

MAKING AN IMPACT — Spotlight on Recovery Programs and Resources

Dear Friends,

A warm hello and peace of Christ to you.

As you might have noticed, this is the first newsletter that I am “hosting,” and I am pleased to be the “voice” from the St. Francis Mission (SFM) to you, our loyal friends. (Don’t worry, though – as always, Rodney’s still working hard as SFM president!)

You also might have noticed that it has been a year since SFM changed the way we communicate with our friends and benefactors. In past years, you received many more mailings. But last year, to make sure we were being the wisest possible stewards of environmental, human, and financial resources, we started sending:

- A quarterly newsletter to tell you what has been happening here.
- A “regular” letter a few weeks later to ask if the newsletter inspired you to share your blessings with a gift for the featured program or general fund.

We also send emails to those who want them – to make sure everyone gets the information they’re interested in, in the way they like to receive it. I hope these outreach strategies are making the best use of your time and attention!

I hope you will gain insights from this update – which features the difficulties that addiction presents to our people, and the ways we are supporting recovery. Jim Stands, director of the White River Recovery Center, tells me that all the people on the Rosebud are affected by addiction, because it doesn’t just impact the individual with the disease. It affects many generations, from the great-grandchildren to the great-grandparents, the family, the tiospaye (extended family), the community, and the oyate (nation).



As you know, the overarching goal of SFM is to foster “Wellness, Community, and Leadership” among the Sicangu Lakota. Recovery efforts involve every element of that goal. Thanks to everyone who helps us to help our people on the good road to recovery and a new life.

I wish you a blessed spring season! May the good Lord bless us all in all of our endeavors.

Fr. Edmund Yainao SJ

Fr. Edmund Yainao, SJ
Pastor
St. Francis Mission

Message from the Director

Alcohol and other addictions among our people are an epidemic, as reflected in health problems, a rise in related crimes, and physical ailments and trauma among children. They can take lives and destroy communities.

One of the main things we provide is access to a support system. People in recovery need help on their journey, whether it be 12-step, religious, or traditional. We open the doors of wellness and help them stay on the road to recovery and sobriety. In the end, it takes us back to our spiritual way of life, Wolakota.

Specific resources include the following.

- Our recovery efforts include traditional Lakota healing sweat and other ceremonies, retreats, and other spiritual resources, as well as meaningful activities for individuals to improve their wellness through a healthy lifestyle.
- Our staff goes into the local jail where many people are incarcerated for crimes related to drug and alcohol abuse.
- We work with all social agencies and programs on the reservation and in surrounding communities, and facilitate meetings in the 12-step tradition, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, and Al-Anon.
- We recognize that people need safe places to recover from the physical and psychological traumas of addiction, learn new ways of coping with stressful situations, regain positive control of their life without using substances as a way of covering up pain, and manage triggers and cravings.

Importantly, we know that addiction is a family disease. Without addressing the family dynamics of addiction, the addict suffers a high risk of relapse and family members have a greater risk of developing addiction. In our model, family members and friends learn about codependency and the role types in family structures that can cause enabling conduct and strengthen addictions. SFM has partnered with the Betty Ford Institute to provide educational programming to address the effects addiction has on the family.

Jim Stands
Director of the White River Recovery Center

FACTS & FIGURES

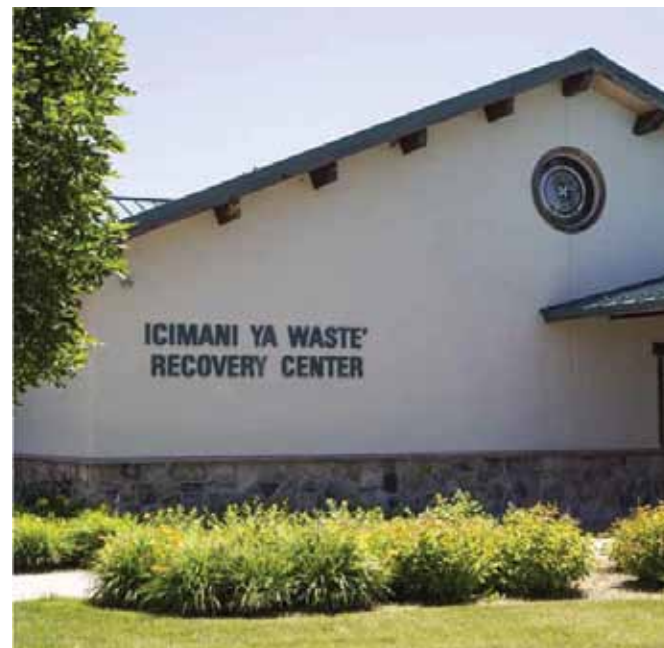
Rates of heavy alcohol consumption on the Rosebud are much higher than the U.S. average.

Rates of substance abuse and overdose-related deaths are disproportionately high among American Indians, and have risen in recent decades.

Risk factors known to predispose populations to high opioid and other substance abuse are all present on the Rosebud. These include untreated psychiatric disorders, young populations with high unemployment rates, and unstable socioeconomic and family situations.

Acute alcohol-related deaths are approximately eight times greater on the reservation than across the Midwest.

Many acute and chronic conditions and injuries are caused by substance abuse, including cirrhosis, cancers, untreated mental and behavioral health problems, and fetal alcohol syndrome.



We have recovery centers in White River, Parmelee, and St. Francis, and we hope to establish another in Winner, South Dakota.

The power of recovery: A personal story

“Jane,” who is nearly two years sober, has been helping others on the road to recovery by starting, and now hosting, recovery meetings. She graciously agreed to share some thoughts with our readers.

I had divine intervention and my chains were broken. My recovery is faith based.

I started these recovery meetings so that people can share their story...in hopes that somebody else in the meeting can take something from what they heard, and it can help them in some way.

I’ve learned that “we,” the people in recovery, feed off of other people’s strengths. It gives us hope, inspiration, and strength to continue what we are doing. We see others struggling – just as we are – and we don’t feel so alone. We realize there are others out there who feel the same way we do, and we see that, no matter the situation or the circumstance, we all feel the same feelings. It’s just different scenarios.

Every now and again there will be a new face, which brings me joy. It makes my heart happy that there are people out there like myself who want a better life, something different.

I wanted to have open recovery meetings because we are all recovering from something, from drugs and alcohol to trauma and depression. As a group, we would like to do things for the youth and communities. Things like feeding the hungry or a Christmas dinner, youth fishing derby...[things that give people] something to look forward to.



By sharing their stories in regular meetings, people in recovery learn from each other, and they discover they’re not alone.

OUR RECOVERY MODEL

STRATEGIES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Community activities that connect cultural teachings to health and wellness for families/individuals Intergenerational learning opportunities Traditional and contemporary physical activities to strengthen families/individuals 12-Step meetings Retreats	More people participating in opportunities to practice health and wellness	Higher participation in cultural, social, and traditional physical activity	Increased resilience using cultural practices to reduce alcohol and other drug use Enhanced sense of mental and emotional well-being among community members

*Connect
With Us!*

HOW CAN YOU HELP US IN OUR MISSION?

- ◆ 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/newsletter
- ◆ Visit us! Call 605-747-2361 to arrange a meeting and tour.



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Retreats hosted at the Sioux Spiritual Center, like the one these participants attended, are just one of the ways St. Francis Mission supports recovery for people on the Rosebud.

WELLNESS...COMMUNITY...LEADERSHIP