



St. Mary's Mission School News

Inspire Hope

Empower Love

Ignite Faith

April 2023

Volume 5 Issue 1

Greetings from snowy Minnesota and God's blessings!

There are a lot of positive things happening this year at St. Mary's Mission! First and most exciting for all of us is moving into the **New Church**. You can read about the details in our featured article in this newsletter. As you know this has been a long time coming and the excitement is at a **fever pitch!**

Secondly, we have received a grant from the Mount St. Benedict Foundation to continue **our outreach** to the homebound and assistance with school health care. Charmaine Branchaud has been a long-time parishioner and has been a point person from the time of Fr. Jerry Rogers to visit those who are homebound to bring them communion and to inquire about their health needs. She has also guided us through questions about children's health at the school. The gift of the grant assures that her ministry continues through this year!

Given the near completion of the rebuilding of the New Church **thanks to all of you**, we are starting to transition to **a renewed focus on the needs of our school**. **St. Mary's Mission School** was the focus of our fundraising until December 2nd, 2017, when the church burned and we need to raise money to rebuild.

Since 2017, we have endured the Covid Pandemic and a nationwide shortage of teachers. According to news reports 800,000 teachers have left the profession or retired since the start of the pandemic. These teachers are not being replaced by new people entering the teaching profession.

These events have created pressure to increase payroll to recruit and maintain teaching and support staff. Now that we can see the finish line on the New Church, we need to renew our efforts in finding support for our school.

Though this transition back to supporting the school will take some time to fully implement as we finish collecting funds for the New Church, we will begin to inform donors of the needs of the school as well. **You are the first** to hear about this gradual transition! Thank you again for your dedication to St. Mary's Mission. **Fr. John Christianson**



MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of St. Mary's Mission School on the Red Lake Indian Reservation is the holistic formation and education of the mind, heart, body, and spirit of our students. We achieve this by providing a God-centered, culture enhancing, quality Catholic education in a nurturing, safe, and Christian environment.

This newsletter is mailed quarterly to all our donors, church families and student families.
Thank you for sharing in our ministry...

"Never underestimate the good that you do!"

To learn more about us, please visit our website:

Stmarysmision.org

Thanks be to God!

We are **nearly finished** with the New Church project at St. Mary's Mission. Because of the resounding response from all of **you generous donors**, we are seeing the finish line. The amount of money that we have raised over the last three years is simply **breathtaking**. We have raised over 2 million dollars with money still coming in. **Thank you, God! Thank you, everyone!**



View from altar. The design includes an "ichthys" on the ceiling.



View from Sanctuary showing the west chapel

As of this writing, we are being told that we will be able to move into the new church even though it is not complete yet. The contractors call this situation **Substantial Completion**. Substantial Completion also means that when the rest of the materials, the Rose Window, finishing work, outside work, etc. can be finished, they will return to complete these items tentatively late this spring. We are still working on raising the remaining dollars needed to finish and furnish the Church project. **We are waiting in joyful hope!**

This is exciting news! The parishioners, the community, and I are all very excited about this prospect of being able to finally have Mass in a church building even though it is not completed. None of us are complaining about transferring from a school gym to an unfinished church. We see it as progress that we have longed for a few years now. Our excitement is in the fact that we can come together to worship in our new church! **Very exciting!**

Our excitement is due to your generosity in supporting the rebuilding of our New Church. We are in perpetual gratitude to all of you for coming together to make our dream at St. Mary's Mission come true. When I hear from priests and lay people who know the challenges of our parish and location, they are amazed as well at your collective support of this project. **We are so blessed to call you, our friends.**

Substantial Completion, mentioned above, is not only completion of the contractors' obligation to build but also obligates us to have the remaining money 'in hand' to fulfill our obligation to finish paying for the New Church. Finishing includes paying for a new altar, an ambo (lectern), pews, office furniture, and kitchen equipment. Though we are very close to having everything paid for, we still have the remaining dollars to raise quickly to fully complete the building of the Church and all the furnishings needed to make our new church a fully functioning parish. **A feat that is achievable with your help!**

Thank you and God bless you for all that have given for the long-anticipated dream to come true!

God Bless you and yours this summer,

F. John Christ

Summer Adventures

by Fr. John Christianson

Planning for **Summer Adventures** is underway at **St. Mary's Mission School!**

For anyone who does not know, *Summer Adventures* started over ten years ago to help our students catch up and keep up with their studies so that the summer break would not have a catastrophic effect on their education. *Summer Adventures* was begun by Fr. Jerry as a way of "tricking the kids into learning" as he put it by having fun while learning so that the children will come back throughout the summer and continue to learn.



During the half days of 'school' during the summer, meals are provided so that the adventures of the day are coupled with nutritious food for the students. We also book youth groups of high schoolers and college students to come weekly and help the students with their learning. They serve as older mentors to the kids who love the attention. The students look at them as *cool older siblings* to look up to and bond with. It is a great experience for the groups who come and for our students as well. Watching the two groups bonding is exciting. Both are deeply affected, with more than a few tears shed when it's time for groups to leave.

It is exciting to look forward to Summer and anticipate the learning and especially the relationship building that will take place once again. Please pray for our students and the students who will be joining us this Summer!



The last baptism in the gym Church.

St. Mary's Mission School

P.O Box 189

Red Lake, Mn 56671