

I attended Holy Rosary Boarding School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in 1958 and 1962, along with my Brother, Sister, and several cousins. It is now called the Red Cloud Indian School.

I was a "Wet the Bedder" and forced to walk to the laundry, even on extremely cold mornings, and return to change bedding before sunrise. Every morning was a ritual of corn meal mush for breakfast, except for cornflakes on Sunday. Boys and girls were separated, except during classroom. Social gatherings were rare. I was forced to pick potatoes during harvest time. I received public swats/slashing on my backside for even minor infractions, such as chapped hands, running, tardiness, etc... I worked in the Shoe Shop repairing shoes and worked shoveling coal to heat the school. I shoveled walkways for residents/teachers in the school, without pay or thanks. I was subject to verbal abuse by a teacher and/or her drunken spouse and punished with a ruler on the back of my hand or writing on the blackboard. I was fortunate in that my Grandmother lived in Pine Ridge but rarely got to visit her.