

The Dreamer

Exclusive news for the St. Joseph's Indian School DreamMakers



January 2025

The Joy of Christmas Extends Beyond the Holiday Season

Your generosity made Christmas exceptionally memorable for the students at St. Joseph's and their families!

While some people are ready to pack away Christmas music, decorations and lights as soon as December 26 rolls around, we at St. Joseph's Indian School stay jolly for a while longer and embrace the spirit of the season well into the New Year.

During winter break, our students spend Christmas Day with their families in their reservation communities. Therefore, December 25 is quiet on St. Joseph's campus. However, it's just the calm before the storm of joy that ensues when the students return in January.

When students return from break, the campus Christmas celebration begins with Mass and is followed by a special dinner. But the highlight of the day is the gift opening! Thanks to your kindness, every child finds sweet treats in their stockings and beautifully wrapped packages with their names on them. Our campus homes overflow with laughter and awe as paper flies everywhere. It's a day of pure joy, filled with giggles, smiles and playfulness.

For some Native American children living in poverty, this scene can be in stark contrast to what they experience at home during the



holidays. But your love and kindness ensure the joy students experience upon returning to campus is also felt in their reservation homes during winter break.

Before traveling home, students shopped at St. Joseph's Christmas Store — a place filled with donations from generous supporters like

(over, please)





you. At no cost to them, the students chose gifts for their loved ones. For instance, an older brother carefully considered a football for his younger sibling, hoping to share the joy of childhood play. A girl with a passion for art thoughtfully selected a set of paints for her creative cousin.

“I got my five-year-old brother a stuffed teddy bear,” said Kayley, a student. “I think he will like to cuddle with it!”

Once the gifts were chosen, staff members helped wrap them in festive paper, ribbons, bows and gift tags.

“I got my mom a blanket because it looks cozy and soft!” said Athena, another student.

This experience is rooted in one of the four Lakota values: **wačháŋtognaka** — *generosity*. Allowing students to exercise this value spreads a lot of joy in the giver and receiver throughout the process.

Philámayaye — *thank you* — for being a DreamMaker and a loyal **kǎholá** — *friend* — to the children at St. Joseph’s Indian School. Your gift provides Native American children with much more than a safe place to live and learn. It provides them with love as they reach for their dreams.



DID YOU KNOW?

Native Americans have always been generous and thoughtful gifters. The sacred White Buffalo Calf Woman gave the Lakota people a Sacred Pipe and a small round stone used in the Seven Lakota Rites of the Lakota (Sioux) people.

Learn more about the Seven Lakota Rites at stjo.org/culture.





Dear Friends,

Christmas at St. Joseph's
Indian School so special. We
had chicken patties for dinner,
and we opened our christmas
gifts. Thank you again for my
brand new pair of shoes.
Merry Christmas!

- Amiel