

A Call to Action (Continued from front cover)

Physical Fitness:

- St. Augustine intends to create a fitness testing program including body composition testing for all students and staff at the beginning and end of the semester. Through this mechanism, students and staff will begin to better monitor their own consumption and exercise rates and how that equates to their body mass index.
- The school will purchase new and updated equipment to be overseen by the P.E. teacher who will encourage staff and students to increase their exercise.
- A demonstration of our collective progress will be measured through the use of a “thermometer” for tracking the amount of physical activity by students and staff during the semester.

Cultural Relevance:

- Cultural relevance is important for the long term success of the program. St. Augustine will incorporate traditional stories, games, music, artwork, foods and family activities. Through these kinds of traditional and cultural activities, engagement of the students and staff will be passed on to family members.
- St. Augustine will generate opportunities for families to participate in activities and events that support healthy lifestyles.
- Staff involvement at each level provides mentorship and solidarity with the students.

Repairs Needed for the Physical Plant

As with all aging structures, the needs of the School’s physical plant continue to be a challenge. Some items are on the smaller end of the scale and others are not. Unfortunately, the School is facing some major repair work on the heating and cooling system that impacts the Kindergarten classroom and the school administration office. The unit’s compressor and blower are no longer functioning

St. Augustine is fortunate to have the partnership of the Wellness Councils of America. Dr. David Hunnicutt, the National Director of WELCOA is very excited about the possibilities that lie before us. “It is very important that we set goals and teach children at an early age how to live a healthy lifestyle. Together we can build a better future for them.”

Father Dave Korth said, “Our school has proven success in academic and character formation (as seen by higher graduation rates, lower truancy and fewer discipline problems than other local schools). I am hopeful we can show similar success with this obesity-prevention program. It has become clear to me that the Mission needs to do what it can to help turn the tide on the depressing health statistics that exist here on the reservations.”

As with any new program, your support for St. Augustine’s *Wadooch and Manee Program* would be much appreciated. This new program will require resources to purchase new fitness equipment and healthy snacks. The school needs to raise \$5,000 to match what the Wellness Councils of America is contributing toward this program. Please send your contributions to St. Augustine Indian Mission attn: *Wadooch and Manee Program*, or, contact Father Dave Korth at 402-878-2402. We look forward to a much brighter and healthier future with your support!

which impacts the amount of air circulation and reduces control of humidity in these areas. Our goal is repair this unit before the season turns to warmer weather and the humidity greatly increases. The fear is that without circulation and humidity control, we will add a mold problem to this area of the school. That is a health risk with which we do not want to contend! Estimates for repair are approximately \$4,000. If you are interested in helping St. Augustine pay for these much needed repairs to the compressor and blower unit, please contact Father Dave Korth at 402-878-2402. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

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St. Augustine Indian Mission

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ST. AUGUSTINE INDIAN MISSION the Trumpet Call

April 2008

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



I wish I could say that Spring is in full-swing here on the reservation, but we are still waiting. Everyone that I talk to is anxious for Mother Earth to wake up from her winter sleep.

This issue of the Trumpet Call will share some exciting news with you pertaining to the past and the future of St. Augustine Indian Mission. I was blessed with the opportunity in February to visit the motherhouse of our foundress, St. Katharine Drexel, near Philadelphia, PA. I prayed for her intercession as we continue to strive to carry on the work she started nearly 100 years ago. A special treat was meeting Sr. M. Francis Paul Zboyan, who served in Winnebago from 1944-45.

As we discern in the present where we want to go in the future, it became evident that we needed to do more in the area of wellness education for our students. You can read about the exciting things we are planning to implement in that area in this issue as well.

It is helpful to look at where we have been and to dream about where we want to go, but it is your generous response in the now that enables us to keep the dream alive for these children. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts to continue the work of St. Katharine in serving these blessed children of God!

Blessings, Fr. Dave Korth

A Call to Action: *Wadooch and Manee* to Fight Obesity and Diabetes

(Winnebago for Diet and Exercise)



“The high risk and occurrence of obesity and diabetes among American Indians demands that we address the issue of healthier lifestyles with our students immediately,” said Father Dave Korth. “St. Augustine Indian Mission School looks to become a national leader in programming that encourages Indian children to make well-informed choices about what they eat and how they exercise. Our best shot is to teach our students about these options at a young age and continue to reinforce those messages throughout their years at St. Augustine. In this way, we hope to sustain them; ‘Body, Mind, and Spirit’, into adulthood. To do this, we are launching our *Wadooch and Manee Program* in the Fall of 2008.”

Diabetes was rarely diagnosed in American Indians until the 1930’s but it is now found in epidemic proportions in American Indian populations and is largely attributed to the increasing prevalence of obesity, according to a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. According to this study, the overall prevalence of those overweight in American Indian children was 39% compared with 15% for all other races combined. This change is attributed to the relative abundance of high fat foods and the rapid change from an active to sedentary lifestyle.

Changes in diet coupled with a decrease in physical activity have created dire consequences locally for the Winnebago and Omaha Tribes. These trends need to be reversed. One bright light in the fight against childhood obesity and diabetes resides in school-based obesity-prevention programs. School-based programs can contribute toward developing policies and shifting social norms.

St. Augustine Indian Mission is taking these issues head-on with a three pronged program including a nutrition component, a physical fitness component and engagement of students, staff and families.

Nutrition:

- The school will offer a healthy snack alternative to be given to each child at dismissal. Nutrition education will be provided with the snack to assist students in making better snack choices.
- More nutrition information provided by a dietician will be incorporated into coursework.
- St. Augustine and the head of food service will work cooperatively with nutritionists to plan meals and snacks at the school for better content and healthier targeted food groups. *(Continued on back page)*

Journey to St. Katharine Drexel Motherhouse

In a truly meaningful journey, Fr. Dave Korth was invited by Fr. Wayne Pysse, the Director of the National Black and Indian Missions Office, to attend a February meeting of leaders ministering to American Indians. The meeting in which participants were asked to surface ideas on how the Black and Indian Missions Office can better serve its constituents, convened in none other than the St. Katharine Drexel Motherhouse in Philadelphia. Not only was this meeting significant in that Father Dave discussed challenges facing St. Augustine with colleagues who face similar situations on their own mission campuses, but the connection to St. Katharine Drexel and her Motherhouse was powerful. While there, he re-connected with the core values that were instrumental in setting up St. Augustine almost 100 years ago. "I was inspired once again by the vision and service St. Katharine Drexel gave to the poor in black and Indian communities across America. I was also humbled that St. Augustine Indian Mission is part of this amazing story," said Fr. Korth.

"Meeting with my peers was instrumental in re-enforcing what we are committed to do at St. Augustine, helping Native Americans embrace the dignity that used to be stripped from them. I believe we have the responsibility, as a Church, to continue the work St. Katharine Drexel so bravely started." said Fr. Korth. St. Katharine is buried below the chapel at the Motherhouse. Fr. Dave celebrated Mass in the crypt and asked for her intercession

as we continue to strive to follow in her footsteps.

"Many of the mission schools she started on reservations across the country didn't survive when the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament were no longer affiliated. I am grateful for the commitment of all the Directors who preceded me, as well as the Missionary Benedictine Sisters who continue to serve the Mission today and carry on the legacy of St. Katharine Drexel and her Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament," said Fr. Korth.

While at the Motherhouse, Fr. Dave also had the occasion to meet Sister M. Francis Paul Zboyan. Sr. Francis Paul took her vows in 1943 and was missioned to Winnebago from 1944 to 1945, the last year the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament served in Winnebago. Fr. Dave shared with Sr. Francis Paul the strides being made at the Mission School today and how they are based in the values and ethics of St. Katharine Drexel. Sr. Francis Paul delighted in seeing images of the children in the St. Augustine Indian Mission calendar and reminisced about her time at the Mission. "Clearly the images of our beautiful children touched Sr. Francis Paul's heart."



Catholic Schools Light the Way • Catholic Schools Week, 2008

St. Augustine Indian Mission School participated in Catholic Schools Week, January 28 to January 31, 2008.

The theme this year was Catholic Schools Light the Way and St. Augustine students were indeed a beacon of light.

Not only did they have fun with specific clothing theme days like hat day or crazy hair day, they also enjoyed an afternoon of "carnival" which included a pie throwing contest with Mr. Blackbird, Mr. Modlin and Mrs. Aman being such good sports. The carnival was made possible by a generous donation by a friend of the Mission.



The week also included a special Mass featuring Michael Murphy on Native American flute. The children showed how to Light the Way by supporting the food pantry located in Walthill, NE. By bringing in items needed by the

pantry, such as canned goods, baby items and dry goods, the children learned a lesson about giving back to those in need. The students filled a mini-van with items to support the pantry. A powerful lesson for all involved! Thank you students for your passion and enthusiasm and putting into motion the lessons this Catholic school is trying to teach you!