



# Dehonians USA

PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART

July 25, 2023

Dear Brothers,

In his letters, the apostle Paul mentions that he supported himself as a tentmaker and refused to receive financial support for his personal expenses. He believed that he had the right to financial support as an apostle but chose not to. However, he did encourage churches to support missionaries and pastors financially. In the letters to the Corinthians and Philippians, we learn that the Philippians supported Paul's ministry not just through prayer but also with a financial gift (2 Cor 11:9; Phil 4:15). Also, Phoebe, a woman of means, contributed financial support to others, Paul in particular.

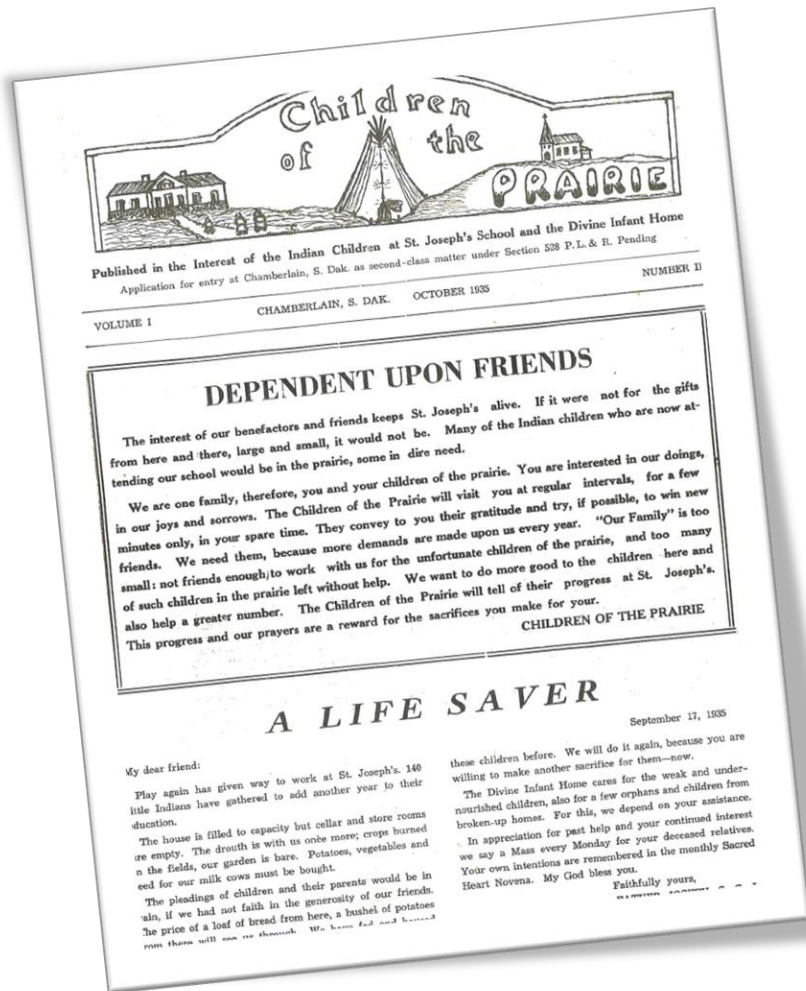
Similarly, we rely on the generosity of those who believe in our mission. Over the years, the Priests of the Sacred Heart of the US Province have developed an extensive fundraising network to finance our various ministries. Our success is not possible without our benefactors, whose generosity I would like to stress in this letter. We rely on their generosity to carry out our mission.

As we celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I couldn't help but reflect on our humble beginnings and the generosity of those who helped us get to where we are today. Our mission in various apostolates and places was only possible because of God's blessings, the vision of the leadership, the commitment of our members, the dedication of our staff, and the generosity of our benefactors. Their vision, dedication, and generosity enabled us to operate St. Joseph's Indian School, purchase the present-day SHML land, and expand into northern Mississippi and other places in the country.



*Old Sacred Heart Monastery, also known Shabby Abby*

Fundraising was mostly through magazines: *Children of the Prairie* for South Dakota, *The Mission Call* for Wisconsin, and *The Southern Missioner* for Mississippi. In the 1935 issue of the *Children of the Prairie*, Fr. Joseph Speyer made the following request for St. Joseph Indian School:



“Play again has given way to work at St. Joseph’s. 140 little Indians have gathered to add another year to their education. The house is filled to capacity but cellar and store rooms are empty. The drought is with us once more; crops burned in the fields; our garden is bare. Potatoes, vegetables and feed for our milk cows must be brought. The pleadings of children and their parents would be in vain, if we had not faith in the generosity of our friends. The price of a loaf of bread from here, a bushel of potatoes from there will see us through. We have fed and housed these children before. We will do it again, because you are willing to make another sacrifice for them—now” (Vol 1, No. 2 October 1935).

Fr. Joseph’s words remind us of the urgency of their needs and the importance of the generosity of our benefactors. I cannot imagine being responsible for caring for and feeding 140 children. It must be an incredibly daunting task. In the same magazine issue, there is a list of donors who contributed \$10, an equivalent of \$220 today.

Our brothers did what they could to keep our ministries going. Fr. Wayne Jenkins, the province archivist, told me that for some time, members of the province would look up the obituary section in newspapers, send condolence cards, and offer to say Mass for the deceased. People would send in their Mass intention and donation.

Our benefactors have always been there for us, and we are grateful for their continued support. We express our gratitude to God for our benefactors. Through their generosity, we are able to serve far and wide.

Fraternally,

Vier