In September, Our Lady of the Sioux Catholic Church marked its 100th Anniversary. Located on the Pine Ridge Reservation, in the town of Oglala, the Church has thrived through natural disasters, social and economic growth and the ebbs and flows of a rapidly changing society. After a century of standing with the people of the town of Oglala—and the greater Pine Ridge Reservation—September was a time to celebrate.

The Sunday morning gathering started with a gathering at the site of the original church, across the street from where Our Lady of the Sioux stands today. The congregants then moved to the church for mass with Fr. Thomas Lawler, SJ (Provincial of Wisconsin Province of the Society of Jesus) and Fr. Joseph Daoust, SJ serving as co-celebrants. Community member Ann Marie Ammott gave witness to her life growing up in the Indian School and once again blessed the church and its work in the community.

Marie Ammiote gave witness to her life growing up in the Reservation—September was a time to celebrate. This June at Red Cloud, students taking summer courses studied history, math and science in the standard way—at a desk and inside the classroom. But they also experienced a different kind of learning—outside in the sun and wind, under the strolling Pine Ridge sky. By helping to care for Red Cloud’s greenhouse and school garden, they learned how to produce nutritious foods while caring for the earth.

“We worked with our summer school students to plant seeds in the greenhouse—and once the seeds began to grow, students either transplanted them into the garden or took them home to plant near their own homes,” said Garrett Waters, a Red Cloud volunteer teacher who has deployed the development of the greenhouse and garden over the last three years. “They’ve had the chance to participate in the science of growing and then to harvest their very own plants—and that can be a powerful experience.”

During his time on campus, Garrett has shared his knowledge with students of all ages—from teaching a senior elective on fundamental plant science to educating first graders about how to nourish a seed to sprout. He says the greenhouse and garden have provided students with a unique, hands-on learning experience that will stay with them as they grow.

“I taught my first health class before the greenhouse was built. We talked about food science and micronutrients and the process of growing, but it felt so disconnected from the actual experience. But now with access to the greenhouse and the garden, our students can actually put their hands in the dirt and see the results of their work as they learn what’s happening in the soil,” said Garrett.

“When Garrett arrived on campus in the summer of 2013, plans for the greenhouse were still being finalized. As construction began, Red Cloud’s administrators began looking for teachers with experience in agriculture and nutrition. Garrett—who has a history in organic farming—jumped at the chance to create lesson plans rooted in the work of growing healthy food using sustainable methods. Once the greenhouse was operational, he launched the school’s garden, which has doubled in size over the last two years.

During his time on campus, Garrett has shared his knowledge with students of all ages—from teaching a senior elective on fundamental plant science to educating first graders about how to nourish a seed to sprout. He says the greenhouse and garden have provided students with a unique, hands-on learning experience that will stay with them as they grow.

“I taught my first health class before the greenhouse was built. We talked about food science and micronutrients and the process of growing, but it felt so disconnected from the actual experience. But now with access to the greenhouse and the garden, our students can actually put their hands in the dirt and see the results of their work as they learn what’s happening in the soil,” said Garrett.

“This spring, I worked with fifth graders on planting spinach and kale. The results of their work as they learn what’s happening in the soil,” said Garrett.

“I taught my first health class before the greenhouse was built. We talked about food science and micronutrients and the process of growing, but it felt so disconnected from the actual experience. But now with access to the greenhouse and the garden, our students can actually put their hands in the dirt and see the results of their work as they learn what’s happening in the soil,” said Garrett.

“This spring, I worked with fifth graders on planting spinach and kale. The students cared for the early seedlings and then in mid-May they transplanted them into the garden. Today many of the students are harvesting and eating the healthy foods they grow, able to see the process from start to finish. When comparing that experience to simply reading about it in a text book, it was really night and day.”

Garrett helped his students identify steps they could take as young people to create positive change—including learning to grow and produce the healthy foods that are so desperately needed on the reservation.

Sustainability is another important lesson that has risen to the top of Garrett’s curricula. Students have learned the importance of allowing the soil to recover and above the need to replant it. This spring the seniors in Garrett’s fundamental plant science class visited a local ranch to learn about the process of composting, and then returned to campus to add compost to their own garden beds. And in July, Garrett took summer school students fishing for carp, which are full of the nutrients needed to replenish soil.

Students learned to dry the fish using sun-dried and salt and then filled the garden beds with the resulting, nourishing substance.

With his volunteer service nearly complete, Garrett is preparing to leave Red Cloud and return to the work of farming. But he says he will miss walking side-by-side with students in the garden—and watching their knowledge of plant science expand. Their unique perspectives and challenging questions have helped... him to become a better teacher, and deepened his own passion for producing healthy, sustainable food.

“Recently, in celebration of Earth Day, we worked with students to plant close to 50 berry-producing bushes that are native to Pine Ridge. These plants that live out in the Black Hills and hopefully will produce fruit for many years to come,” said Garrett. “I love imagining our current fifth graders cultivating these plants when they are in high school, continuing to build on their knowledge of how we can create healthy, sustainable food systems. I feel humbled and grateful to be part of the Red Cloud family having learned so much from the people, culture, and land out here. Working with students in the garden and greenhouse was a privilege and I pray our relationship with food continues to grow stronger for years to come.”
**Passing the Torch**

**After 20 Years, Renowned Jesuit Photographer Places Calendar in the Hands of Lakota Artists**

Early each spring, a group of students arrive on Red Cloud Indian School’s campus dressed in traditional Lakota regalia—adorned in vibrant colors, feathers, and beadwork—to have their portraits taken for the annual calendar. For the last 20 years, the award-winning photojournalist Father Donald Doll, S.J., has stood behind the camera, capturing images that reflect the beauty of Native culture.

This year, the calendar story took on a whole new meaning. At Fr. Doll’s urging, two young Lakota photographers joined him behind the camera. Angel White Eyes and Willi White, both graduates of Red Cloud, will carry on Fr. Doll’s work in the years to come. For Fr. Doll, creating the calendar’s images has always been about celebrating Lakota heritage; something he felt was well overdue for viewing Lakota artists create responsibility to capture and reflect their own culture.

“In all my work I try to approach people with a profound respect for who they are. What I’ve loved about doing the Red Cloud calendar is having the chance to show kids how beautiful and precious they are. Often I believe kids have a hard time understanding their own self-worth. I want them to appreciate who they are as Native Americans, and to treasure their own culture,” said Fr. Doll. “As Native photographers, Willi and Angel will bring a new perspective to this work—a perspective that the world needs to see. I want them to be able to tell their own story, and the story of their people.”

Fr. Doll first came to Red Cloud Indian School in 1962 as a young Jesuit. He was sent to the Rosseau Reservation to serve at St. Francis Mission and, after just one week, he was asked to help with photography. Fr. Doll began taking photos for St. Francis students, but after two years he still was not satisfied with the quality of his work and was contemplating giving up photography. Feeling discouraged, he took a walk across the prairie on a crisp fall evening and felt a voice in his head telling him to “stay with photography, it’s the first thing you loved doing.”

“I believe that was the Holy Spirit speaking in the depths of my heart, like it does in everyone’s heart,” he explained. “That was a pivotal moment for all of my projects since, I’ve tried to stay in that voice in my life. I’m happy I did.”

Fr. Doll went on to become an internationally recognized photographer. In addition to teaching photojournalism at Creighton University over the last five decades, he has traveled the world taking photos for publications like National Geographic. Through his work he has helped to expose non-Native people to the realities facing indigenous communities across the Great Plains and in Alaska, capturing moments of both joy and tragedy in the 1990s, he included their stories and images in his book and exhibit “Vision Quest: Men, Women and Sacred Sites of the Sioux Nation” to celebrate the beauty and resilience of Native culture and spiritual heritage.

Fr. Doll’s long-standing commitment to Native people across the Great Plains—as well as the strong friendships with staff and teachers—have kept him coming back to Red Cloud. When he arrived on campus this year, he worked side by side with Willi and Angel throughout the week, offering guidance around setting up the best studio lighting, engaging with students in front of the camera, and editing the selected best compositions. Fr. Doll, Angel, and Willi all took their own photos of each student, taking turns throughout each session. Together they shot portraits of students and Angel and Willi worked closely with Carol McCabe, Fr. Doll’s photo editor, to pare the photos down to a core selection. By the end of the week, they had selected the final calendar photographs. Only one photo had been shot by Fr. Doll.

“At first I was a little hurt,” Fr. Doll said, laughing. “But then I realized that this is exactly why we call Willi and Angel’s work absolutely beautiful. So it was certainly a mission accomplished!”

Willi and Angel, longtime friends who graduated from Red Cloud High School together in 2000, are now full-time professional photographers. In addition to teaching photojournalism under Fr. Doll as a student at Creighton University, Willi and Angel have traveled the world extensively to document and promote the efforts of the Jesuit Refugee Service. He is also happy to come back next year to assist them. But from what I’ve seen, I don’t expect them to need help anymore.”

As a team, Willi and Angel plan to honor Fr. Doll’s style. Willi explains that the photos will remain an “amazing and beautiful” as Fr. Doll’s studio portraits. But they are also excited to explore their own artistic vision for the calendar—to try new techniques and develop their own editorial approach, engaging more students in the process.

“The photos are so beautiful to look at—but there’s also so much more going on at Red Cloud that we want people to see,” said Willi. “I want to love to get more students involved and for the calendar’s photos to illustrate our students’ lives and who they are outside the studio.”

Happy to turn artistic direction of the calendar over to Willi and Angel, Fr. Doll is moving on from his new work with Red Cloud. But he has no intention of slowing down. He has been traveling extensively to document and promote the efforts of the Jesuit Refugee Service. He is also returning to some work with video production. He will be screening short films about the winners of the million dollar Opus Prize, an annual faith-based humanitarian award honoring individuals and organizations working to solve the world’s most pressing challenges. Whenever his work takes him, Fr. Doll says that the people here at Red Cloud will always be a part of him. “I’ve been blessed to be able to create Red Cloud’s calendar all these years. And it’s also wonderful to be turning this work over to Angel and Willi. I’m sure they’ll be happy to come back next year to assist them. But from what I’ve seen, I don’t expect them to need help anymore.”

The calendar is in very capable hands.”

---

**Coming soon to a mailbox near you!**

Keep an eye out this December for the arrival of your 2017 Red Cloud Indian School calendar—we’ll drop them in the mail just in time for the Christmas holidays!

Or, if you want to get a head start on the year or would like extras—they make great stocking stuffers!—you can purchase them at our online store. Just visit www.redcloudsdschool.org/shop or contact us via email at rcgiving@redcloudschool.org.

---

**Tutored teachers and sides. This year, 20 full time volunteers have engaged in our spirit of service and joined Red Cloud to ensure Lakota children gain stronger reading, writing and math skills. Your support provides food, housing and small travel stipends for these volunteers from across the country. Wóphila!**

**Strong Hearts. It takes courage to stay on the Red Road and ignore the alcohol and drugs which deter too many lives on the reservation. You help the kids stay on the Red “Cloud” Road. Wóphila!**

**Economic Impact. Your donations enable us to bring out leaders and seniors to visit some of their top choices for college, where they see and hear firsthand what life after high school might be like. Wóphila!**

**Athletic Engagement. Our students represent the Red Cloud community on more than 20 teams each year, ranging from across country to girl and many in between. The team building, respect, leadership and lifelong friendships developed in doing so stay with our students for a lifetime. Your support follows our students both on and off the field. Wóphila!**

---

**wóphila!**

Among the Lakota people, gratitude is one of the seven basic virtues. Another is generosity. Red Cloud is humbly grateful for your generous prayers and gifts that provided...