

# ST. AUGUSTINE INDIAN MISSION the Trumpet Call

CHRISTMAS 2009

CELEBRATING 101 YEARS OF EDUCATION, TRADITION AND FAITH

## Dear Benefactors

Our intention was to get this newsletter to you earlier, but when we received word that we would have a very special guest visit our children on Dec. 18th, we decided to delay the mailing of this newsletter so we could share that story with you. You can read about Joba Chamberlain's visit on page three. You will also be able to read about another very special visitor to St. Augustine's. Most Rev. George Lucas, the Archbishop of Omaha who was installed in July, made his first visit to the Mission on Nov. 8, 2009 to mark the 100th anniversary of the opening of the school. Both visitors provided wonderful experiences for our students and people here on the reservations.

This time of year, Christians prepare to celebrate the coming of the most awesome of all visitors, Jesus Christ our Savior. The one we believe to be the Son of God was born into poverty and raised in an out-of-the-way, insignificant town called Nazareth. Many of our students can relate to these circumstances. The vast majority of our students here at St. Augustine Indian Mission were born into poverty and are being raised on what some would consider out-of-the-way and insignificant Indian Reservations. Not to mention the skin color of the Christ Child was undoubtedly closer to our students' skin color than mine.

We mention these similarities to our children to help bolster their self esteem. Recently Fr. Mike was visiting the 1st grade room while they were coloring pictures of the Holy Family. One of the first graders, Paul, asked him what color he should make their skin. Fr. Mike shared with the class that the skin color of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph was probably more like their skin color, rather than his own. One of the little boys said, "Really, that's neat!"

But no matter how much more our students have in common with the circumstances surrounding the birth of our Savior, the message he came to bring the world is that we are all loved equally by His Father. It does not matter what color our skin is, what size our bank account is, or even if



we believe Jesus to be the Christ or not! Jesus brought us a message of love that unites us all and challenges us all to strive to treat each other as we would like to be treated ourselves. Jesus came to teach us to care for those who cannot care for themselves. This is exactly what you are doing when you send your prayers and financial support our way.

As we get ready to say goodbye to 2009 and welcome 2010, all of us here at St. Augustine Indian Mission wish to thank you for all you do for us. May the Lord bless you abundantly throughout the New Year!

*Merry Christmas,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Dave". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line underneath.

omaha's new  
**Archbishop**  
 visits the mission

Photos by Don Doll, SJ



*Archbishop Lucas expresses his thanks for being honored with the gift of a star quilt during his first visit to the Mission.*

The Most Reverend George J. Lucas, the fifth archbishop and 10th bishop to lead the Archdiocese of Omaha, made his first visit to St. Augustine Indian Mission on Sunday, November 8th to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the first day of school. Archbishop Lucas was the main celebrant and preached at the 10 A.M. mass. Fr. Dave Korth and Fr. Mike Eckley concelebrated. The Kateri Warriors, the school drum group, lead by Jerome LaPointe, played an honor song during mass. In his homily, the Archbishop praised St. Katharine Drexel for her lifetime of generosity in sharing her gifts and resources with those in need. He challenged all those in attendance to follow Mother Drexel's example and share their gifts and resources, what ever those gifts and resources may be, to ensure the ongoing work of the Mission begun by Mother Drexel 100 years ago. At the end of mass Winnebago



*Friends from our "sister parish", St. Vincent de Paul; Andover, KS, Nancy Winters and Diana Knolla exhibit the centennial cake as Archbishop Lucas gets ready to assist them.*



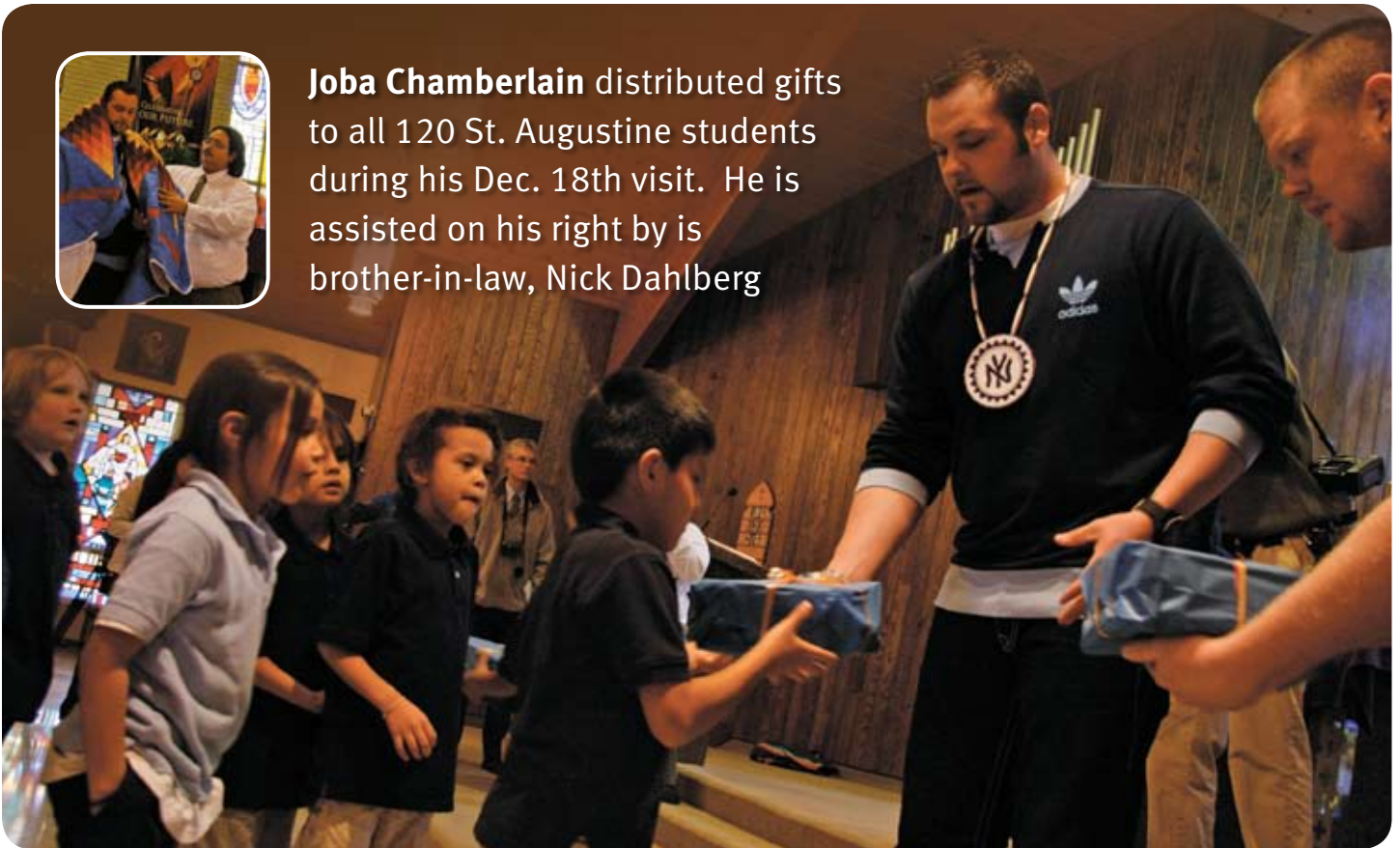
*Archbishop George Lucas is wrapped in a star quilt by elders Viola LaPointe and Jack LaMere, as servers Joe Murphy and Craig Cleveland, Jr., as well as Fr. Mike Eckley look on.*

elders and parishioners Viola LaPointe and Jack LaMere presented the Archbishop with a star quilt. After the mass the Archbishop visited with alumni, staff, students, parents and parishioners at a brunch held in the Church basement.

Archbishop Lucas was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of St. Louis, MO on May 24, 1975. He served as an associate pastor in a number of parishes in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Besides his parish work, he also served on the faculty of St. Louis Preparatory Seminary-North and St. Louis Preparatory Seminary, as the chancellor and vicar general of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and rector of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. He was ordained a bishop on December 14, 1999 and served for almost 10 years as Bishop of the Springfield, IL Diocese. He was named Archbishop of Omaha on June 2, 2009 and installed on July 22, 2009.



**Joba Chamberlain** distributed gifts to all 120 St. Augustine students during his Dec. 18th visit. He is assisted on his right by his brother-in-law, Nick Dahlberg



## world series **Champion** meets with students



When most kids during this time of the year hear that there is going to be a special visitor who is coming to visit the school they assume that Santa is on his way. On the last day of school before the beginning of Christmas break the students of St.

Augustine gathered in the Church to

meet a special visitor. Principal, Donny Blackbird Jr. asked the students, "Who is your favorite baseball player?" The response, which sounded more like a cheer, came thundering from the students, "Joba!!" A moment later Joba Chamberlain, pitcher for the World Series Champion New York Yankees, emerged from the sacristy and into the sanctuary of the Church to greet the students, staff and parents who had assembled there.

The St. Augustine Kateri Warriors honored Joba, who is a registered member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, with a song and then St. Augustine Board Member, Brian Chamberlain, and principal, Mr. Don Blackbird, Jr., presented

Joba with a star quilt. Joba spoke to the students about the importance of dreaming big and continuing to strive for the dream. Also important in achieving your dream is to rely on God, your family and your friends. He encouraged the students to always be proud of who they are and where they come from. He then took questions from the students.

At the end of his presentation in the Church, Joba presented gifts to the Staff of St. Augustine and encouraged the students to show their appreciation for those who serve them. He also had gifts for all the students. Everyone then moved from the Church to the school gym where Joba pitched a wiffle ball to Fr. Dave and some of the students. Most of the students were able to get a hit or make contact with the ball except for Fr. Dave who was struck out on three pitches.

It is obvious to anyone who follows baseball that Joba Chamberlain is an extraordinary talent. What is not always obvious or seen but was seen by the students, staff, and families of St. Augustine Indian Mission is that Joba is also an extremely humble and generous young man. Joba stayed, took pictures, and signed autographs until the last student went home from Christmas break. This will be a special guest and a special day that will be remembered by the students for a long time to come.

## Friend of St. Augustine creates “A Fountain of Life”

Researching, writing, directing and acting in “A Fountain of Life” was a transforming experience for Richard Poole, a friend of St. Augustine Indian Mission and Chair of Speech Communication and Theatre at Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, Iowa.

“If I hadn’t been offered this opportunity by Fr. Dave – if I hadn’t embraced this project, I would never have learned about St. Katharine Drexel, Fr. John Griese, Monsignor Frank Hulsman and so many other extraordinary people who have served the children of St. Augustine during its first century. Their lives bear witness to the great good that can be done with God’s grace,” says Poole.

“A Fountain of Life” was presented at the Betty Strong Encounter Center on Nov. 1 and 8 as part of the commemoration of St. Augustine’s Centennial. The interpreters’ theatre production illuminated the legacy of visionaries and leaders who financed, planned, built and nurtured St. Augustine at the request of the Winnebago and Omaha people.

Poole used numerous sources to research St. Augustine’s history and to develop the play. As the two-year project evolved he found himself drawn particularly to St. Katharine, Fr. Griese and Monsignor Hulsman.

“I decided to focus on them. I felt that if the audience gained insight into their work during St. Augustine’s formative years, they would gain a better understanding of St. Augustine today,” says Poole.

“A Fountain of Life” begins with the struggle of Katharine Drexel, heir to the Philadelphia Drexel Banking fortune, to discern a religious vocation and dedicate her life to serving Native and African-American children.

She entered religious life in 1889, founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament order and funded educational institutions throughout the country, including St. Augustine. In 1909, Mother Katharine traveled from Philadelphia to Winnebago where she oversaw construction of St. Augustine. She lived with a Winnebago family and met with virtually every other family in the area.

Fr. Griese, who served as St. Augustine’s first pastor, shepherded the mission through its opening and some of its most difficult years. His tireless efforts to help make St. Augustine self-sufficient by cultivating crops and raising livestock literally helped feed the people. Monsignor Hulsman succeeded Fr. Griese in the early 1940s. Under his leadership the entire campus was rebuilt.



Cast members for “A Fountain of Life” (l to r): back row; Fr. Dave Korth, Rex Towns, Mike McCormick, Bruce Miller, John Carter, front row; Marcia Poole, Joanne Fox, and writer/director Richard Poole.

“A Fountain of Life” celebrates the accomplishments of St. Katharine, Fr. Griese and Monsignor Hulsman. At one point, the play speaks to the essence of their work and the work of those who have followed, says Poole. “...always, always, always, from the beginning to the present day, it was for the children, all of it for the children.”

“This play touched all of us who had the privilege of experiencing it,” says Fr. Dave who was a cast member. “It encouraged us to follow the example of St. Katharine, Fr. Griese and Monsignor Hulsman - to honor all children and to nurture families, communities and a world that supports the dignity of all children.”

Poole says he is indebted to volunteers who worked on the project, most notably the cast: John Carter; Joanne Fox; Mike McCormick; Bruce Miller; Fr. Dave; Marcia Poole; and Rex Towns.

“These are people with significant theatre and performance experience who cared deeply about the project’s success. Their work was rewarded by the warm reception of audiences at both performances, especially the sincere expressions of appreciation by Native people who attended.”

Poole continues his interest in researching the legacy of St. Katharine Drexel who died in 1955. Her intercession has been credited with curing a man’s deafness in 1988; and a two-year-old girl’s deafness in 1994. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000. She is the patron saint of racial justice; and the patron saint of philanthropists.

“I am not a Catholic; I’m Jewish. Yet I find universal truths in the life of St. Katharine Drexel as a model of service to children,” says Poole. “Her spirit is present today at St. Augustine. It will be present tomorrow. It will always, always, always invite us also to serve the children she loved so much.”

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