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Saint Francis Mission  
PO Box 499  
St. Francis, SD 57572

**Active Youth Group Enhances  
Connection with God, Lakota culture,  
each other and our community**

Our youth group offers opportunities for fellowship, growth, prayer, and activities. These 11-18-year-old students have helped St. Francis Parish with fundraising; researched symbols to share with the community and host an annual meal at the St. Charles Parish; baked cookies and made cards for elderly people and delivered them; made over 175 baskets for the annual egg hunt; participated in annual Tekakwitha Conferences; and collaborated with tribal programs to do glow walks, candlelight vigils and youth day events. We have also held classes for our youth to make ribbon skirts, bags and beading projects.



*SFM youth group and chaperones getting ready for the Suicide Prevention Glow Walk in Rosebud in June. Below: 3rd-4th graders from Spring Creek Elementary school show off bags they made.*



**MAKING AN IMPACT**

**Religious Education  
and Faith Formation**

Dear Friends,

Ever since the St. Francis Mission (SFM) was established, religious education has played an essential role in our work.

Today I'm happy to report that our programs are thriving, serving hundreds of students at four schools and through an active youth group. Our sacramental/faith formation programs are providing preparation for baptism three times a year, confirmation once a year and first communion twice a year. We also provide summer camps in five communities.

All of this is happening through the diligent work of our well-educated, caring and knowledgeable staff, including Jennifer Bordeaux-Black Bear, who just celebrated her tenth year as director of religious



education. We recently promoted four-year employee Theresa Leader Charge to full-time religion teacher, and are glad to have part-time religion teacher, Robin Fernandes, on this vital staff. In addition, our parish administrator Ben Black Bear III assists with our religion classes as needed, teaches adult faith formation classes with Jenny, and serves as an advisor for the SFM youth group.

In all of this, our approach is designed to enhance our families' relationships with God and each other, in Christian and Lakota ways.

*Rodney Bordeaux*  
President  
St. Francis Mission



This past July, the 84th Annual Tekakwitha Conference was held in Bloomington, MN. Present were Executive Director of the Black And Indian Mission, Fr. Maurice Henry Sands, along with the SFM youth group and chaperones.

### Message from SFM Director of Religious Education

Everything we do is designed to honor and serve God, and to serve the people of the Rosebud, by supporting their faith and sense of belonging to both the Catholic Church and Lakota culture.

We teach and reach out to those who want to engage with us – including children, youth, and adults who seek to build on their Christianity and recall their faith.

During the school year, we teach religious education for an hour a week when children from grades 1-8 are released from school to attend classes. Our curriculum includes the Catholic faith, Lakota values, prayer, reading and writing, and promoting a safe environment. We celebrate birthdays every month and provide nutritious snacks.

While we consider parents to be the primary teachers of each child's faith development, we seek to enthuse, inspire and educate each child through learning and reflecting on different people's religious experiences. Our approach also helps each child feel that they belong, as an integral part of the Catholic Church and their community.

Our religious education programs also include an active youth group. **Please see the back of this page for more information.**



Fourth grade students at Red Cloud Elementary

### Offering Programs to Serve as Many People as Possible Across a Wide Geographic Area

SFM provides religious education at Rosebud Elementary (grades 1-5), He Dog Elementary (grades K-8) in Parmelee, Spring Creek Elementary (grades K-8), and Sapa Un Jesuit Academy (grades K-8) in St. Francis.



While we teach the most students in Rosebud, our work also involves traveling to Spring Creek, about 30 miles round trip; Sapa Un, about 14 miles round trip; and the He Dog school, about 25 miles round trip.

And, while many programs are housed in our building in Rosebud, children ages 6-14 enjoy our summer "Body, Mind, and Soul" camps offered in five communities. These include a vacation bible school curriculum, Lakota language and culture, breakfast and lunch, arts and crafts, and other fun activities.



Students ages 6-14 enjoy the summer "Body, Mind, and Soul" camp at Spring Creek Elementary.

### Informing our Approach

#### The Lakota Values

- Praying
- Respect
- Compassion/Caring
- Honesty/Truth
- Generosity
- Humility
- Wisdom

#### Ignatian Spirituality and Core Gospel Values

- |             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| Integrity   | Healing |
| Courage     | Service |
| Love        | Justice |
| Forgiveness | Prayer  |
| Hope        |         |