



EAGLE

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ST. JOHN'S ACADEMY, JAMESTOWN, NORTH DAKOTA

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TIGIRLILY GOLD

TO PERFORM IN JAMESTOWN

St. John's Academy is delighted to announce that Tigirlily Gold, North Dakota's own award-winning, nationally rising country music duo, will be performing in Jamestown on April 18th, 2026 for a special concert in support of our school. This exciting event brings together two things we care deeply about: celebrating exceptional homegrown talent and strengthening Christian education for the families we serve.

Sisters Kendra Olson and Krista Slaubaugh—known to the country music world as Tigirlily Gold—have been singing together since childhood. Their journey began right here in North Dakota, performing across the region, building a loyal fan base, and sharing their gift with the Midwest long before Nashville discovered them.

Their rise has been extraordinary. From landing a weekly residency on Nashville's famous Broadway to topping charts with "Somebody Does", releasing their debut album *Blonde*, performing on national television, and earning the ACM Award for New Duo of the Year, Tigirlily Gold has quickly become one of country music's most exciting new acts. Their newest single, "Forever From Here," is a heartfelt tribute to the Midwest—making their return home even more meaningful.

This is more than a performance—it is a powerful moment for our school community. Every ticket purchased directly supports the mission of St. John's Academy: to provide academic excellence in a Catholic environment and inspire lives reflective of the Gospel.

The funds raised will help sustain our commitment to:

- Faith-based formation
- High academic standards
- Safe, nurturing, Christ-centered classrooms
- Opportunities for leadership, service, and personal growth





St. John's Academy

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE - ROOTED IN FAITH

SINCE 1890



From the Principal's Desk

Dear St. John's Academy Families and Friends,

As I reflect on my first few months as principal, there have been challenges and wins. The challenges have highlighted systems we must strengthen, and the wins have reminded me of the incredible potential within our staff and students. Both have helped guide my leadership and our path forward.

Running a school as unique and dynamic as ours comes with surprises of every shape and size. Some are rooted in the everyday life of students and families, supporting learner needs, navigating busy schedules, nurturing faith, and partnering with staff and parents. Others are far less glamorous but equally important such as, tracking down the source of a mysterious leak in the roof in the middle of a busy school day or finding that the boiler isn't sparking like it should. The community that supports this school by the answer of a text, phone call, or email is unmatched. Each day brings its own blend of the sacred and the unexpected.

Through it all, my commitment remains steady: to strengthen our school, support our teachers, and cultivate a faith-filled environment where students grow not only in knowledge, but in virtue and love of Christ. These responsibilities are both humbling and deeply fulfilling, and I approach them each day with prayer, purpose, and a desire to do what is best for our children.

One of the blessings in this role is experiencing St. John's not only as a principal, but as a mom. There is nothing sweeter than walking the halls and hearing one of my own children call out "Mom!", snagging a quick hug on the run, or catching a glimpse of them learning, laughing, and growing in their faith.

The partnership between families, parish, and school is the heart of who we are, and I am grateful to walk this journey alongside you. Thank you for the grace, encouragement, and support you continue to offer, not just to me, but to our entire staff.

With gratitude and faith,

Melissa Haas

Melissa Haas
Principal
St. John's Academy



Our Mission:

St. John's Academy provides academic excellence in a Catholic environment to inspire lives reflective of the Gospel.

Our Vision:

St. John's Academy, will continue to strive to be an institution that forms the whole child through an authentic Catholic education based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Church and to be distinguished in instruction and learning.

Our Core Beliefs:

- Encountering Christ
- Cultivating Virtue
- Inspiring Christ-like Relationships
- Academic Excellence
- Safe Environment



Very Rev. Chad Wilhelm

The Gift of Advent

As the days grow shorter and that familiar North Dakota chill settles in, something quiet and beautiful begins to take shape in the heart of the Church. Advent approaches, not with noise or pressure or endless to-do lists, but with a gentle invitation from God: Slow down. Make room. Let Me come to you.

One of the greatest blessings of being your priest is that I get to experience Advent, not just at St. James Basilica, but also right here in the halls and classrooms of St. John's Academy. I say this often, and I mean it every time: We have the finest, most upbeat teachers anywhere. Their love for Christ and for our students is genuine, and it shows in the patience, creativity, and joy they bring into the classroom day after day, and how they work with me and our Administration. Our students are wonderful: curious, joyful, funny, sometimes loud, sometimes reverent, always full of life. And I'm deeply proud of our principal and administration, whose leadership keeps our mission strong and our school anchored in faith of Christ the Savior.

To be honest with you, on some of those long parish days, when everything seems to come at once, when the phone won't stop ringing, when the needs are great and the time is short, there is nothing better than stepping away for a few minutes and visiting a classroom. It is impossible to stay discouraged around our school family. The children lift me up. The teachers lift me up. Just being here reminds me why we do what we do: to bring Christ to our children and to let our children teach us how to welcome Him with simple hearts.

As Advent arrives, I want to invite our families, parents, grandparents, students, and anyone who calls St. John's home to prepare for Christmas in a truly Catholic way. Here are a few simple customs that can fill your home with grace and help welcome Jesus into your hearts, your homes, our school, and our beloved St. James Basilica:

1. Light the Advent Wreath Together

Set aside a moment to gather around a wreath, light the candles, and pray. Let your children help lead the prayer. They love it more than you think. A good place for your Advent Wreath is on your table where you eat, and light it before you eat and pray.

2. Set Up a Nativity Scene Slowly

Instead of placing everything out at once, build the scene gradually:

- Week 1: the stable
- Week 2: the animals
- Week 3: Mary and Joseph beginning their "journey"
- Christmas Eve: place Baby Jesus

This teaches anticipation, patience, and wonder.

3. Use a "Straw for Baby Jesus" Jar

Every time someone does a good deed: shares, forgives, helps, listens! Add a piece of straw (real or paper) to a small manger.

By Christmas, the crib is soft and ready for Jesus.

4. Bless Your Home

Make the Sign of the Cross on the front door and pray: "Lord Jesus, be the light of this home. Make our hearts ready for Your coming."

5. Choose a Family Advent Prayer

Keep it simple! Maybe a short Scripture verse before dinner, the Hail Mary before bed.

6. Practice Small Acts of Mercy

Let Advent be a season of kindness:

- Write a card to someone who is lonely.
- Let your child choose a toy to give away.
- Pray for a classmate or teacher by name.
- These small acts soften the heart for the Savior.

7. Visit your Church

Stop by your church for five quiet minutes.

Sit. Breathe. Tell the Lord what's on your heart.

My prayer for you is simple:

May your home be filled with hope.

May your hearts be filled with peace.

May Jesus find you waiting for Him with love.

From all of us at St. John's Academy—our teachers, staff, students, and parish family—may this Advent bring you closer to Christ, and may your Christmas be blessed with His joy. Come, Lord Jesus.

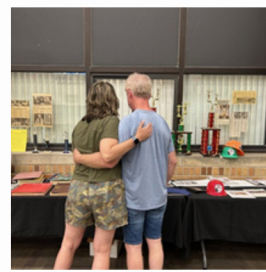
Fr. Wilhelm

All

ALUMNI Reunion RECAP



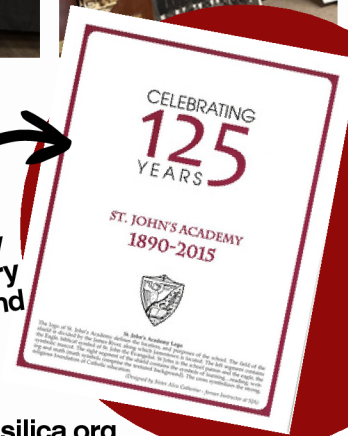
St. John's Academy was filled with joy and nostalgia this July as more than 100 alumni and friends gathered for our All-Alumni Reunion. Guests enjoyed reconnecting with classmates, reminiscing over photos and memorabilia from the past century, and touring both the original and newly renovated parts of the school. Laughter, stories, and fond memories filled the halls once again—proof that the spirit of St. John's continues to unite generations of students and friends. We are privileged to be a part of their family legacy.



**FOLLOW OUR ALUMNI
FACEBOOK PAGE!
ALUMNI OF ST JOHN'S ACADEMY**



If you would like a copy of this 125th Anniversary booklet, let us know and we will mail you one!



In Memoriam

*St. John's Academy remembers our alumni, friends, and family.
We apologize for any omissions.*

Harvey Albright died 8/17/03 - Class of 1956
Kenneth Gengler died 5/2/12 - Class of 1956
Gordon Tschider died 6/23/12 - Class of 1961
Loraine Kauphusman died 2/2/2025 - Class of 1945
Shirley Jean Rasmusson died 2/19/2025 - Class of 1949
Arlene McClure died 2/19/2025 - Class of 1953
Marilee Lasch died 3/17/2025 - Class of 1962
Donald Linn died 3/20/2025 - Class of 1961
Jerry Berquist died 4/24/2025 - Class of 1968
James Schlosser died 4/26/2025 - Class of 1955
Mary Mulfinger died 6/21/2025 - SJA Friend
Judith Schley Hansen died 6/30/2025 - Class of 1960
Audrey Rexine Heier died 7/16/2025 - Class of 1948
Zach Schlecht died 8/26/2025 - Class of 1993
Cory Graves died 8/28/2025 - Class of 1985
Patricia Lewis Brown McAnallen died 8/29/2025 - Class of 1956
Helen Geinert died 9/7/2025 - SJA Friend
Joan "Peach" Johnson Cichos died 9/23/2025 - Class of 1964
David Wagenmann died 10/20/2025 - Class of 1965
Louise Wanzek died 10/24/2025 - Class of 1954
Jason Schulz died 11/5/2025 - Class of 1983
Fred Fennern (husband of Mary Lavey Fennern '49) - died 11/5/2025

Please send memorial information to sarah.sankey@k12.nd.us or call 701.252.3397



ADVANCING OUR MISSION WITH PAM PERLEBERG

ST. JOHN'S ACADEMY
ADVANCEMENT DIRECTOR

Greetings SJA Alumni & Friends,

As we enter the holiday season, it is the perfect time to express our thankfulness for the blessings bestowed upon St. John's Academy. Over the summer it was our honor and pleasure to host the All-School Reunion - it was wonderful seeing old classmates reconnect after not seeing each other for decades - and hearing the stories and laughter was heartwarming. Thank you for all of you that shared your memorabilia with us, and the stories for future generations to enjoy and treasure.

As anyone who has ever remodeled an older home knows - while the beauty and structure of an older building is the core of its existence, it is the behind-the-scenes upkeep that holds it all together! We love our Centenarian age school, but we also need to keep it current, as much as fiscally possible.

Our students have always and will always be our number one priority - and providing them a safe, comfortable environment is imperative. We are planning on upgrading our current security camera system, doors and adding additional cameras outside on the playground as well as around the perimeter of the building. The tragedy at Annunciation Church in Minneapolis was a stark reminder that none of our communities are exempt from violence, and we must do whatever we can to protect our children. The cost for the upgrade will be above our normal building maintenance & upkeep budget, but we hope to subsidize the expense through grants and donations.

A prospective project aimed at teaching our children sustainable growing practices as well as providing fresh vegetables for our cafeteria is a hydroponic garden. For those unfamiliar, a hydroponic garden is an eco-friendly indoor garden to grow vegetables using a water based nutrient solution rather than soil. I'm exploring grants to support this initiative, and donations are welcome as well.

When I witnessed the interaction between the generations at the reunion and see the joy our students bring to the residents of Ava Maria when they joined them for Mass recently - the love runs deep within the hearts of all those tied to St. John's Academy. You cannot manufacture dedication - it evolves through the years. Our school continues to thrive because of the support of faithful alumni and friends - *THANK YOU*.

Looking ahead - important dates to add to your calendar -

January 10th- 11th, 2026 - 5th Annual Newman Mid-Winter Challenge Basketball Tournament - kids in grades 2nd to 8th - the tourney has become a great community event involving over 60 teams from the region.

February 12th, 2026 - Giving Hearts Day - last year we were blessed with 214 gifts from generous donors totaling \$166,060. Please let me know if you are **interested in making a leading Match gift** in honor or memory of a loved one.

April 18th, 2026 - SJA Presents...Tigirlily Gold - we are proud to be bringing the country duo back to ND to perform at the Jamestown Civic Center, with opening act Rogue Royal. Tickets on sale at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Happy Holidays! Please stop by if you are in the area, always enjoy visiting with friends of SJA.

Pam Perleberg

Office: 701-252-3397

Cell: 701-293-0495

Email: advancement@stjamesbasilica.org



Legacy GIVING



One Time Gift - Make an immediate impact on our school mission and benefit from a charitable tax deduction. All gifts to St. John's Academy are tax deductible - and can be designated to a project/fund of your choice.

Endowment Gift Fund - Gifts of any size can be invested in the St. John's Academy Endowment Fund. Annual endowment gifts of \$5,000 or greater provide a 40% tax credit (ND Tax Credit). The SJA Endowment will live on for years to come - and your gift will make a lasting impact.

IRA Charitable Distribution - at age 72 or older, you can take advantage of the IRA qualified charitable distribution to avoid federal income taxes on your gift and qualify for your required minimum distribution. Retirement plan assets are often taxed at high rates. Therefore, it can be advantageous to pass other assets to heirs that are taxed at lower rates and donate retirement plan assets such as 401(k), 403(b) or IRA's to St. John's Academy.

Bequest/Life Insurance - You can designate St. John's Academy as a beneficiary of your assets through your will, trust, or beneficiary designation form. You maintain ownership control of your assets during your life and make a gift to SJA when you pass away. You can work out the details with your attorney and/or financial planners - but if you are making a bequest to SJA, we would appreciate being informed - so we may recognize your generosity.

WHY SUPPORT SJA?

By supporting St. John's Academy, you contribute to the educational and spiritual growth of young people in the community. This involvement strengthens community ties and builds a network of support that benefits everyone.

Your contributions enhance the educational experience by funding programs, facilities, and resources that may not be fully covered by tuition alone. This support directly impacts the quality of education students receive, ensuring they have access to a well-rounded curriculum and extracurricular activities.

Investing in education is an investment in the future of the community. By supporting local Christian schools, you contribute to the development of future leaders who are grounded in faith and ethics. These students often become active members of the community, contributing positively to its growth and sustainability.

Contact Advancement Director Pam Perleberg
for more information!
701-252-3397 or advancement@stjamesbasilica.org



35th Annual HOPE DINNER & AUCTION

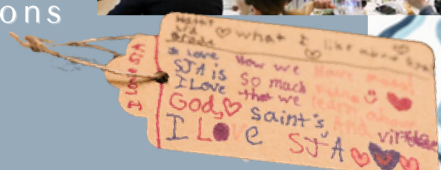
Celebrating 35 Years of HOPE

This year, St. John's Academy joyfully celebrated the 35th anniversary of our HOPE Dinner & Auction—Help Offer Private Education. What began as a simple spaghetti supper in the 1990s has grown into our school's largest and most cherished fundraiser, a tradition woven into the fabric of our community.

The evening was filled with meaningful moments, including the special honor of welcoming the founders of the very first HOPE Dinner. Guests loved reminiscing through photos from past events, a beautiful reminder of how far this tradition has come and how many lives it has touched.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, this year was a record-grossing celebration. The love, commitment, and community spirit felt throughout the night were truly palpable.

To everyone who continues to support St. John's Academy through HOPE—thank you. Your dedication plays a vital role in ensuring that our mission and the gift of private education continue for generations to come.



APRIL 18TH
JAMESTOWN CIVIC CENTER

TIGIRLILY GOLD TO PERFORM IN JAMESTOWN

continued...



Since ticket sales opened on November 7, we've already seen wonderful enthusiasm, with hundreds of tickets sold and families, alumni, and supporters expressing excitement about the chance to be part of something special.

Thirteen local businesses have stepped forward as sponsors, demonstrating Jamestown's belief in the importance of strong Christian education and vibrant community partnership.

Events like this remind us how powerful it is when our community gathers around a shared purpose. Welcoming Tigirlily Gold back to their home state is a celebration of talent, hard work, and hometown pride—but it is also a celebration of what makes Jamestown strong: families, faith, and the willingness to come together for something bigger than ourselves.

This concert gives our alumni and supporters a chance to reconnect, our current families a chance to celebrate, and our wider community a chance to support the future of St. John's Academy.

We invite all alumni, families, parishioners, and friends of St. John's Academy to join us for this extraordinary evening. Your presence matters. Your support strengthens our mission. And together, we can continue to ensure that St. John's Academy remains a place where faith is alive, students are known and loved, and the Gospel shapes every aspect of learning. Come enjoy an incredible night of music—and help us build the future of Christian education in Jamestown.



TICKET INFO ON PAGE 9



DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD

St. John's Academy was proud to recognize alumnus Cliff Orr, Class of 1955, with the Distinguished Graduate Award from the National Catholic Education Association. This award honors graduates who have continued to live out the values of Catholic education through faith-filled service, leadership, and dedication to their communities.

Cliff has been a steadfast supporter of St. John's Academy throughout his life, generously sharing his time, talent, and passion to help the school thrive. His commitment to Catholic education and to the mission of SJA has made a lasting impact on generations of students and families.

We were truly honored to celebrate Cliff and his lifelong loyalty. His example continues to inspire our community and reminds us of the enduring strength of a Christ-centered education.

Thank you, Cliff, for your many decades of support!



COMPING UP AT SJA...

Christmas at the Academy

Sunday
December 14th
2:00 - 4:00pm

Picture with Santa
Bounce Houses
Cookies, Ornaments, & More!



Youth Basketball Tournament January 10-11th in Jamestown

Hosted by St. John's Academy, teams from all over the region come to compete with the best.
All proceeds benefit the Academy.



Catholic Schools Week January 26th - 30th

follow us on social media for a look into the festivities!



Catholic Schools
United in Faith and Community



Giving Hearts Day

Thursday February 12th
6:00 - 8:00 pm
@ St. John's Academy



Join Us!



TIGIRLILY Gold

APRIL 18TH 2026

@ JAMESTOWN CIVIC CENTER

TICKETS ARE ON
SALE NOW! >>>

MORE DETAILS ON
OUR WEBSITE:

STJOHNSACADEMYND.ORG
>TIGIRLILY GOLD CONCERT





Community of Saints



Learn more about our Community of Saints Program on our website!
stjohnsacademynd.org



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Our Mission:

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to inspire lives reflective of the Gospel.*



www.stjohnsacademynd.org



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St. Johns Academy



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St. John's Academy Eagles

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