More Friday afternoons, the sounds of beautiful, historical hymns fill the air of the radio waves and across the rolling hills of the Pine Ridge Reservation. The familiar melodies come from the Christian tradition—but the words themselves have been translated and sung in the Lakota language. Each hymn brings together elements from both spiritual backgrounds in poignant harmony. And for that reason, they provide a perfect foundation for the Lakota Catholic Radio Hour—a new program launched through the pastoral efforts of Red Cloud Indian School—that seeks to explore the deep connections between the two religious traditions.

“Such diversity and sharing of knowledge and experience will provide countless opportunities for me to take something away, but mostly, I wish to hear and see the perspectives of people who are seasoned in the field of social justice, and I hope to improve my own skills in that area,” Rosales said.

While in Washington, the Red Cloud delegation met with all three South Dakota members of Congress and the D.C. advocacy organization Center for Native American Youth. “This is an exciting opportunity for Red Cloud students to recognize and celebrate their diverse cultural connections with parishioners and communities across the reservation. Through his work, he has spent untold hours visiting with parishioners in times of need and offering them any support and comfort that he can. And for Charles, speaking to listeners over the radio feels like a direct extension of that work.”

“A core part of our mission is to build and sustain a Lakota Catholic community that welcomes everyone—and that honors the power of Lakota spirituality and culture in all that we do,” said Fr. George Winzenburg, S.J., Red Cloud’s president. “The Lakota Catholic Radio Hour provides an opportunity to look carefully at Christian scriptures and Lakota stories, and to discover and explore the bonds between them. Our hope is to reveal those connections and to celebrate all that we share as one community.”

In Red Cloud’s parish, Lakota lay leaders work alongside priests and parish staff to provide essential ministry services across the reservation. Today, parish teams embody the many ways that Lakota spirituality and Catholic traditions and briefs have become intertwined. According to parish staff, the radio show was created as a forum for exploring sacred stories from both the Lakota and Catholic perspectives, to better understand the powerful connections between them.

The show—hosted on the Oglala Sioux Tribe’s radio station, KILI—features a diverse range of voices that represent the richness of both spiritual backgrounds. Tribe members Charles McGee, a lay minister and parish life coordinator at Sacred Heart Church, and Patricia Catches the Enemy, a long-time parishioner and Lakota speaker, serve as the show’s primary hosts and give it its unique perspective.

Charles has spent many years of his life reaching out and building strong connections with parishioners and communities members across the reservation. Through his work, he has spent uncounted hours visiting with parishioners in times of need and offering them any support and comfort that he can. And for Charles, speaking to listeners over the radio feels like a direct extension of that work. “Some of the most important experiences of my life have been sitting with elders, listening closely to their stories, and guiding them in prayer.”

And just as I do when I visit and speak with parishioners, I hope that people listening to our radio show will find some inspiration and encouragement in the words they hear,” said Charles.

“Although we don’t interact with the audience during the show, people have called or come up to me to say that they really appreciate hearing these stories and hearing them sung in the Lakota language,” and Charles. “During the month of November, we honored the fact that it was Native American Heritage Month, and included a Lakota story, as well as a hymn, as a central part of the show. People really liked that—and so we want to continue to celebrate those Lakota stories in our programming.”

Sharing traditional Lakota stories is something Patricia Catches the Enemy is honored to do. Bo on the Pine Ridge Reservation, Patricia developed a strong connection to both Lakota and Catholic spiritual practice through the guidance of her parents. When she was very young, her father was a Catholic priest in the Church, but ultimately left that role when he was called to become a medicine man. Her mother supported her father in that decision, but decided to stay involved in the Church and continued to work alongside the nun at a local Montessori school to educate young children. As a result, Patricia learned to worship and pray in both Catholic and Lakota ways. And while the harsh assimilation policies previously established in the early 20th century led her to split from the Church for a period of time in her life, today she maintains and celebrates her roots in both spiritual paths.

“When I was little girl, I had my feet in both cultures. Then I was forced out of my home to attend boarding school—and punished for speaking Lakota, my first language. After that, I had a lot of bitterness and moved away from the Church,” said Patricia. “But over the last 20 years, as I practiced my Lakota traditional customs, I realized that they teach us to pray for those who have done us wrong. And I saw how much the Church has changed, and how today it includes and honors Lakota traditions as well. So now I’m following in my father’s footsteps as a Catholic. I’m in the fourth year of a class to become a Lakota lay minister in the Church. I’m letting the Lord lead me in that way.”

During the radio show, Charles and other guest hosts read and reflect on the scriptures being discussed that day. Patricia translates and reads the same passages in Lakota—and then shares her thoughts on how the message in the passage relates to Lakota history, culture, and spirituality. She says she loves offering that Lakota perspective and bringing light to how spiritual practice can help inform our responses to the critical issues facing our communities. Recently she spoke passionately to listeners about the protests on the Standing Rock Reservation—and the importance of joining together to protect Mother Earth.

Like Charles, Patricia hopes that—through the show—she’ll be able to reach out and offer listeners some comfort, peace, and inspiration. “My main purpose in doing the show is reaching the ones who are homebound—either elders or those who are ill,” she explains. “My hope is to reach them and inspire them, or somehow enlighten their lives. I want to share our culture and give our listeners courage and strength.”

And we hope everyone will join us in that mission. Next time you’re home from the reservation, we hope you’ll join us in the kitchen as we prepare our traditional Lakota meal. And next time you’re feeling alone, we hope you’ll join us in the classroom as we teach the next generation of leaders. And like Patricia and Charles, we hope you’ll join us in the classroom as we teach the next generation of leaders. And like Patricia and Charles, we hope you’ll join us in the classroom as we teach the next generation of leaders. And like Patricia and Charles, we hope you’ll join us in the classroom as we teach the next generation of leaders.

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Red Cloud Publishes Original Lakota Language Books

When Red Cloud Indian School first launched its Lakota language program almost ten years ago, there were very few Lakota storybooks available to share with students. Since that time, the school’s Lakota Language Project (LLP) team has been hard at work writing, editing, and publishing their own Lakota readers. These brightly illustrated story books are designed to help students learn to read from kindergarten through high school, interacting with the language in a whole new way. And this winter, after successfully copyrighting the first set of readers, the LLP team introduced them in beginning language classes on both Red Cloud campuses.

Read the full story and sign up for our e-newsletter online at www.redcloudschool.org

When Red Cloud Indian School’s buses—several with odometer readings of over 210,000—started breaking down a few years ago, something needed to be done.

"If the bus broke down, or stopped coming, I wouldn’t be able to make it to Red Cloud," explained then-sophomore Tad Bowman. "I put up with the early mornings and cold bus rides, because the education is top notch."

Red Cloud’s President, Fr. George Winzenburg, S.J. knew an ambitious plan was needed to address such a critical issue. And so he turned to the school’s national network of partners and friends for help to raise the $870,000 needed to replace the aging fleet. A long-time partner out of New York committed a matching leadership gift of $250,000 with the aim of inspiring others to give. Momentum grew and over the course of last four years, countless friends have stepped up to the challenge with donations to help make safe, reliable travel to Red Cloud’s quality education possible.

Today, with a national network of support, Red Cloud is pleased to announce that enough gifts and pledges have been secured—more than a year ahead of established goals—to purchase ten Yellow School Buses, ensuring students can continue their education this year and well into the future.

As you have no doubt read on these pages, it is an exciting time at Red Cloud. We are poised with a momentum that has allowed us to take on some of the most innovative work in our institution’s history.

Students are traveling to national conferences to learn from leaders in industry and are interacting with students at other Jesuit schools to build bonds of friendship and common values in anticipation of giving back to their reservation community. Parish leaders Charles McGaa and Patricia Catches the Enemy are connecting with more people than ever before, reaching out to every home on the reservation—by using radio waves. And The Heritage Center is introducing Native art and culture to people far beyond the edges of the Great Plains with two traveling exhibits curated by a Red Cloud alumna.

I am grateful to be a part of a community of individuals working tirelessly toward a tomorrow that is brighter than today.

But we do not work alone. The support we receive makes it possible for our students to grow in an environment rich with possibility and opportunity. Since 1888, when Chief Red Cloud walked alongside the Jesuits, Franciscans and Lakota people to establish a school for his community of children, we have worked together with countless individuals and organizations to make sure that a Lakota Jesuit education is possible here on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Ours is a partnership that ensures that our buses are not only safely crossing the plains of South Dakota, but that the hopes and dreams of the students those buses carry are founded with the same passion that drove Chief Red Cloud to make his own dream a reality.

This dream—and this momentum—must continue. Today, I ask for your financial support by returning the gift form attached to this newsletter. You might also wish to consider a bequest in your will. If you are updating your estate plans to include Red Cloud, here are two examples of bequests in as well as sample language:

1. I give to Red Cloud Indian School, Inc. _________% of my estate.
2. I give to Red Cloud Indian School, Inc. the sum of _______.
3. I give, devise and bequeath to Red Cloud Indian School, Inc. all (or a percentage) of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate.

Please do let me know of your estate plans so that we can recognize you as a member of the Red Cloud Legacy Society—or Mahpíya Lúta Owáyawa (cut here)

Red Cloud has seven Horatio Alger Scholarships created to offer a quality education of the mind, body and spirit.

Please do let me know of your estate plans so that we can recognize you as a member of the Red Cloud Legacy Society—or Mahpíya Lúta Owáyawa.