



Changing Seasons, A Fresh Approach

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Čante wasteya nape čiuzapelo (I greet you with a hearty handshake),

After more than six months in my new role as president of St. Francis Mission (SFM), I've continued to witness the challenges that our people face, but I've also learned about how our organization makes a difference in their lives.

We have a great opportunity to work for our people, and the dedication to do so. I know we can meet the challenges together, and I am so thankful for your support of and belief in our mission. We will continue to improve our processes and operations to honor that belief.

One such improvement involves you – our loyal friends – because we are taking a fresh approach to communicating with you. For one, this newsletter will now come to you four times per year. This decision came from listening to our donors, and from recognizing that Lakota and Catholic values call for the wisest possible stewardship of environmental, human and financial resources.

We also feel this will make better use of your time and attention – less in your inbox, and less in your mailbox!

I hope you will enjoy this update – which features our museum and how it honors the traditions, culture and history of the Lakota, and preserves them for current and future generations. **Through support from generous benefactors, we can maintain and enhance projects like this, and do so much more for our people. Thank you!**

Sincerely,

Rodney M. Bordeaux
President
St. Francis Mission



Rodney M. Bordeaux

In the Lakota calendar, next month, April, is when the ducks return, the new year begins, and the Lakota begin celebrating the return of spring. Though calendar types vary from one American Indian tribe to the next, nearly all tribal calendars begin in the spring. To Native people, spring symbolizes the start of a new year through the birth of new plant and animal life.

Celebrating OUR HERITAGE



Father Eugene Buechel, SJ, first arrived on the Rosebud Reservation to teach at St. Francis Mission in 1902. Over the years, he devoted his free time to photographic work and study of the Lakota Sioux language. His 30,000 vocabulary cards were the first written documents of the Lakota language and are valued as a reference to this day.

Wanbli Sapa, or Black Eagle, as Father Buechel was named by the Lakota people, translated several church texts into Lakota and wrote a Lakota book on grammar. His file of almost 30,000 Lakota words with translations was published in 1970 as a Lakota-English dictionary.

He also preserved specimens of the flora of the region in all four seasons, identifying them in English, Latin and Lakota, and saved a large collection of native Sioux artifacts.

On his 50th anniversary as a Jesuit in 1947, SFM constructed a museum to display Father Buechel's collection. His photographic negatives, prints and diaries were added to the archives of the Buechel Memorial Lakota Museum in 1972.

Today the museum's collection is one of the most important historical and sociological records in the state.



The mannequin at left depicts historical Lakota clothing of different lines, colors, designs, forms, and rhythm. The display includes shells, elk teeth, dyed buckskin, quill work, paint, fur, fringe and colored feathers. The beads, bells and copper wire came after the arrival of the Europeans and people from other trading posts. These impressive exhibits showcase the richness of our 2,000-plus artifacts.

Some of our 42,000-plus photographic items include the following.



1917 Rosebud Fair



1949-1950 girls' basketball team



1939 boys' basketball team posing with elementary students



Classroom photo from the 1960s

Connect With Us! HOW CAN YOU HELP US IN OUR MISSION? PLEASE:

- Let us know what you think of our newsletter – or anything else!
- Pray for us.
- Follow us on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, and share posts with your family and friends.
- Donate now at www.sfmission.org.

