ANDREW MISSION, Pendleton OR

Despite the severe winter weather, the Religious Education Program students have been working hard to prepare for Confirmation which they hope to receive the week after Easter when Bishop Liam Cary visits the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Families arriving on these wintry Sunday mornings are served hot breakfast before class.

Confirmation students have been working hard on learning the foundation of our Catholic faith, including the Ten Commandments, the fruit of the Spirit, the beatitudes, the

sacraments, the gifts of the Spirit, the four marks of the Church, the Holy Trinity and the Two Great Commandments. They have also been reading the Bible

and undertaking service projects in preparation for receiving the sacrament of Confirmation.



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH, Maricopa AZ

The St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church purchased Bibles and catechetical materials for all 11 missions supported by the church. The church was also able to have Dr. Ryan Hanning from the University of Mary teach a certified catechetical training for 26 catechists in the community.

The trained catechists are now equipped to bring the word of God to their missions. The training inspired six catechists to further their knowledge of the faith. St. Francis Catholic Church, through the generosity of the grants awarded, has paid the first year tuition for these catechists to attend the two-year Kino Catechetical Program from the Diocese of Phoenix.



Catholic Church and Missions, under the leadership of Rev. Garcia, is blessed with volunteers and tribal church officials who are committed to the faith formation of the children, youth and adults.



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, Keshena WI

The students at the St. Michael's Church Religious Education Program meet every Wednesday for their catechism classes. The evenings begin with a prayer in church, followed by the formal instruction by the catechists.

Students participate in various activities throughout the year that help them grow in their knowledge of the faith. The students always have something to take home to share with their families about what they have learned, which is a way to evangelize to the parents.



SAN DIEGO INDIAN MISSION, Jemez Pueblo NM

The San Diego Mission cares for three Native American communities in Jemez Pueblo. The Religious Education Program classes prepare the children for the sacraments of first holy Communion, Reconciliation

and Confirmation. The three Native American Pueblos of Jemez, Santa Ana and Zia teach their students in their respective pueblos. The mission also holds adult formation classes for the community, which have helped to renew the evangelization spirit at the mission.

ST. MARY & ST. ANTHONY PARISHES AT ROCKY BOY RESERVATION, Box Elder MT

The St. Mary & St. Anthony Parishes Religious Education Program is an after-school catechism program held throughout the year for grades 1-5. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is used by the catechists for the faith formation classes in preparation for first holy Communion and Confirmation. Scripture is incorporated in daily activities that provide lessons to the children on how to walk in the way of Jesus, become Christ-like, and see Jesus in others.





ST. LUCY'S CHURCH, *Syracuse NY*

St. Lucy's Church holds two annual events in their place of worship, a "Fallen Leaves" Mass to honor loved ones who have passed away and a Mass in honor of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. These events are commemorated by the blessing of gifts and a smoke blessing while the altar is decorated with flowers and a statue of St. Kateri Tekakwitha.



KATERI NORTHWEST MINISTRY INSTITUTE, *Spokane WA*

The Kateri Northwest Ministry Institute is joyfully blessed in welcoming back Maureen Foley-Bensen to teach Scripture and help deepen the participant's love and understanding of the sacred word. Maureen has lived and worked among the Native

people in Omak, WA on the Colville Indian Reservation for the past 40 years. She engages groups from Spokane, Montana, and Great Falls. There has been a wonderful and favorable response from the participants as they all delve into the Scriptures together to explore and absorb their meaning in a deep and meaningful way.



Mercy abides *in all times of strife*

I WANT TO COME BACK TO A FAVORITE PASSAGE OF MINE IN SCRIPTURE AS WE ENTER THIS GREAT SEASON OF EASTER, THE FEAST OF FEASTS. I WANT TO LOOK AT THE DISCIPLES ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS — LUKE 24:13-35.

These two disciples of Jesus decide to leave Jerusalem; these are men who are disillusioned, angry, frightened, deeply discouraged. In a matter of days, they have moved from a hope and confidence in the Messiah to a place of crushing loss. “We thought he was the one,” they said. “We hoped he was the one to redeem Israel.” BUT: It is now the third day since this happened . . .” In other words, there is no hope. It is the third day since his death. Jesus is really dead! “This Jesus was not the one we had hoped for — he, this Jesus of Nazareth, is dead so he cannot be the longed for one.” And so they do what we often do when we have endured a very painful shock. They go back, back to Emmaus, back to what is familiar, back to what was part of their old life before they became disciples. They leave the community of believers.

How many times in life have we experienced a similar blizzard of conflicting emotions and thoughts, a sense of loss and sometimes, yes, real or seeming betrayal? We can’t think straight at all. It is no time to make major decisions, but these men do what a lot of us do: “I’m out of here.” There’s too much fear, too much confusion, too much loss. It is precisely when these men are in that frame of mind that Jesus begins to walk along with them. They don’t recognize him, because they don’t expect him. He is dead, isn’t he? But Jesus walks along with them and, over the next while, teaches them from the Old Testament about the Messiah; he “opens the Scriptures to them.” By the word, he opens their frightened and disillusioned hearts and spirits and minds to the Truth that genuinely sets people free.

Later, when they ask him not to leave, but to stay with them, Jesus breaks bread with them in the Eucharist and their eyes were opened and they began to realize who he was — and then, right then, when they actually recognize him, he disappears from their sight! That instruction from the word of God and that food enabled

them. Right away, that night, they return to Jerusalem to pound on the door behind which the other disciples were hiding in fear of the authorities, and to exclaim what had happened to them on the road to Emmaus. Brothers and sisters: Look at God’s mercy! That same mercy is available to us all. Particularly, I want to speak to those of you who are carrying very heavy crosses right now and may be faltering in your faith: “Where is God? Why did he let this (whatever it is) happen?”

In this Easter season, I ask you to bring your cross: your loss or betrayal or failure. Perhaps it is a cross made of poor health, economic difficulties, death of loved ones — whatever it is, I want to encourage you to bring this pain to the foot of the cross, his cross. Lay your cross down under the shadow of his cross so that you might begin to know the tremendous power of Christ’s resurrection, raising you up with new faith and new hope. There are two ways from this 24th Chapter of Luke that we can learn how to “access” the faith and the hope and the love that God wants to impart to each of us in our particular circumstances:

- 1 Read slowly Chapters 14-17 of the Gospel of John. See what Jesus tells and promises his disciples — that includes you and me.**
- 2 Come before the Blessed Sacrament as often as you can and read his word — especially Luke 24 and Psalms 8 and 51. Gratitude and repentance where needed help us to be open to God’s grace.**
- 3 Receive the Eucharist as often as you can. God will nourish you on his body and blood and that will strengthen you to continue the journey.**

The steps I am giving you are the very steps that are described in Luke 24:13-35. That Gospel passage is given us to show us how our Lord brought frightened and disillusioned disciples back into union with him and with one another. May this be a blessed Easter season for you, and may you know the new life that God wishes to give you. ☩



**SPIRITUAL
FITNESS**

**BY
SISTER ANN
SHIELDS**

SAINT OF THE
MONTH



CATHERINE OF SIENA

FEAST DAY: APRIL 29

ADVOCATE OF PEACE, ADVISORS TO POPES

On the feast of the Annunciation, 1347, Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa welcomed their 25th child into the world. Saint Catherine of Siena lived in Siena, Italy, where she consecrated her life to God as a young girl. As she grew in devotion to the Church, Catherine became a Third Order Dominican, which allowed her to live in the world and serve the poor and hospitalized at the same time. She encouraged those around her to embrace God's plan for their lives, saying, "If you are what you should be, you will set all of Italy ablaze!"

Later in life, Catherine received visions from God directing her to work for peace between the warring city-states of Italy and the papacy, which at that time operated out of Avignon, France. Because of her writings and constant prayer, Pope Gregory XI decided to return the Papacy to Rome in 1377, and his successor, Urban VI, asked her to reside in Rome as an advisor. After months of illness, Catherine died in 1380 at the age of thirty-three. Along with St. Francis of Assisi, she is one of the patron saints of Italy. – Emily Pohl ☩

DID YOU
KNOW?

CATHERINE WROTE
APPROXIMATELY
400 LETTERS AND
LITERARY WORKS

CATHERINE IS ONE
OF ONLY FOUR
FEMALE DOCTORS
OF THE CHURCH

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WRITER CAUSED HER TO BE
COMPARED TO HER FELLOW
ITALIANS, DANTE AND PETRARCH

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