

## Giving from the Heart

Donna Cain, Reading Resource Teacher at St. Augustine Indian Mission School wanted to teach her kids about how other people live. Cain has sponsored a child through the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging for three years. She introduced five-year-old Cindy to her students through pictures. She told the students that Cindy lives in Villa Nueva, Honduras in a house with mud floors and a tin roof. After learning a little about the culture and about the poverty they suffer, Cain asked her students what essential needs they thought people from Honduras required. The students answered with shelter, food and water.

Cain then challenged the children to raise funds for the family through an effort she called Cents for Cindy.

The students were asked to bring spare change to give to the family during Catholic Schools Week. Over the course of the week, many brought babysitting money, spare change, and some students even forfeited the money they had brought for snacks on their field trip to the skating rink. In all, over \$180 was raised. The students decided they'd like to purchase a goat which would provide the family with milk to drink and wool to make clothing. They also raised enough money to purchase a water pump for the family.

A letter written for Cindy by her grandfather thanked the students for their support. He said he hoped that his five-year-old granddaughter would learn from this generous gift and, perhaps, be able to do the same for another one day.

## A Vision for the Future

On September 13, 2006 members of the St. Augustine Indian Mission Board of Advisors met to discuss the future of the school. Celebrated at the meeting was the strong and successful past of the School, nearly one hundred years old. Fr. David Korth, Director of the Mission shared with the group his desire to strategically look at the programs of the Mission in an effort to create a path for future growth. He also shared his desire that St. Augustine Indian Mission School would become a model for best practices in Native American education through the development of innovative programs.

To that end, committees of the Board have been set up to look at the program, staffing, financial and educational needs of the school. Over the next twelve months, the Board will work with staff of the Mission to develop a strategic plan that will guide the Mission for the next ten years. All aspects of the Mission will be analyzed to

identify physical plant needs, teacher retention and recognition opportunities, student scholarship opportunities, and best practices.

Additionally, a group of community members, teachers and business leaders has been developed. This group will provide valuable information about perceptions of people in the community regarding the important place St. Augustine holds. They will also share their impressions on where the school might improve and what they would like to see for the future. The combination of these two important groups will help to create our future direction.

"I am so excited for what the future holds for St. Augustine, and thankful for this dedicated group of people who are willing to serve on the Board of Advisors, and to those who will contribute from the community as a whole. We want to serve the Native American people of Nebraska the best we can. I look forward to working with our Board and the community in developing a roadmap for the future", said Fr. Korth.

### Saint Augustine Mission Board Members

Archbishop Elden Francis Curtiss  
Fr. Dave Korth, *Director*  
Fr. Pat McLaughlin, *Assoc. Dir.*  
Fr. Tom Merkel, *President*  
Jeff Neary, *Vice President*  
Steve Knolla, *Secretary*  
Sarah Berridge • Ted Bridges  
Stephen Bruckner • Sid Dillon, Sr.

Bruce M. Frasier • Judy Haney  
John Hildenbiddle • Wayne Ibarolle  
Erin Morgan • Mary Ann Nipp  
Dr. Jim Pillen • Thomas Purcell  
Dr. Mike Sketch • Kelly Snow  
Terry St.Cyr • Joe Twidwell  
Mark Weber • Jane Weekly  
Elaine Wilwerding

**How to contact us at the Saint Augustine Indian Mission:**  
[www.staugustinemission.com](http://www.staugustinemission.com)  
St. Augustine Indian Mission • P.O. Box GG  
Winnebago, NE 68071 • 402.878.2402

**Wish List** • St. Augustine regularly has needs that go beyond our operating budget. Below is a list of items we would like to have. If you feel so moved, and would like to provide funding for any of these items, please contact the Mission at (402)878-2402

- ELMO HV-5100XG Visual presenter - \$2787.00
- AccuCut Mark IV Roller Die Cutting Machine \$749.00
- Fire Proof Filing Cabinet (4 drawer 2 hour FireKing) \$1863.00
- Nebraska State Wall Map with a set of desk maps – \$570.00
- Catholic Jeopardy Game System – \$1117.00
- Commercial Vacuum Cleaner – \$427.00

# ST. AUGUSTINE INDIAN MISSION the Trumpet Call

February, 2007



## A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings from a snow covered St. Augustine Indian Mission! One of the nice things about all the snow we have received in the month of January is the opportunity for our children to go sleigh riding during recess. I can see them out my window, and it looks like they are having a wonderful time. I just witnessed what appeared to be one classmate trying to help another up. They both ended up on the ground laughing. That kind of teamwork puts a smile on my face.

When I think about all the teamwork and partnerships the Mission has enjoyed this year, my smile turns to an expression of awe, and I offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God. Some of those partnerships include: Marcia Poole and the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center; Mutual of Omaha, Pat Osborne, and Don Doll, SJ who created the beautiful 2007 calendar; our sister parish of St. Vincent de Paul in Andover, KS; my associate, Fr. Pat McLaughlin; all the individuals and foundations who are participating in our Sponsor-A-Child program (at this point we have 59.5 children sponsored – our goal is 70); all our staff who give endlessly for the good of our students... just to name a few!

This newsletter was truly a team effort! I want to thank our contributing writers: Tim McNeill from the Archdiocese Stewardship and Development Office; Jodi Guillemette from St. Vincent de Paul; and Judy McNamara from St. Augustine Parish in Winnebago.

I also want to thank those of you who have partnered up with us by your prayers and your financial support! Both are needed so we can continue to offer an education for these children of God. With you on our team we can continue to see smiles on their faces and hope in their future! Blessings, Fr. Dave



## SISTER PARISHES, MILES APART

Mariah and Savannah enjoy a game together after meeting for the first time.

**St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Andover, Kansas, and St. Augustine Indian Mission have been sister parishes since 2000.** During the last seven years St. Vincent de Paul has hosted numerous activities for the purpose of building connections between the two communities. In the early years, the parish assisted St. Augustine by offering opportunities that raised funds in support of programs at the Mission. These activities also served as a time for learning and understanding of one another.

As time has passed, relationships have grown into deep friendships. The level of comfort and care has blossomed from hand shakes to hugs. Harriet Lebak, a St. Vincent parishioner who recently visited the Mission remarked that she felt so at home, "Everyone welcomed us with open arms. It was like they had known us forever and it was the first time I had met them. It was such a wonderful experience."

When St. Augustine Director, Father Dave Korth comes to Andover, he celebrates Mass with Father Mike. One trip that is fondly remembered by all is the year Father Dave decided to do a cartwheel in celebration of First Holy Communions. Everyone was so impressed that he made the cover picture of St. Vincent de Paul's next newsletter. Unfortunately for Father Dave, this celebrity status comes back to haunt him during every visit because at least one child asks him for a repeat performance.

During his most recent visit, Father Dave had the opportunity to bring along Mariah, an eight-year old student who also happens to be sponsored by Jing and David Redfern from St. Vincent de Paul parish. Mariah enjoyed the company of her Wichita family; but most especially the opportunity to meet Savannah, eight-year-old daughter of the Redfern family. (Continued on Page 2)

## Teenagers **Sieze** Catholic School Opportunity



**Vinetta Snow and Maya St. Cyr know a good opportunity when they see one.** The freshmen from Winnebago rise in the morning when most students are still sleeping to make the 25-mile trek to Bishop Heelan Catholic High School in Sioux City, Iowa. The sacrifice is worth it, they said, because their futures depend on it.

“My mother and grandmother thought a Catholic high school would best prepare me for the future,” Maya said.

“My mother received a good education at Bishop Heelan,” Vinetta said. “She wants me to have the same opportunity.”

Vinetta and Maya are the beneficiaries of St. Augustine Indian Mission’s commitment to assisting graduates in attending the Catholic secondary school of their choice.

Maya, 14, and Vinetta, 15, are making the best of their opportunity. Both are B students or better. According to Maya, “learning about God” is the best thing about attending Bishop Heelan. “I learn how to speak to God through his teachings,” she said.

Vinetta and Maya have decided they will attend college. Maya has not settled on a study area; she knows she wants



a good paying job after college. Vinetta is leaning toward studying medicine.

When Vinetta isn’t studying, she competes in a bowling league. Maya is a member of the school choir. In her free time, she writes poetry, draws, and plays recreational sports.

It would be easy for Vinetta and Maya to take credit for their early success. Both are aware of the positive influences in their lives, especially their parents.

Vinetta’s mother is a surveillance and security manager at Win-a-Vegas Casino. Maya’s mother is the chief executive officer of the health center in Macy; her father makes affordable medicine available to reservation residents as an employee with a Winnebago pharmacy.

Fr. Dave Korth, director of the St. Augustine Indian Mission, also gets high marks from the teens.

“Fr. Dave is a really good teacher,” Maya said. “I like how he explains the Gospel in his homilies.”

“He’s a cool Father,” Vinetta added.

Most would agree that Vinetta and Maya are cool for taking advantage of a good opportunity.

## SISTER PARISHES • MILES APART

*(Continued from Page 1)* The two shared so many eight year old features. The Redferns see their involvement really as Savannah’s sponsorship. This has allowed Savannah to develop an understanding that stewardship is an honor and an opportunity, and that service is a celebration.

Steve Knolla another parishioner at St. Vincent de Paul Church has been a liaison between the two parishes since the beginning. Because of his commitment to St. Augustine’s, Steve was asked in 2004 to become a member of the Advisory Board of Directors. He and his family have enjoyed many fun visits both here and in Winnebago.

As a member of the Board and close friend, Steve has had the privilege to attend or participate in numerous activities including; the mission’s celebration of a successful capital campaign in 2001, the Native American celebration of the opening of the new tribal hospital and medical center, tribal ‘naming’ ceremonies, tribal ‘pow wows’, memorial celebrations, and the Sponsor-A-Child appreciation lunch.

Steve says, “This sister parish relationship has been one of the most rewarding personal endeavors I have ever been involved in. I believe this has made me a better person spiritually, intellectually and socially. I am gratified to no end by the smiles and hopeful eyes of the children of the Mission.”

## St. Augustine’s **Touches** Generations



**St. Augustine Indian Mission has had a presence in Winnebago since it’s founding by Saint Katharine Drexel in 1908.** The mission school originally educated the girls of the Winnebago and Omaha tribes. In the 1940’s boys began to be admitted to the school. St. Augustine’s ceased to be a boarding school in 1982.



The present day Winnebago community does not remember a time when the Mission was not a part of the community. Jim Snow, tribal council vice-chair speaks of the Mission in very positive ways. He recalls that in the 1950’s when jobs on the reservation were very scarce, Fr. Frank Hulsman began an aggressive construction program at the mission. Fr. Frank insisted that tribal members be employed for this project. His father was one of those workers. Jim remembers carrying lunch to his father at the construction site and the importance of his father working for his family... In later years Jim also found work at the Mission and recalls that he was able to buy school clothes for himself from the money he earned. Jim, his parents, his children and his grandchildren have all attended the Mission school.

Sunshine Bear studied at St Augustine’s for 8 years. She believes she received an excellent education. It had a positive impact on her life. She says she felt supported and encouraged by her teachers. Today her 5 oldest children attend the Mission school. She relates that they all love school. She believes that they feel safe and comfortable there which makes learning more positive. She believes it is a good background for a bright future.



One extremely important aspect of the Mission school is the challenge it brings to the broader community in terms of education according to John Blackhawk, a 23 year veteran of the tribal council and past council president. A study a few years ago showed evidence that St. Augustine’s had a high number of high school completions and students going on to higher education. Improving educational standards for the community remains a primary focus in Mr. Blackhawk’s work for the tribe. St. Augustine’s educational standard has a positive influence on the community as a whole.

Gina Snow attended the school when it was a boarding school. She remembers lots of children, many activities and many religious sisters. She says the sisters were nice to her and she continues to hold the values she learned while she was a student. Her 5 youngest children are currently students at the school. The small class size and values influence the decision to continue at St. Augustine’s. Many activities are offered for her teens in the parish. She believes participation in the parish and the activities provide blessings for her entire family. It gives them many opportunities that they might not otherwise have. She loves it when one of the children comes home and tells a Bible story learned at school that day.

The Catholic values at the Mission are extremely important to the community. Mr. Snow recalls the elder’s excitement when Mother Drexel would visit as all had such positive experiences with her. For Ms. Snow and Ms. Bear the opportunity to attend Mass regularly growing up has left them with many of the values they are now bringing to their own children. The pastor’s respect of traditional native spirituality gives families in crisis much needed support.