

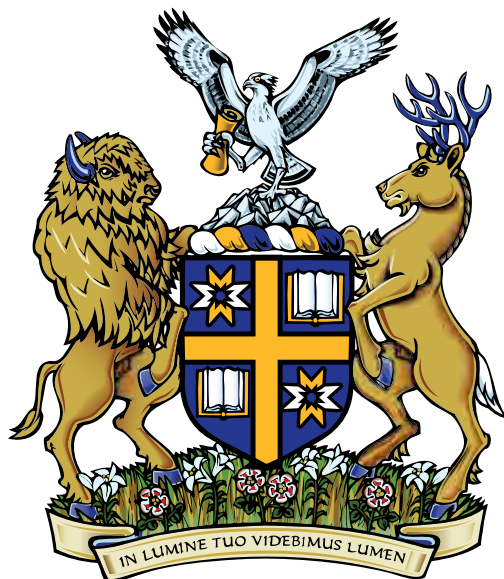
2021 Report to Community

THE Spirit OF St. Mary's  
People Pride Passion



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## Vision

St. Mary's University will be a leader in post-secondary education, open to all, and focused on developing the whole person: mind, body and spirit. Founded on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, St. Mary's will prepare its students to live with integrity, compassion and confidence.

## Mission

St. Mary's is an innovative teaching and research university that provides affordable, accredited and highly valued degrees in the Liberal Arts, Sciences and Education. Through the pursuit of knowledge and service to the community, we prepare our students to become lifelong learners, engaged citizens and compassionate members of society.

## Land acknowledgment

St. Mary's University campus sits on land that has a deep relational history and ongoing presence with the Indigenous Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial: the Siksikaisitapi (the Blackfoot Confederacy), the Siksika, the Kainai, the Piikani and the Umskappi Piikani. Mohkinstis is also home to the Tsuut'ina peoples, a Dene people who travelled from the North and were signatories to Treaty 7 alongside the Iyârhe Nakoda Peoples, the Chiniki, Wesley and Bearspaw First Nations. This place is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3, a proud post-contact Nation formed from the union of First Nations families and European Settlers.

As an academic institution, we have a responsibility to honour these long-standing, and ongoing relationships to land, and to learn how we can become good relatives here.



# Message from the President

As I sit here and compose my thoughts for what will be my last Report to Community contribution, I find myself pausing to reflect on the amazing accomplishments, initiatives and people who have had such a transformative impact on St. Mary's University.

It has become a cliché to say this, but it is no less true: this has been a year like no other. Indeed, when we sat down to finalize last year's Report to Community, we were sure then that the pandemic was almost over. Instead, it has persisted, changing literally every initiative, class and activity that the University has undertaken. What the pandemic has not done is negatively impact the dynamism, creativity and passion of the faculty, staff, students, and the community that make up our unique university.

This Report to Community is a celebration of the people, passion and purpose that underpin what St. Mary's University is all about: creating engaged citizens of the world who are armed with critical thinking skills, compassion and a dedication to service above self.

This has also afforded me the opportunity to reflect on the people who have had such a large impact on our institution and the initiatives we have undertaken during my tenure at St. Mary's.

Together we were able to take St. Mary's from a university college to a full-fledged university, emblemized by the awarding of a beautiful Coat of Arms. We were able to add the remarkable Heritage Centre in the heart of our campus, creating a new state-of-the-art teaching and performance hall and much-needed gathering spaces for our students. We restored our historic 100-year-old water tower, turning it into the award-winning Mauro Art Gallery and learning space. We expanded and renovated our Library thanks to the generous support of the Basilian Fathers of Toronto, and we created a new custom-built Reading Room for our special collections.

St. Mary's also became home to what was then only the second Heritage Edition of the seven-volume St. John's Bible held in Canada, an initiative that continues to attract hundreds of artists, calligraphers and art lovers to the campus every year. For six years our St. Mary's Ghost Tour celebrated the institution's long history, all while attracting thousands of visitors to campus. And our Stampede Breakfast became one of the largest events in the city, attracting more than 3,000 guests in one year alone.

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Of all the many initiatives, one that I am most thankful for is the President's Volunteer Team (PVT), an initiative I started some five years ago in the hopes that a handful of students would join me in monthly volunteering events. Instead, more than 100 students volunteered overnight for the first event, and since then we have worked together in our hundreds to support important causes, from preparing meals for the Mustard Seed and Feed the Hungry, to building houses for Habitat for Humanity, to lighting 3,500 candles each Remembrance Day in honour of those veterans who lost their lives in securing our freedom.

All of this, and so much more, reminds me of the thanks that is owed to so many.

To our committed donors who give so generously and selflessly to the University to help with our many needs, thank you for your faith in us and thank you for not only making us a better university, but a more equitable and inclusive one. You have transformed lives.

Thank you to our First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders who teach us, every day, how to walk in a good way, and thank you to their communities who support us and guide us, who teach us and enlighten us, and who firmly root us in the culture and history of these beautiful traditional lands that we share together.

To our alumni and student body, thank you for supporting the University, thank you for reminding us of our social mission and thank you for giving us renewed purpose. You are our past, our present and our future.

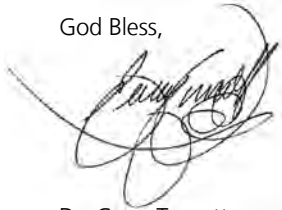
To our faculty and our staff, thank you for your continued commitment to providing the best educational experience for our students. Your dedication to St. Mary's is inspiring and it has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to work alongside each one of you.

Finally, to our dedicated Board of Governors, the Board Chairs I have served under, the committee representatives who have helped us to grow and improve, and to our Chancellor Bishop William McGrattan, and before him Bishop Emeritus Henry: thank you for your faith in me, your belief in St. Mary's and in your ongoing and passionate support of this remarkable institution.

In the last 10 years that I have been here, the University has grown by more than 100 percent — but its journey is just beginning, and the future ahead is bright.

Thank you for allowing me to stand on the presidential shoulders of the giants who came before me, and for letting me be a small part of this community that I have cherished and admired.

God Bless,



Dr. Gerry Turcotte  
President and Vice-Chancellor



# Message from the Chancellor

*"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen."*

1 Peter 4:10-11

As Chancellor of St. Mary's University, I have witnessed, in the midst of this pandemic, the strength and conviction of a community dedicated to the service of others, helping to ensure that the gift of a strong liberal arts and sciences education based in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition is available to all.

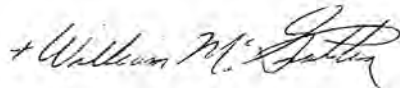
At a time when distancing has been required and has strained interpersonal relationships, we find ourselves connected to others through our desire to listen, learn, grow and mature.

The gifts of learning, of understanding the dignity of the human person, of rebuilding our society on values that are just and compassionate, are the gifts that are much needed in today's time, in this polarized society.

Dr. Turcotte has shared these gifts with each member of the St. Mary's community for over 10 years and has encouraged everyone to answer God's call generously with a life dedicated to service, mercy, compassion and the pursuit of social justice. Though Dr. Turcotte will be leaving at the end of this academic year, he will leave knowing that the work he has done and the university he has poured his heart and soul into will continue to carry out its mission and purpose in God.

It has been an honour to serve and support the academic community of St. Mary's University alongside Dr. Turcotte, a community that will continue to grow and excel in the liberal arts and sciences but above all, in applying that knowledge and leadership in the service of God and His people.

Yours in Christ,



Most Reverend William T. McGratton  
Bishop of Calgary  
Chancellor





## Message from the Board Chair

As our institution and the world around us continues to grapple with the challenges presented by the global pandemic, I reflect on St. Mary's accomplishments with immense pride. As Board Chair for St. Mary's University, I have witnessed the amazing spirit that lives within our people, the sense of dedication each member of our community has to providing an excellent education to our wonderful students and the sense of community that has lifted us up during some very difficult times. St. Mary's dedicated faculty and staff are deeply committed to help students maximize their potential and achieve their educational dreams. Even in the face of global uncertainty, the commitment to each other and the values of a strong liberal arts and science education rooted in Catholic Intellectual Traditions has helped carry us through.

This past year has been difficult, of that there is no doubt, but together we have found a way to thrive amongst the uncertainty. Though this past year may not have transpired how anyone planned, it was the passion, purpose and people of St. Mary's University who have ensured that our students can continue receiving the amazing educational opportunities for which St. Mary's has become so well known.

This would not have been possible without the leadership and guidance of Dr. Gerry Turcotte. I have known Dr. Turcotte for many years and have had the privilege of working along side him in my previous role as Superintendent of the Calgary Catholic School District. Having witnessed St. Mary's University's transformational growth under Dr. Turcotte's stewardship has truly been a sight to behold. Though Dr. Turcotte will be leaving St. Mary's in June of 2022, his legacy will continue to live as we begin to chart a new course forward.

I am honoured and privileged to serve as the Chair of the St. Mary's University Board of Governors, to work collaboratively with a group of dedicated and committed volunteers who selflessly contribute their time, wisdom and skills as offerings of service and leadership to this amazing institution. I look forward to helping St. Mary's continue to prosper and to providing a place for our students to grow and reach their enormous potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Strother". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Strother  
Chair and Treasurer  
Board of Governors

# Board of Governors

as of June 29, 2021

Most Reverend William T. McGrattan	Chancellor
Mr. Gary Strother	Chair and Treasurer
Mr. Paul Valentine	Vice-Chair
Mr. Bonnie Annicchiarico	Chancellor's Designate
Dr. Gerry Turcotte	President and Vice-Chancellor
Dr. Norman Knowles	Faculty Representative
Ms. Kessa Stuckert	Student Representative
Mr. Devin Elkin	Community Advisory Council Representative
Mr. Nathan Ruff	Administrative Staff Representative
Ms. Kara Shaw	Alumni Representative
Most Reverend Gregory Kerr-Wilson	Ecumenical Representative

# Members at Large

Ms. Annette Bruised Head  
Ms. Mary Comeau  
Dr. Linda Dudar  
Ms. Monique Fry  
Mr. Lee Funke  
Mr. Roberto Geremia  
Ms. Debra Mauro  
Mr. Scott Morrison

# Senior Officers

Ms. Kim Bourque, University Secretary  
Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell, Vice-President Academic and Provost  
Mr. John Deausy, Vice-President Finance and CFO  
Ms. Thérèse Takacs, Vice-President Advancement and Campus Services



# Message from the Vice-Presidents

As we continued to overcome challenges presented by the global pandemic, the 2020–21 academic year was highlighted by the unfailing determination, resilience and dedication of our students, faculty and staff. We embarked on a full year of online learning environments and remote working arrangements. While this was not how any of us had envisioned the year playing out, it is a testament to the St. Mary's community that we were all able to support each other and ensure that our students could continue to pursue their studies and receive the strong liberal arts and sciences education for which St. Mary's has become known.

Our entire community rallied around each other as we overcame these new challenges. Even as restrictions continued to be in place, collectively we were able to mobilize our new environments and ensure that students received the best possible educational experience. The tireless work of faculty to create engaging course material through online delivery and the hours spent by our Information Technology department to ensure faculty and students had the necessary equipment to accommodate online learning were paramount in ensuring that together as a community we could continue to move forward.

Though restrictions once again forced us to alter our Convocation plan, internal community members answered the call to help make this milestone achievement special for graduands. Volunteers answered the call to help distribute amazing graduation boxes to students and a record number of attendees participated in our virtual ceremony.

We have all worked hard to be financially prudent over the past year to ensure that St. Mary's University has the resources available to adapt

to changing needs and shifting learning dynamics. The outpouring of support and generosity from our community towards the Student Emergency Bursary Fund and the President's Dinner UnGala Fund, which raised over \$150,000, helped provide financial support for any student who needed it during these difficult times, and for that we cannot be more thankful.

While we may not have returned to "normal," we were able to welcome students, staff and faculty back onto campus in September 2021, a sight that was truly humbling and inspirational. St. Mary's is an institution founded on interpersonal relationships and that connection to community and the ability to once again be together was truly a special sight to behold.

Collectively we would also like to thank Dr. Turcotte for his leadership over this past year and during his tenure at St. Mary's. Under his watch we have grown from humble beginnings as a university college into a university and cemented our place as a leading liberal arts and sciences institution. His tireless dedication to St. Mary's University has truly known no end. From championing our cause to government officials, to forming lasting relationships with individuals who have become pillars of the St. Mary's community, Dr. Turcotte leaves St. Mary's poised for a very bright future.

We enter this year reinvigorated in the opportunities that lie ahead, armed with the knowledge that together as a community united we are able to overcome, persevere and achieve amazing things.



Dr. Tara Hyland Russell  
Vice-President Academic  
and Provost



John Deausy  
Vice-President Finance  
and CFO



Thérèse Takacs  
Vice-President Advancement  
and Campus Services

# Message from the President, Student Legislative Council

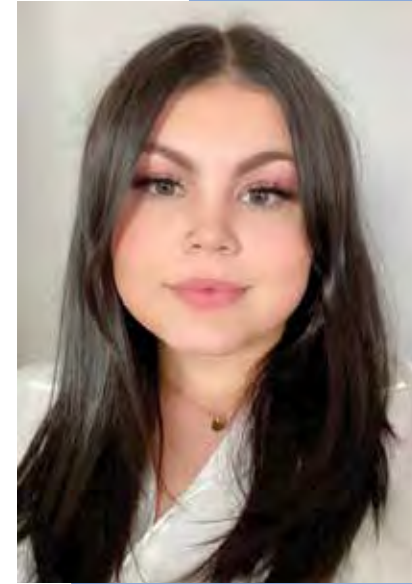
To represent the St. Mary's University student body is both an honour and a privilege.

During a time that has been anything but normal, my fellow Student Legislative Council members and I understand that students need elected officials who will advocate and champion for them, as well as play a fundamental role in helping to shape their student and campus experience.

To be back on campus as a community is something that we are all thankful for and I look forward to continuing the great work previous councils have implemented towards social justice initiatives, as well as the many new and exciting initiatives we have planned for St. Mary's students over the course of this new year.

There is plenty of work to be done, but I know that I and my fellow SLC members look forward to the opportunity to serve the St. Mary's student body with compassion, dedication, dignity and honour.

Kessa Stuckert  
President  
Student Legislative Council



# A fond farewell to President Gerry Turcotte

As St. Mary's University prepares to bid farewell to President Dr. Gerry Turcotte, students, faculty, staff and the wider community have the opportunity look back on the memorable moments and initiatives that have had a transformative impact on the University — and in which Dr. Turcotte figures prominently.

Over the past 10 years at the helm of St. Mary's, the University has grown in profound ways, both in size and in reach, transitioning from a university college into a full-fledged university, all while maintaining the core principles of small class sizes, outstanding educational experiences in the liberal arts, a commitment to service and social justice, and the importance of developing the whole student: mind, body, and spirit.

The legacy Dr. Turcotte leaves at St. Mary's will continue to have a real impact in communities near and far long after he leaves. The Humanities 101 program he championed and helped re-launch, for example, will continue to serve people who have previously encountered barriers to post-secondary education. The meaningful work with Indigenous leaders and community members to advance Indigenous initiatives and work towards reconciliation will continue, following in Dr. Turcotte's steps.

Thank you, Dr. Turcotte, for your ethical leadership and your clear and steadfast devotion to the entire St. Mary's community — students, faculty, staff, donors, alumni and others throughout the community.

The next few pages celebrate Dr. Turcotte's vision and spirit in action, including photos and messages from grateful community members.

30th Anniversary Mass



Grad Box delivery

St. Mary's University has been blessed to have Dr. Gerry Turcotte at the helm these past 10 years. Not only was St. Mary's granted university status to become Calgary's second university in 2004, it is also one of the fastest growing post-secondary institutions in Alberta. The Calgary Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League congratulates Dr. Gerry Turcotte on his many accomplishments and prays that he will be abundantly blessed as he begins the next chapter of his life.

*Jane Myhre, Calgary Diocesan  
CWL President*





Gerry has taken this small Catholic, liberal arts school and made it a valuable piece of Alberta's educational family. Thank you for everything you have done for Catholic education in Calgary and Southern Alberta. My family and the entire St. Mary's family will never forget you and your success in moving this school forward. God bless you, and if I may paraphrase from the school's motto "From your light, we saw more light."

*The Valentine Family*



*Installation as President*



*Mauro Gallery opening*



2021 Report to Community



*Heritage Centre opening*



*Ghost Tour*

Dr. Turcotte has been a leader with the utmost integrity, tirelessly advocating for St. Mary's at all levels of government, championing the amazing initiatives and programs that are preparing students to make real impacts out in the world. The legacy that Dr. Turcotte leaves behind at St. Mary's is one of devoted, ethical leadership centred on compassion and committed to social justice and service of community.

*Dr. Allan Markin*



*Exercise Freedom Together Challenge*











*President's Dinner*

Dr. Turcotte has made many sacrifices along the way to ensure that St. Mary's is in a position to thrive, sacrifices that haven't gone unnoticed but can never be repaid. He has been the biggest champion for St. Mary's, at all levels, working tirelessly for equitable funding, sharing impactful student stories and the amazing programming that goes on at St. Mary's. From the bottom of our hearts, we are grateful for his leadership, his passion, his compassion and his hard work.

*Tom and Debra Mauro*



*St. John's Bible reception*



*St. Mary's University name change*

Gerry has been an inspiration to the University in promoting the total education of a student; bringing together an amalgamation of faith, community and education. After the student has completed their studies they are equipped to contribute to the community as leaders, applying many attributes learned while attending St. Mary's University. We are proud supporters of St. Mary's and the achievements of Gerry during his tenure.

*The Blasetti Family*



*Community influencers breakfast*



*Convocation*

I have marvelled at the tremendous energy level and drive Dr. Turcotte has brought to and sustained at the institution. The growth of St. Mary's under his leadership has been simply astounding. It has quickly developed a reputation for excellence in developing and training our future Catholic teachers. The University is known for its smaller undergraduate classes and for providing a Catholic perspective in its courses.

*Willis Winter, President, Alberta Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation*



# St. Mary's University at a glance

## The liberal arts and sciences advantage

Emphasis on the liberal arts and sciences prepares graduates to be knowledgeable, nimble, adaptable and ready to make a difference in a rapidly changing world.



## Snapshot 2020–21



## Our Brand



### Icon

The icon is a star, based on the letter M for the Virgin Mary. Four qualities of Mary (simplicity, clarity, purity and confidence) are represented by the four Ms that comprise the image. The Ms frame a source of light, representing the enlightenment within each student.



### Mascot

Zeus



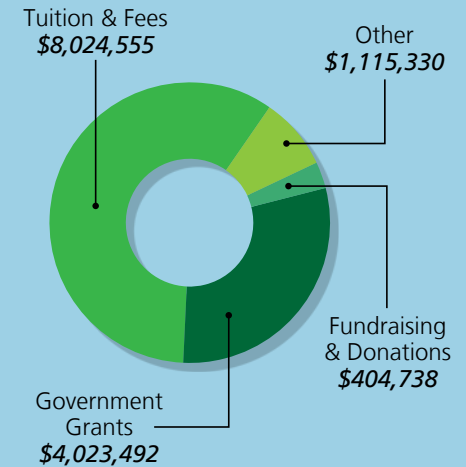
### Logo

The emphasis of the logo is on the name Mary. The letter T is a pedestal raising the icon's profile. The light encircled by the Ms becomes a flame, with the T as the candle. The T forms a simple cross with Mary, with the star standing in witness above.

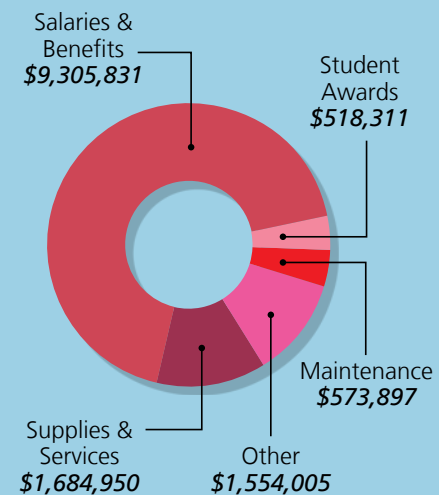
### Colours



## Operating Revenues



## Operating Expenses



## Student success

**60**  
students received a total of \$32,300 in COVID-19 pandemic relief bursaries

**65**  
President's Circle Scholarships totalling \$70,550 awarded to new students entering from high school who achieve an average of 80 per cent or higher on averages calculated on the five best Grade 11 or Grade 12 admission subjects



**262**

Student Awards totalling \$518,311 distributed in 2020-2021

## Involved



## Vibrant student life

**50%**  
of students volunteer on campus or in the community

## Rigorous academic programs

Start at St. Mary's and succeed anywhere! St. Mary's offers high-quality, accredited undergraduate degrees valued by employers and recognized nationally and internationally for graduate-level study.

### Bachelor of Arts 3 or 4 years

Degrees in English, General Studies (3-year only), History, Liberal Studies (4-year only), Psychology, Social Justice & Catholic Studies

Minors in Canadian Studies, Catholic Studies, Drama, English, Family Studies, Management, Philosophy, Political Studies, Psychology, Science Studies, Sociology

### Bachelor of Education (Elementary) 2 years

After-Degree

### Bachelor of Education (Secondary) 2 years

After-Degree

### Bachelor of Science 4 years

Major in Biology

### University Transfer up to 2 years

Business, Catholic Studies, Classics, Drama, Economics, Family Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology and more

### Pre-professional

Prepare for professional programs including Law, Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, Social Work, Veterinary

Certificate of Catholic Educational Leadership (CCEL) equips teachers and administrations in religious education

### One Admission, Two Degrees

BA or BSc + BEd

A pathway for St. Mary's students into both a four-year BA or BSc AND the two-year BEd (Elementary) After-Degree

# Get to know St. Mary's

St. Mary's University is well positioned to thrive in this current climate of rapid global change and challenge. Unique and different, it brings together the very best of all aspects of learning — in mind, body and spirit — to enable students to develop their gifts, realize their potential and contribute to a better world.

## St. Mary's is a liberal arts university

As a liberal arts university, St. Mary's focuses on cultivating the critical, creative and curious mind; it teaches people how to think rather than dictating what they ought to think. It seeks to provide a breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding across disciplines and methods, and is by its very nature collaborative and interdisciplinary. It cultivates clear thinking and effective communication while instilling a process of ongoing questioning and discernment that furthers the ability to solve problems. At its best, the liberal arts university produces graduates with a love of learning who are teachable and trainable, curious and creative, and from whom new ideas emerge. Graduates become active citizens ready and eager to participate in the life of their community and the wider world.

## St. Mary's is a Catholic university

St. Mary's is rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, which holds that the search for truth is enriched by sensitivity to the ethical and spiritual dimensions of life, while also recognizing that faith itself must be informed by critical inquiry. The Catholic Intellectual Tradition resists the temptation to compartmentalize knowledge and experience, and is committed to the formation of the whole person. It seeks to create thoughtful and compassionate citizens committed to justice and able to respond sensitively and creatively to changing social needs and cultural realities.

## St. Mary's balances Catholic identity while embracing diversity and welcoming all

St. Mary's is an open and welcoming community to all, which is an extension of its identity as a Catholic university. It is conscious of God working in each person's life, recognizing the dignity of the individual as a unique creation and revelation of the divine. Because all persons are created in the likeness and image of God, all persons are to be treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination on any grounds has no place in a Catholic university. St. Mary's welcomes all to enter into conversation, learn from experience and, in the process, more fully understand themselves. Such conversations are essential in an increasingly diverse, multicultural society and interconnected world.

# New Dean, Arts and Sciences strengthens St. Mary's position as liberal arts education leader

Karim Dharamsi, PhD, joined St. Mary's University in July 2021 as Dean of Arts and Sciences, bringing a wealth of post-secondary experience and visionary and operational strengths that will benefit students, faculty and the University as a whole.

The former Associate Professor of Philosophy and Chair of General Education at Calgary's Mount Royal University, Dr. Dharamsi is an experienced administrator who was instrumental in helping to build the liberal arts and sciences education core which informs every MRU degree. He held the Chair's position for 10 years, playing a key role in MRU's complete transition from a college to a university.

Dr. Dharamsi has a deep commitment to service and to the value of St. Mary's mission. Hallmarks of his career have been his commitment to diversity, to mentoring and to finding meaningful avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration.

In addition to his administrative gifts, which include program development and assessment, budgeting and faculty mentorship, Dr. Dharamsi also draws upon years of experience as an award-winning teacher and scholar committed to both undergraduate and graduate education. He has published articles on the philosophy of history, the philosophy of R.G. Collingwood, Wittgenstein and Frege, and the philosophy of education and liberal education.

St. Mary's conducted a rigorous search for this important leadership position, seeking a dean with the capacity to help St. Mary's reach the exciting and ambitious future it envisions, to further augment teaching and research excellence, and to strengthen the University's position as one of the leading destinations for a liberal arts and sciences education.





# At-home learning kits help students transform kitchens into science labs

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique challenge for students when it came to completing the lab component of science courses, and St. Mary's University Lab Coordinator Dylon Thompson (B.Sc. – Biology 2019) played a crucial role in ensuring the pandemic didn't adversely affect students' learning.

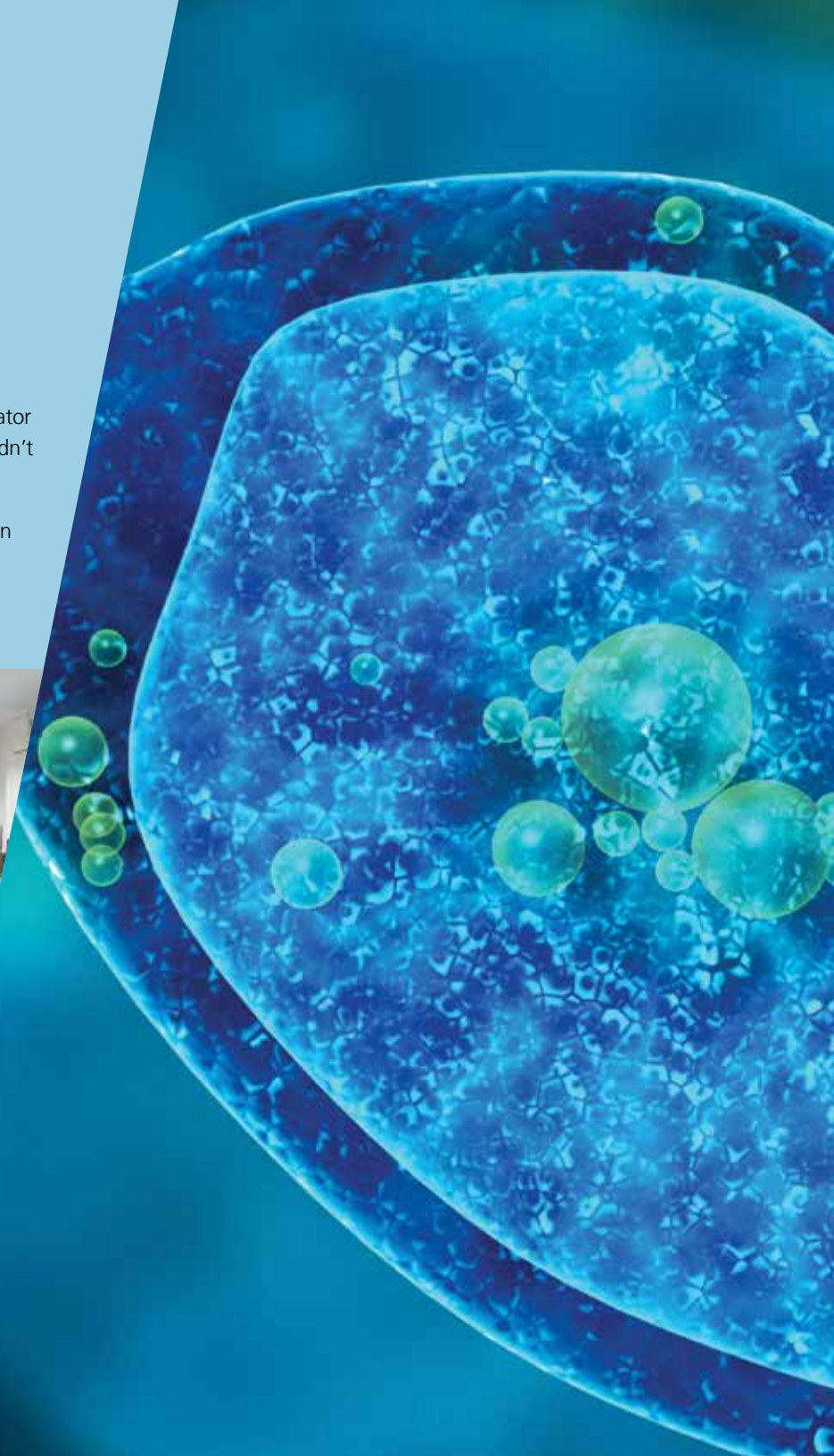
Thompson and his faculty and staff colleagues were able to continue with some in-person labs, following AHS guidelines, including a lab rotation for chemistry and lots of outdoor work for biology. When that wasn't practical, they did some outside-the-box thinking — and created take-home lab kits for students to work on independently.

The kits emphasized core concepts and provided students with a focused, hands-on experience because every student had to perform the lab for themselves. Videos were developed to enable students to develop a detailed understanding of the technique, procedure, tools and reasoning, and ensure safe disposal of any materials.



In addition to providing an opportunity for students to complete their course's lab requirement, the kits helped build confidence in their ability to do lab work, which was especially valuable for students just beginning their science degree.

The novel approach was a win-win, introducing students to experiments that wouldn't typically be done in a lab, while also finding creative yet effective alternatives for using expensive laboratory equipment.



# 5 minutes a day for better mental health

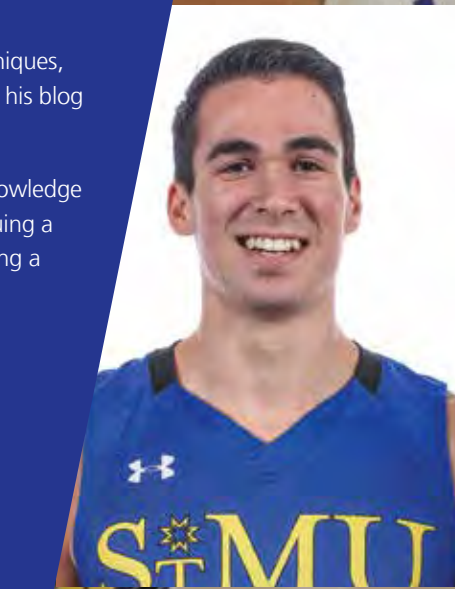
Lightning athlete Jordan Britton (BA – Psychology student) channelled his competitive spirit and rose to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic by creating a valuable new resource to help people strengthen their mental well-being during this trying time.

Translating what he's learned at St. Mary's into practice, Britton published a journal in November 2020 for individuals to focus on their mental health. *The Five Minute Mind*, sold on Amazon and [thefiveminutemind.ca](http://thefiveminutemind.ca), encourages and guides readers to spend five minutes each day reflecting on the most essential things that help them grow forward positively into the next day, including gratitude, social connection, inspiration, self-affirmations and happiness.

Readers will find that 100 days of simple, guided journalling exercises is enough to cement some of the healthiest habits that contribute to well-being and health. The guidance is based on hours of independent research Britton conducted to build on existing materials, which he felt could be improved.

In addition to having his first book published, Britton regularly posts self-help techniques, positive affirmations and other tools to help people get through the day on his blog on [thefiveminutemind.ca](http://thefiveminutemind.ca).

He plans to continue expanding his knowledge and building on his interest by pursuing a master's degree, keeping his writing a consistent and active part of his future goals.





# Teeing off 'fore' students at the annual golf tourney

Members of St. Mary's University's amazing community took out their golf clubs and their cheque books to support student scholarships and bursaries at the 10th Annual St. Mary's Golf Tournament on Aug. 26, 2021.

Beautiful weather and the beautiful Silvertip Resort in Canmore, Alta., combined for a memorable experience, and 100+ golfers raised more than \$20,000 through donations, sponsorships and ticket purchases, with all proceeds going to provide opportunities for students who need them most.

Participants were treated to a driving clinic by eight-time Canadian Long Drive National Champion Lisa Longball, and many fun hole challenges sparked competitive energy — both on the course and in giving.

While the pandemic has made it a difficult year for many, the generosity of supporters shone throughout the 2021 tournament. Through their efforts, more St. Mary's students will have access to vital resources needed to reach their academic dreams.

*The Golf Tournament adhered to all pandemic protocols in place at the time of the event.*





## S P O T L I G H T

# Bitmojis put teachers in classrooms even when they can't physically be there

Miranda Mooney (Bachelor of Education 2021) transformed a St. Mary's University class assignment into a viral learning sensation that is taking the country by storm. Her bitmoji classroom project, undertaken while a B.Ed. student, creates a virtual classroom where educators can deliver content to students in a fun and engaging way.

In the classroom, educators can add bitmojis — little cartoons people create to represent themselves, which are frequently used on social media — into a virtual setting to create an animated experience for students.

Mooney created a classroom for her Girl Guide unit and has hosted workshops teaching instructors and members of the Girl Guide community across the country how to implement this platform.

Her idea was initially posted to a Canadian Guider Resource Facebook page, and people loved it. Not long after, she found herself receiving hundreds of messages from Guiders asking if she could host training — and in short order she was meeting women from all over Canada virtually and showing them how to make bitmoji classrooms.

Mooney contacted a senior manager of Girl Guides of Canada, and was offered a spot in the nationwide Girl Guide convention, Leg Up. After the first webinar reached its maximum of 25 participants, she was invited to host a second to accommodate an 89-person waiting list. She is now a provincial trainer for Alberta Girl Guides.





# Uniting in reverence, celebration of Fr. McGivney



(L-R) Daryl MacDonald, Calgary Chapter President, Alberta Knights of Columbus; Vince Reyes, State Deputy, Alberta Knights of Columbus; Most Reverend Bishop William T. McGrattan, Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary; Gaston Launière, State Secretary, Alberta Knights of Columbus; Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President & Vice-Chancellor, St. Mary's University

approved the promulgation of a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Fr. McGivney: healing Michael Schachle in his mother's womb after doctors gave him no chance of survival, in Nashville in 2015.

Those in attendance at St. Mary's viewed the live stream of the beatification mass held in Connecticut. Following the event, plaques recognizing the dedication and support of the Knights of Columbus were unveiled.



Bishop William McGrattan blesses the new altar and ambo generously provided to St. Mary's by the Knights of Columbus

On Oct. 31, 2020, St. Mary's University was honoured to welcome members of the Knights of Columbus Alberta Chapter to the campus to celebrate the beatification of Father Michael J. McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, and to honour the Knights of Columbus's long-standing support of the University.

Fr. McGivney was a Connecticut priest who served his flock during the flu pandemic of 1889–90, before dying of pneumonia in 1890 at the age of 38. He is an inspiration throughout the Church and at St. Mary's, empowering all to discover the fullness of their identities in service.

In May 2020, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis



## The legacy of Fr. McGivney

Fr. Michael J. McGivney was an Irish-American Catholic priest who recognized, from his own experience, the incredible difficulties families, and especially immigrant families, faced when the main income earner passed away. Working tirelessly for his parishioners, he was an Assistant Pastor at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., when he founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882. Initially a mutual aid society devoted to helping families financially, as of 2020, the fraternal organization had more than two million members worldwide, and it provides wide-ranging philanthropic support to Catholic institutions and causes.

# Knights of Columbus support leaves indelible mark on St. Mary's

The Knights of Columbus and its members have been instrumental in creating a thriving hub of learning at St. Mary's University. Among their many contributions are:

- restoring a pivotal space for Masses, classes and events, Fr. Michael J. McGivney Hall
- renovating and creating a spacious sacristy for priests and servers to prepare for worship, and supporting Campus Ministry and the Wednesday Mass
- creating a new Oratory, so people can encounter Christ at the heart of the campus
- enabling students to pursue their vocations and their Christian values by establishing scholarships
- helping explore contemporary issues in Catholicism, such as through support of activities like Crossroads, St. Mary's Fall 2020 virtual speakers event, which included a valuable Indigenous perspective

St. Mary's University is grateful for support of the Knights of Columbus. It reaches into communities, connecting people and making a meaningful difference today — and creating a legacy that will improve life for generations to come.

## In memory

**Joseph Elvin (Al) Soloski**  
1943–2021

Al Soloski was a staunch supporter of St. Mary's University, and particularly of its annual Golf Tournament which raises funds for student athletes. In memory of his beloved wife, Al established the Margaret Soloski Memorial Bursary, which will be awarded in perpetuity to support students in need. Recently, the Knights of Columbus donated a beautiful Chalice to St. Mary's in Al's honour, which was used at the Opening Term Mass presided over by Bishop William McGrattan and attended by members of the Soloski family.





# S P O T L I G H T

## Music success is something to sing about

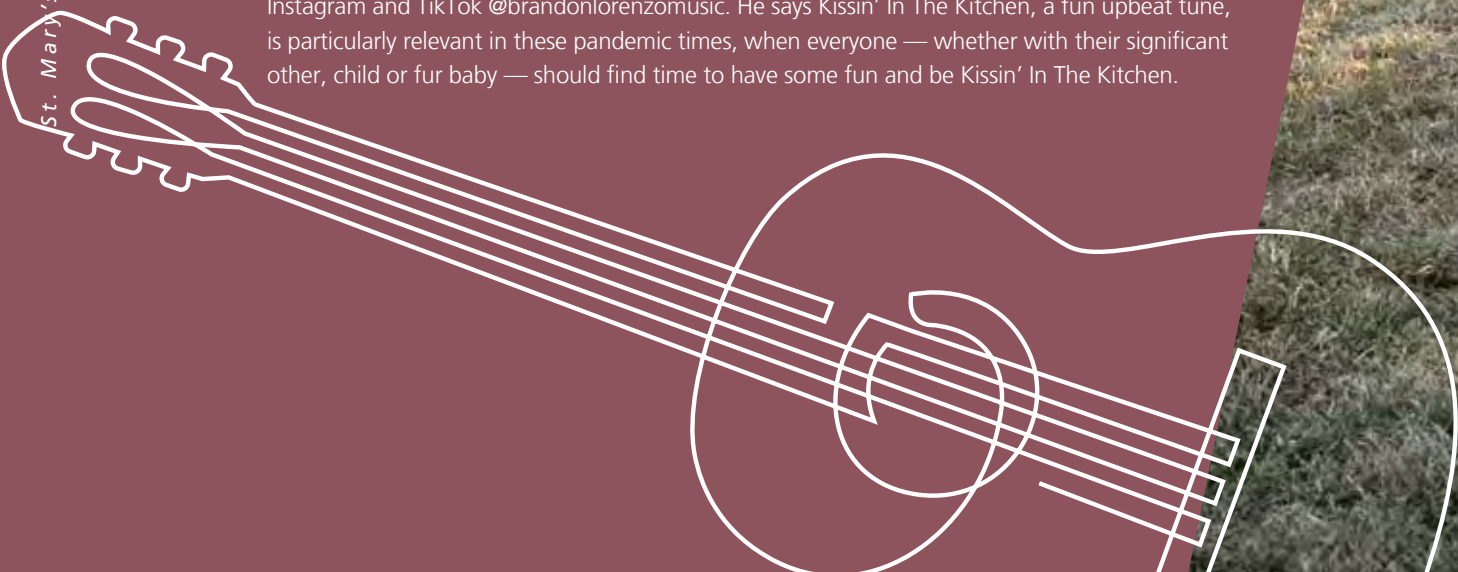
St. Mary's University students are passionate about their field of study — and many are also following their dreams outside school. Award-winning country music recording artist Brandon Lorenzo (BA – History 2019; B.Ed. – Elementary 2021) proves the point.

In early 2020, his first song, *Spread Some Good Time Around*, was released, winning the YYC Country Music Awards People's Choice Award and being nominated for Country Recording of the Year. In February 2021, Lorenzo performed at the Country Music Alberta Awards and was nominated for both the Horizon Male Artist of the Year and the Fans Choice Awards, and also released *Kissin' In The Kitchen*.

A full-time student, Lorenzo has become adept at managing time, using hours on the road to study and complete writing assignments, for example, so neither school nor his art suffers. And while COVID-19 took its toll on many artists' ability to perform, he was innovative and generous, giving free performances in his local community to make sure his voice remained practiced and strong.

St. Mary's also figures prominently in his vocal practice, where he takes part in the University choir and masses. In music ministry, Lorenzo enjoys leading worship and plans to continue after graduation because it not only brings the two sides of his life together, it also encourages his faith development.

Lorenzo's music can be found on all streaming platforms, as well as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok @brandonlorenzomusic. He says *Kissin' In The Kitchen*, a fun upbeat tune, is particularly relevant in these pandemic times, when everyone — whether with their significant other, child or fur baby — should find time to have some fun and be *Kissin' In The Kitchen*.









# Provincial award recognizes alumna's kindness, caring for her students

Sarah Papke (BA 2018; B.Ed. – Elementary 2020) received the Alberta School Board Association's annual Edwin Parr Teacher Award for Zone 5, recognizing the difference she is making in her students' lives. A Grade 5/6 teacher at St. Damien School in Calgary, her enthusiasm and passion for teaching — and her genuine care for students, parents and colleagues — is abundantly evident.

This was especially important over the past year, when everyone found themselves in the new world of online learning. In addition to putting together engaging schedules for each day, Papke also delivered packages of supplies for crafts and experiments to students' homes.

Papke's words and actions reflect her respect of each person's dignity and worth, and her classroom is safe and fun. The environment she has created isn't lost on her students, who say they are grateful for this great, warm, funny teacher who creates wonderful classroom experiences. As one of her students said to her: 'Mrs. Papke, you are awesomely legendary!'

*Mrs. Papke,  
you are  
awesomely  
legendary!*



## CALGARY CATHOLIC EDUCATION TELETHON

Change a local child's potential today



CALGARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY



## Changing lives and growing potential by enriching Catholic education

On Nov. 17, 2020, the Calgary Catholic Education Foundation hosted its inaugural telethon and virtual event supporting Catholic education in Calgary — and affirming the importance of investing in education as an investment in young people's potential.

Thanks to a generous community, more than \$30,000 was raised, which will benefit countless students locally, including those who attend St. Mary's University.

CCEF is a non-profit organization focused on providing grants to enrich the educational experience of students within the Calgary Catholic School District, with emphasis including: social justice; safe and caring faith-filled schools; citizenship, stewardship and leadership development; and, leading-edge learning opportunities.

S P O T L I G H T

# Building on the best of St. Mary's to follow the lure of law school

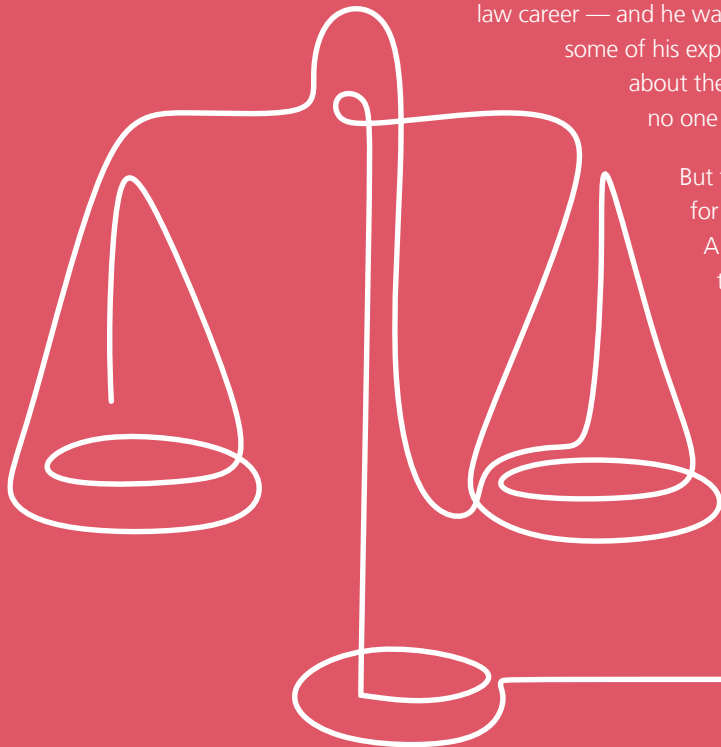
Josh Sheppard (Bachelor of Arts – History 2021) is taking everything he learned and did in his four years at St. Mary's University to build the foundation for the next challenging step in his future: law school.

A wide array of liberal arts courses, connections with classmates forged in small, seminar-style classes, professors who invested in him as a learner, support from generous donors who contributed to scholarships and student awards, extracurricular experiences and two rewarding years serving peers as Vice-President, Internal, of the Student Legislative Council have all combined to create a rich and diverse suite of knowledge and experience that will be beneficial in future endeavours.

Financial support helped to provide a safety net and gave a grateful Sheppard more freedom to work on his grades and pursue activities that would be valuable when writing the LSAT and for strengthening his law school application.

Serving on the SLC affirmed Sheppard's desire to help others — his motivation for pursuing a law career — and he was even able to create a pre-law club to share some of his experiences with students who may be curious about the profession and application process, but have no one to talk to about it.

But these weren't the only things to reinforce for Sheppard that he was on the right path. A couple of years ago, while attending the annual St. Mary's President's Dinner, he was seated beside two people who had donated to a scholarship he had received. Both were lawyers.



# Student athletes score big academic wins

St. Mary's University Lightning student athletes aren't just stars on the court and track — they're standouts in the classroom, too.

In a year like no other — starting with many unknowns and uncertainty, followed by the disappointment of a cancelled season — athletes found a way to weather the storm, persevere and excel where it matters most: in their academic performance.

Restrictions changed how athletes could train, what practices looked like, how many people could be in the gym and even what they could do while they were in the gym. Despite the constant feeling of change and concern about what was going to come next, 40 athletes trained with the varsity basketball and cross-country/indoor track teams.

The teams put up solid stats for their academic efforts, ranging from combined GPAs of 2.972 to an impressively high 3.763, demonstrating their determination to excel in mind and body.

A remarkable total of 15 of 40 Lightning athletes were also named Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association National Scholars, recognition earned by completing 24 credit hours in the year, earning a 3.5 GPA or higher in one term, and achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or more for the entire year.



## CCAA National Scholars

Emily Wagner	Women's Basketball
Danya Osterling	Women's Basketball
Alba Vera Ponte	Women's Basketball
Maya Sinclair	Women's Basketball
Coal Clark	Men's Basketball
Riley Follensbee	Men's Basketball



# St. Mary's to host 2021 CCAA national cross-country finals

St. Mary's University will host the 2021 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Cross-Country Running National Championships this fall. The Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) institution will host the event Nov. 12–13, 2021.

Cross-Country Running is a fast-growing sport at St. Mary's and with a beautiful 35-acre campus that overlooks Fish Creek Provincial Park, its home course has gained the attention of many in the local cross-country community.

St. Mary's is a relatively new member of the CCAA and the ACAC, and this is the first National Championship it will host.



## CCAA National Scholars

Kristian Quist	Cross Country
Quinn Demers	Cross Country
Tanner Nordstrom-Young	Cross Country
Marissa Seegers	Cross Country
Laura Fraser	Cross Country
Jaime Bellows	Cross Country
Emily Knudsgaard	Cross Country
Casey Field	Cross Country
Kirsten Schwartz	Cross Country





## S P O T L I G H T

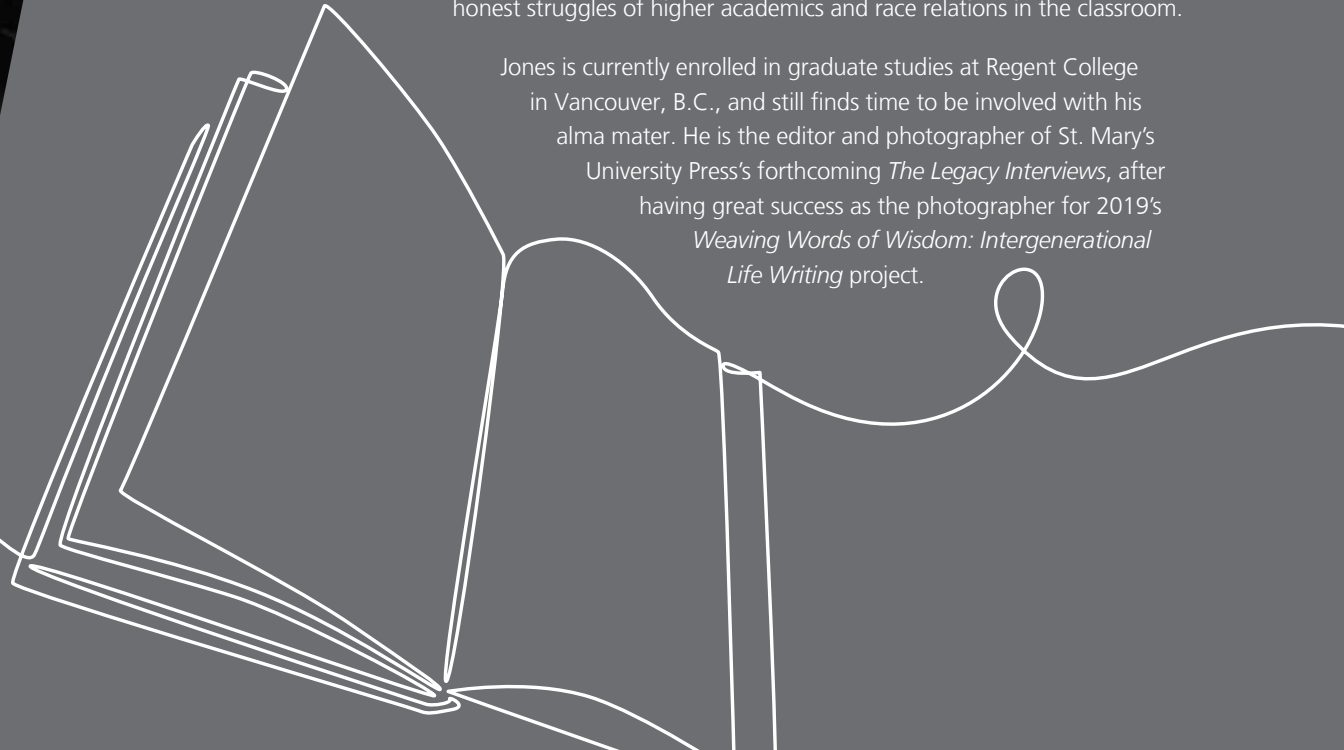
# Living a passion to bring racial justice, Christianity together

Daniel Melvill Jones (Bachelor of Arts – English 2021) shared his graduation project-turned-conference talk, “An Obstructed Vision: Flannery O’Connor’s Habits of Racism,” at the Conference on Christianity and Literature (CCL) in June 2021 — the latest affirmation of his passion for social justice.

Jones has a long history of intentionality and dedication at St. Mary’s University, including engaging in the peer mentoring program, bringing life to the library as a part-time staff member and forging relationships with many students, staff and faculty. Those experiences, in turn, were invaluable in his online conference participation, enabling him to be the only undergraduate student to attend all panels of the conference — and to contribute openly and meaningfully.

He describes the candid roundtable discussions as a “boots on the ground” approach engaging professionals who had a soul-searching desire to implement ideas from conversations about the honest struggles of higher academics and race relations in the classroom.

Jones is currently enrolled in graduate studies at Regent College in Vancouver, B.C., and still finds time to be involved with his alma mater. He is the editor and photographer of St. Mary’s University Press’s forthcoming *The Legacy Interviews*, after having great success as the photographer for 2019’s *Weaving Words of Wisdom: Intergenerational Life Writing* project.



# Serving the community when it's needed most

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused many people to retreat into their own bubbles, members of the St. Mary's University community stepped up to serve.

St. Mary's was honoured once again to be part of the Night of Lights on Nov. 10, 2020, at the Field of Crosses on Memorial Drive. Despite frigid temperatures, more than 150 students and friends came out to place lit candles by the 3,500 crosses that recognize soldiers from Southern Alberta who died in service.

Students paid their respects at this poignant memorial, reflecting on what it truly means to serve when the community has great need.



## Feeding the hungry

The President's Volunteer Team and St. Mary's community volunteers partnered with the Calgary Diocese on the weekend of March 15, 2021, to prepare meals for Feed the Hungry. St. Mary's sponsored the event and volunteers helped serve 225 guests, providing 450 snack bags and meals.



Green Christopher H 42 FS RCAF 04/04/41



# Moving toward reconciliation and healing

Since its founding, St. Mary's University has sought to build respectful and enduring relationships with Indigenous Peoples upon whose land the institution rests. This continuing journey toward reconciliation is one being taken together, and it begins with truth, knowledge, understanding and compassion.

In addition to engaging Elders and Indigenous community leaders to share their personal experiences and wisdom with students, staff and faculty, creating Indigenous knowledge course materials and providing a safe and welcoming environment for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, the University actively participates in the wider conversation so that all Canadians may take this vital journey.

President Gerry Turcotte contributed the following words, published in *The Catholic Register* on June 11, 2021.

## Carrying the Bones

*You must carry my bones with you from here.*

Exodus 13:19

The discovery, in May 2021, of 215 bodies of children in unmarked graves on the site of the former Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia understandably triggered a national response of outrage and mourning. Less understandable is why this particular discovery has unleashed a sudden outpouring of grief and accountability by community leaders and politicians since the evidence of these atrocities is so well known, and when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report highlighted this issue for special mention. Somehow, though, the Kamloops story has resonated in a different way, and having done so has opened a path for our communities to take stock and to move towards understanding and healing.

Residential schools, of course, are a blight on Canada's history and a stain on the Catholic Church in particular. It is important to acknowledge, too, that this isn't "ancient" history. This is a contemporary as well as an historical phenomenon, with some residential schools closing as late as the mid-1990s. Over 150,000 First Nation, Métis, and Inuit children were taken from their families and forced to attend residential schools run by Christian churches and the Canadian Government, and the TRC estimates that over 6,000 of these children died. One chilling revelation is that the plans for many of the Residential Schools included a cemetery, and we may want to imagine how our communities would feel today if the design of every new school in our suburbs — in Toronto, say, or Calgary — also came with a graveyard attached.

Although some type of removal practice existed as early as the 17th century, Canada's official policy on child abduction came into effect in, and Residential schools operated from, the 1800s until 1996. The goal of the schools was to strip Indigenous youth of their language, their culture, and their identity, and while some critics have baulked at the term genocide to describe the practice, the goals identified under the government's policies literally align with the definition. And while Anglican, United, Methodist and Presbyterian churches all participated in the practice, there is no question that the Catholic Church was the dominant force in the administration of over 60 per cent of the schools. As such, and understandably, a specific weight and responsibility rests on the shoulders of our Church's leaders to address, and redress, the sins of the past.

*"As a Catholic University we have a moral obligation to ensure that we follow along this path in words and in deeds."*

This is certainly a call that Indigenous Elders have made, and a specific recommendation of the TRC Report in 2015 — that the Church, and our Pope, issues a formal apology on Canadian soil.

It is noteworthy that Pope Benedict had personally expressed his sorrow to Canadian Indigenous leaders in 2009 at the Vatican, and Pope Francis has invited national Indigenous leaders to meet with him in Rome in December in what is widely believed will be a formal apology on behalf of the Church. Understandably, many feel it is critical that Pope Francis himself visits Canada to offer the apology on Canadian soil, and there is widespread feeling that this may indeed happen.

Pope Francis recently spoke of the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as the path to true, human healing; as the only way to have "greater spiritual health. To pass from misery to mercy." This is true of our collective responsibility, as a nation and as a Church. This is the other critical act of reconciliation — of truth and reconciliation. This sentiment is clearly expressed in a recent apology issued by the

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops that expresses 'profound remorse' for the pain and suffering caused by the Residential School system. The power of all these important apologies, of course, will only have true meaning if we follow our words with concrete actions. As a Catholic University we have a moral obligation to ensure that we follow along this path in words and in deeds. Our Elders' Council, our tipi, our Medicine Garden, our new courses on Indigenous topics, our land-based teachings: all of these are concrete but preliminary steps on a renewed engagement with Truth and Reconciliation.

In one of the best-known passages of the Bible (Ezekiel 37: 1-14), Ezekiel is taken by God to see the valley of the dry bones. Here he is presented with the lost souls whose bones are forgotten and unloved. But God tells Ezekiel to speak to the bones, and through the speaking of the Word "the bones come together," the flesh comes upon them, and then breath comes into them, so that "they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude." In Ezekiel, the story promises the rebirth of the Israelites, dispirited by their stolen land and their eradicated lives. So much of the Bible speaks of the evil of dispossession and the importance of accountability. Indeed, this underpins one of the most powerful theological principles of our faith — the practice of reconciliation — one predicated on an acknowledgement of past wrongs.

One of the most powerful images that emerged in response to the Kamloops tragedy is the appearance of hundreds of children's shoes at makeshift memorials and sacred drum circles, acknowledging the missing children. We need to speak to these bones, to bring their stories back to life, and to show that in our faith, reconciliation isn't a ceremonial, but a life-changing sacrament. We can't bring the children back — but their voices should be restored. Nothing less is acceptable.

*"We need to ... show that in our faith, reconciliation isn't a ceremonial, but a life-changing sacrament."*



# New Indigenous Medicine Garden connects people to land, history

A new Indigenous Medicine Garden now grows at the heart of the St. Mary's University campus, a small but important step in St. Mary's progress toward truth and reconciliation. Completed in 2021 in the area around the central flag pole, the Medicine Garden will grow in beauty and meaning every year as part of the University's increasing awareness and understanding.

Born of conversations over recent years among Indigenous Elders and St. Mary's staff, faculty and students, the Medicine Garden will help people reconnect with the land and the Indigenous history of this land. It will be a welcoming place for all — to sit, read, talk, study, meditate and learn about native plants that were once common

here — and will be a source of medicine (such as sage, sweetgrass and kinnikinnick) used for smudging. The garden will also be a learning asset for students in Chemistry, Ecology, History, Conservation Biology and Education.

Four Biology students — Joslynn Colp, Perla Garcia Mendoza, Lauren Poelzer and Kessa Stuckert, along with their faculty advisor, Dr. Mary Ann McLean — led creation of the Medicine Garden as part of their senior project, together with the guidance of Indigenous Elders. They were supported by peers, faculty and staff who volunteered to help.









# Hand drawn, heartfelt Christmas designs again adorn St. Mary's greeting cards

For the second year in a row, St. Mary's University's annual Christmas cards celebrated local artwork created by people in the University's community.

Following on last year's well-received inaugural contest inviting students from across Calgary to submit designs, the 2020 effort was affected by the pandemic's impact on schools. As a result, St. Mary's looked within its own community — to staff, faculty, students and their extended families — for creative expressions of the Christmas spirit.

Once again, contributors were invited to be creative and to let their designs reflect their feelings about Christmas. The designs were featured on all cards sent by St. Mary's.





# Saying *dobrý den* to Czech learning adventure

With pandemic protocols finally making international travel a bit more manageable, St. Mary's student Libby Toliver was able to embark on a grand Czech Republic learning adventure this summer.

The avid traveller and Bachelor of Arts – English program student learned in June 2021 (and was on a plane three weeks later) that she had been awarded a full scholarship to complete a one-month language and history course at Masaryk University in Brno.

Toliver is the latest of many students from St. Mary's who have received grants, scholarships and awards for international study, an invaluable opportunity to widen their perspectives and grow as world citizens — and to build knowledge and skills in high demand by today's employers.

In Czech, Toliver stayed in a dorm for the first time and took five courses each day. She also took part in excursions led by university master's students who are learning English. She took a week after her studies concluded to explore Europe a little more.

Despite having to make plans and travel during these uncertain times, Toliver was excited by the prospects of learning in a different country, living in and getting to know a city rich with wonderful architecture and culture, and connecting with newfound friends and colleagues.





# Media highlights

## St. Mary's University grad earns Indigenous achievement award

By Guinter Amundson, Canadian Catholic News | Life | February 25, 2021



Mere months away her June 2020 convocation at Calgary's St. Mary's University, Kate Gillis' days are full of Zoom call collaboration and deep-dive independent research. Such is the life of an academic in 2021.

The 22-year-old Métis woman, who graduated with a BA in History at St. Mary's, is navigating the interminability that comes with being a first-year graduate student in pursuit of a Master's degree in Indigenous studies at the University of Saskatchewan. The focus of her thesis is Métis feminism.

On top of that, the Calgary-born and raised Gillis — her Métis roots are planted in the St. Laurent rural community in Manitoba's Red River region — is also serving as a K-12 Education team intern for the Rupertsland Institute Métis Centre of Excellence.

## THE CATHOLIC REGISTER

NEWS OPINION FAITH YOUTH FEATURES ARCHIVE SUBSCRIBE BOOKS ABOUT

TRENDS: Heavy prayer prayer life Spiritual life



### The higher calling of Catholic Education

By James McManis

In the wake of University John Henry Newman (1801-1890) defined his idea of a liberal education that speaks of the virtues and purposes of a university. Originally an Oxford man, his formal studies at Oxon College — where he engaged with the Protestant Rev. John Keble — included close engagement with Anglo-Catholics — a movement that was being cast out of the liberal tradition and turning instead to a life of research.

It wasn't until they were near 50 that he was invited to join the faculty when he was invited to help found the Catholic University of Ireland in Dublin. And although there were few libraries for the university to draw on, a general Newman's was far and understanding of the unique gifts of Catholic education. Indeed, in his letters and Diaries he is quoted as saying, "From the very first month of my Catholic education... I entered for a Catholic university."

Research was likewise central to the ethos of the St. Mary's arts, and of a Catholic university. The end of research

## CBC NEWS

Top Stories Local COVID-19 Opinion World Canada

### Calgary

#### Catholic school district enlists St. Mary's University expert to implement racial justice framework

Mandatory professional development courses focus on anti-racism

Lucie Dixon - CBC News - Posted Jan 27, 2021 5:54 PM MT | Last Updated January 7



Lucie Dixon is the director of campus ministry at St. Mary's University and is helping the Calgary Catholic School District to implement a racial justice framework. Submitted by Lucie Dixon.

Lucie Dixon, who is bilingual, is the director of campus ministry at St. Mary's University in southwest Calgary.

## THE CATHOLIC REGISTER

NEWS OPINION FAITH YOUTH FEATURES ARCHIVE SUBSCRIBE BOOKS ABOUT



### Sarah Twomey: Educators play key role in reconciliation

By Sarah Twomey

As a 19-year-old, I've spent most of my life in the classroom, and as a high-achieving student, I've learned that educators play a key role in reconciliation. It's not just about teaching the curriculum, but about creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students. As an educator, I've seen the power of empathy and understanding in the classroom. It's about listening to our students and recognizing their unique experiences and perspectives. It's about creating a space where everyone feels valued and respected. It's about building a community of learners who are curious, engaged, and motivated. It's about being a role model for our students and showing them that we care about their success. It's about being a mentor and a guide, helping them navigate the challenges of life and school. It's about being a source of support and encouragement, helping them reach their full potential. It's about being a part of something bigger than ourselves, helping to build a better world for all of us.

## LIVEWIRE CALGARY

People. Places. News.

CALGARY ELECTION 2021 PODCASTS CALGARY'S NEXT ECONOMY MEMBERS

OCTOBER 18, 2021

HOME CALGARY - Home on the wreath: Robins nest in same spot on Calgary home, four years running

MAYBE THE WREATH IS JUST REALLY GOOD REAL ESTATE, BIOLOGIST SAYS

10 May 10, 2021 | 10:00 AM | CALGARY

### Repeat robins

Dr. Scott Lovell, a biology professor at St. Mary's University, has a specialization in ornithology and avian behaviour.

He said that without distinct markings on the birds, there's no sure way to know if it's the same bird.

"It is hard to say if it is the same pair or if it's just that the wreath is really good real estate," Lovell said.

"American Robins may reuse old nests with or without a new lining, or build a new nest on top of an older one on a structure like a wreath."

## Global NEWS

World Canada Local Politics Money Health Entertainment Lifestyle

### Calgary educators focused on moving forward in truth and reconciliation through education

By Louise Olson - Global News

Written for some post-secondary students in Calgary smacked down on the weekend by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, others chose to close their eyes.

But, the city was being entirely recognized as a diverse priority, through online professional development courses, leading up to an anti-racism day.

"It's just been so encouraging. Every single part of the university is involved in the anti-racism day. It's important, I think we're in a changing place in society and people want to know, well, why?"

Building unity and learning about Canada's residential school system is part of the push to reconciliation. Casey English, executive director at St. Mary's University, says the school is committed to it.

He often speaks to the students at St. Mary's and shares his own story of teaching a residential school. He says the students often feel a sense of shock when they learn what he experienced.

"I think teachers need to know the truth of Indigenous people. It's been for so long that they've tried to be as neutral as possible, but it's those (school) stories that really bring light and colour back into the history of Indigenous people," he said.

Michelle Scott, director of Indigenous initiatives at St. Mary's, said her campus has been quite active in the time after it been there, over the last several years. But there is a difference this year, with the announcements of unmarked graves across Canada. She said more people are engaged in the conversation.

"We always been saying that the fact is an Indigenous conversation. But it's a Canadian conversation."



S P O T L I G H T

# Well prepared to guide children's learning

Jaden Baragar (Bachelor of Education 2018) teaches Grades 1 and 2 with the Tsuut'ina Board of Education, and says her life has been enriched in countless ways since embarking on her career.

She credits St. Mary's University professors (who invested their time and expertise in her development) and generous donors (who gave financially to support her education) for walking with her on a rewarding path.

Baragar provided literacy support in her first year of teaching. Working with children from all grades, she was able to see their growth in reading from the beginning to the end of the school year. She now leads her own Grades 1 and 2 classes.

She believes she was fortunate to learn and grow in a community which offered unlimited opportunities, and which enriched her educational experience, making her a stronger candidate to join the workforce and contribute to society in a meaningful way. In addition to the impact she has on her students every day, Baragar also strives to give back to the St. Mary's community, volunteering at events.

Since its launch, the St. Mary's Bachelor of Education – Elementary program has experienced tremendous growth, and graduates have distinguished themselves through many achievements and awards — reflecting the valuable contributions they make to children, schools and communities.



# UnGala underscores support for students

The COVID-19 pandemic is having an impact on every facet of life and last year forced St. Mary's University to re-evaluate the annual, and highly successful, President's Dinner. While transitioning to an online event would have enabled the University to present a wonderful night, planners were aware of the increase in virtual events and "screen fatigue" in people's lives — and decided to replace the annual event with a new concept to raise much-needed funds to support students.

This urgent, short-term President's Dinner UnGala fundraising campaign raised more than \$151,000 which will be used to support students through scholarships, bursaries and emergency funding, all of which are needed more more than ever as students navigate the realities of a global pandemic.

While it was easy to see that on-campus life was significantly disrupted, and that teaching and learning had moved online, less obvious was the uncertainty in students' lives as they dealt with housing and food expenses, restricted travel that potentially stranded some away from home, reduced opportunities to earn any income at all through jobs or work-study positions, and many more unforeseen challenges.

Once again, the St. Mary's University community generously rose to meet the challenge, coming out in record support for the UnGala campaign and demonstrating their unyielding commitment to students. While the annual fundraising event may have looked totally different, the tradition of community support remained as strong as ever.

## The certainty of support in these uncertain times

Over the past year, the pandemic has caused many St. Mary's students to face limited opportunities to work and earn funds needed for daily living, offset decreased funding opportunities and unexpected travel costs. In these uncertain times, students were able to count on the certainty of the Student Emergency Bursary Fund, supported in part by the UnGala, which provided a financial lifeline for 60 students in crisis. It was particularly impactful as students' lives were disrupted in new and unexpected ways.





# Long-time donor invests in liberal arts to provide essential skills for the future

For more than 20 years, Colin Ross has generously donated to a variety of initiatives at St. Mary's University, contributions that have had a direct impact on the lives of countless students.

While Ross is inspired by the tangible results delivered by St. Mary's and the direction in which the University is going, he firmly believes that it is the core liberal arts education that will have the greatest impact going forward.

He is convinced that this focus is essential for where the world is going, and students' ability to think critically, resolve conflict and be able to compromise, communicate and collaborate effectively are skills essential for future success. He sees graduates leaving St. Mary's with those key assets in hand.

Ross notes that while technology has ever-expanding reach and impact — on jobs specifically and more broadly on how the world views itself — the problem-solving and “people” skills acquired at St. Mary's are not going to be replaced by technology.

By supporting St. Mary's, Ross follows the example set by his parents, whose involvement in many charitable endeavours inspired him and affirmed what philanthropy means and does.

He continues that family tradition by supporting St. Mary's because he believes in the University's mission to create engaged citizens and compassionate members of society — developing students with the skills necessary for the future world.



“The liberal arts education at St. Mary's has as a core focus essential for where the world is going.”

“Education should focus on skills that are not going to be replaced by technology.”

“It is easy to be inspired [to give] when you surround yourself with people who are heavily involved in philanthropy.”

# In Memoriam

Over the past year, St. Mary's University lost members of the community who were committed to a liberal arts and sciences education rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, and who helped establish the institution as a leader in post-secondary education.

## Larry Day

1952–2021

Larry Day was a champion and dear friend of St. Mary's University. His generosity and dedication helped grow St. Mary's community profile through the stories he and his company, Pyramid Productions, helped to capture and share. Larry was a member of the Board of Governors from 2009–19 and served on numerous committees, including the Development Committee. He personally helped shape the University's communications strategy, and taught classes on film and communications, leading to the outstanding student video *The Ghosts of St. Mary's*.

## Edward (Ed) Andrew Raymond Rewucki

1932–2021

Ed Rewucki and his beloved wife Agnes (1929–2020) were devoted supporters of St. Mary's University, and members of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League, respectively. Ed was instrumental in helping St. Mary's develop student resources, including funding a major computer teaching lab. He supported the University personally and through his auto dealership, Tower Chrysler, and contributed significant funds to enable St. Mary's to redevelop its century-old glass blowers' building, which today houses the Bookstore.

## Edward (Ted) John Cuthbert Valentine

1930–2020

Ted Valentine was a long-time supporter of St. Mary's University and a tireless defender of important community causes in Calgary. The founder of Valentine Volvo, Ted served on many St. Mary's committees, notably the President's Dinner Committee. He and his wife, Shirley, passionately supported students through scholarships and other important donations to improve the quality of teaching and recreation spaces. Valentine Court, which hosts the annual Valentine Cup, is one such initiative.

## Francis (Frank) Vetsch

1928–2021

Frank Vetsch was a beloved friend and one of St. Mary's most significant supporters. A pioneer in petroleum engineering and a respected oilman, Frank and with his wife, Jeanne, helped fund some of the University's most important projects. He helped establish the Frank Vetsch Endowment to support students in need — today worth almost \$7 million and which will support student learning for decades. His most recent gift helped build part of the new Heritage Centre, creating much-needed, high-tech teaching and performance spaces. It also enabled creation of a beautiful outdoor garden and meeting space, the Vetsch Garden.

## Gerald (Gerry) Watkins

1929–2021

A member of the original St. Mary's University planning committee, Gerry Watkins believed deeply in the importance of establishing a Catholic university in Calgary. He worked tirelessly to help create and then ensure St. Mary's success, importantly serving as the Board Treasurer for seven years. Together with his beloved wife, Faye, Gerry remained deeply involved in many initiatives, and generously established the Gerry Watkins Bursary Fund, which has enabled many students to pursue their education dreams and become caring, compassionate leaders.



# Indigenous student finds meaning, value and a second home at St. Mary's

Angela Bear Chief admits to being hesitant and afraid when she first thought about going back to school as a mature Indigenous person, but working full-time for Urban Indigenous Youth, she knew she'd need a degree if she wanted to grow and move into a managerial role.

St. Mary's small campus, small class sizes and proximity to home convinced her to apply to the Bachelor of Arts – General Studies program. Her experience to date has prompted her to continue with the B.Ed. program after completing her BA.

In her first year, Bear Chief attended in-person classes, made connections and was active in discussions. Professors were inclusive and within only a few weeks she had connected with Indigenous Initiatives Director Michelle Scott. Scott helped Bear Chief connect with Elders and the Indigenous community on campus, and offered a place to smudge.

Bear Chief had the opportunity to demonstrate her skills as a beader by participating as a facilitator in the Beading, Bannock and Banter series she and Scott created, enabling Bear Chief to become an educator for peers and staff.

She and her family were also invited to erect the St. Mary's tipi in June 2020. In her culture, when a tipi is erected, it is not to be left unattended. Understanding this, Scott asked if Bear Chief's family would be the caretakers for the two nights the tipi was on campus, and her family graciously accepted.

Experiences at St. Mary's have taught Bear Chief the value of being a proud Indigenous student, and has inspired her son to apply to St. Mary's University as well. Today, they both attend and look forward to 2024 when they will graduate together as mother and son.



➔ Angela Bear Chief shares her story in her own words on the St. Mary's website, [stmu.ca](https://www.stmu.ca).

# Sharing love with St. Mary's neighbours

Psychology honours student Stephanie Bauer (pictured right), President of St. Mary's University's Psychology Association, created a heart-warming way to spread a little love in February 2021. She launched Share the Love: Valentine's Day Edition and invited students, staff and faculty to create home-made Valentine's Day cards for the older adults living at the United Active Living centre across the street from the University.

Many older adults have been experiencing increased isolation and loneliness as a result of the pandemic, and Bauer's work on her honours research project looks at the impacts of COVID-19 on younger and older adults in terms of ageism and anxiety surrounding aging in relation to education, knowledge and intergenerational connections.

She brought her research to a practical setting, showing love and thoughtfulness in a safe way. Peanut-free, vegan, sanitized treats accompanied each card, reminding the recipients that they are worthy of love, joy and a sense of community extending beyond their living quarters.

The impact of Bauer's initiative rippled far beyond the University, as family members, friends, relatives and people of all ages eagerly jumped on board, creating more than 200 cards.

With Bauer's leadership, the Psychology Association has grown to be about more than engaging students in awareness activities. She has established a safe place for the greater community to work together on stigmatized needs related to mental health and awareness. The Valentine's Day initiative is only the beginning of what the Association plans to do in the future for St. Mary's and external communities.



*"We're quite connected with the outside world as a small university."*

*"This initiative was small, possible and created a sense of belonging as it grew to be about more than just cards."*



# Master's study in Ireland focuses on environmental, business sustainability

Jack Nodwell (B.Sc. – Biology 2017) has jumped across the pond and into a new adventure pursuing a Master in Science in Sustainable Resource Management: Policy and Practice at the University of Limerick and National University of Ireland Galway.

The program, which takes an interdisciplinary approach to environmental sciences with a focus on sustainability, enables him to blend his passion for conservation and environmentalism with business and policy into a meaningful career.

Nodwell sees himself as a global citizen and hopes to bring together his knowledge and skills to help preserve natural spaces and species for future generations to experience. By advancing environmental sustainability more broadly, this can be integrated into business because sustainability, financing and profit can all work together holistically. His ethics paper at St. Mary's, for example, looked at how forestry companies can choose to be profitable without being detrimental to the planet.

Hands-on learning from St. Mary's University, including considerable field work, the perspectives gleaned through his studies and time spent working in Financial Aid are all proving invaluable in Nodwell's graduate work, enabling him to see how many different systems work together.

By learning to appreciate what is important to people and how people understand things, and using the skills he developed in multimedia presentation, data management and presenting data in digestible ways, Nodwell is taking what he learned at St. Mary's to communicate more effectively in his graduate studies.



# Contributing to the expansion of knowledge

St Mary's University faculty, staff and administrators have an important part to play in advancing knowledge and understanding about myriad issues important to a changing world, a role arguably more vital than ever in today's fractured communication climate. These contributions make a difference at St. Mary's, helping to enrich learning, and far beyond, helping to give people the tools to make informed decisions about their communities and futures.

When providing expert media comment and analysis on complex issues of the day, sharing their expertise and points of view, finding new ways to engage students in learning, presenting to peers at conferences, writing and editing books and articles, and taking part in a host of other scholarly activities, St. Mary's contributes to the greater good — here at home and around the world.

Following are highlights of just some of the many contributions made in 2020–21.

## Publications and presentations

**Peter Baltutis** "Making the abstract real: Teaching the Catholic Intellectual Tradition through experiential learning" (in press) in *The Journal of Catholic Higher Education*

**Jennifer Garrison** "Reforming community: Women's rape narratives and Gower's confession amantis" (in press) in a special issue of *Medieval Feminist Forum*

**Tim Harvie** "Political lament: Extinction, grief, and embodied silence" (in press) in *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*

**Laurie Hill** "Authoring professional identity: Pre-service teachers and ways of knowing" (in press) in *McGill Journal of Education*

**Alana Ireland** and Shelly Russell-Mayhew "Working together? A situational analysis of combining prevention efforts targeting obesity and eating disorders in schools" in *The Qualitative Report*

**Norman Knowles** "Behold the deaconess and the rector of St. George's: Sexual harassment, church polity, and middle class respectability in early twentieth century Canadian Anglicanism" (in press) in *Trauma and survival in the contemporary church: Historical, archival, and missional responses*

**Michelle Scott** "Making space in the academy for the curriculum of belonging: Exploration of Indigenous self, coloniality and relationships to Land" in *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*



## Awards and grants

**Dr. Ron Porter** was awarded a \$55,000 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant to further his attitude measurement research, which makes use of St. Mary's new Psych Lab. Opened in January 2020, this new behaviour and attitudes research lab is specifically designed to support this type of research.



**Paolina Seitz** and **Laurie Hill** "Cognition in 21st century skills: A mixed methods study" (in press) in *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*

**Corinne Syrnyk** and **Alisa McArthur** "The characteristics and motivations of human volunteers of animal-assisted interventions" (in press) in *Human Animal Intervention Bulletin*

**Jocelyn Williams** "This Ends in Betrayal" in *PRISM International*

**Cory Wright-Maley** and Ryan Colwell "Nothing to fear: Teaching to transcend transphobia in Catholic contexts" in *Teaching about gender diversity: Teacher-tested lesson plans for K-12 classrooms*

**Cory Wright-Maley** and Cathryn Van Kessel "Seeking an antidote to radical rightwing populism: Do the Blackfoot have an answer for us?" paper presentation, College and University Faculty Association of the National Council of the Social Studies virtual conference, Nov. 30–Dec. 4, 2020



## Ants and plants: researching an 'invasion' in Fish Creek Park

Since 2013, Dr. Mary Ann McLean, Associate Professor of Biology, has been examining the invasion of a Eurasian hemi-parasitic plant *Thesium ramosum* in Fish Creek Park. Despite understanding how the plants grew, how they spread was a bit of a mystery. Noticing ants carrying the seeds suggested that ants might play a role.

McLean collaborated with a provincial ant expert and they received two grants to study the idea, conducting field work in the summers of 2018 and 2019. Results showed that different ants collected seeds at different rates, and that some carried seeds a long distance. The team also learned that ants, considered very territorial, commonly shared resource patches, and added to the Park's known-species list. In total, about 40% of the species carried the plant seeds.

McLean is currently developing an article for a peer-reviewed publication.





# Convocation celebrates resilience, spirit of St. Mary's

For the second year in a row, life in the time of pandemic once again required some “inside the box” thinking — and scores of volunteers — to mark one of the highlights of the academic year.

Convocation 2021, like the year prior, went ahead without the usual walks across the stage, hugs and handshakes. And also like the year prior, joy, smiles and a sense of accomplishment were abundant as students received Celebratory Packages, hand delivered to their homes, to mark this milestone moment.

Degree parchments, mortarboards, alumni gifts and a few party supplies for the makings of a festive at-home celebration were included in the packages, all of which were delivered June 8–10, 2021, by senior administrators, faculty, staff and other members of the St. Mary's community to graduating students. On June 11, a virtual Convocation event was held online.

St. Mary's pride in the achievements of students — who have risen to many unforeseen challenges through the course of their education — was shared with the entire city through celebratory ads and congratulatory messages, in print and online. Grads were also invited to share pictures of the moment they opened their boxes on social media.







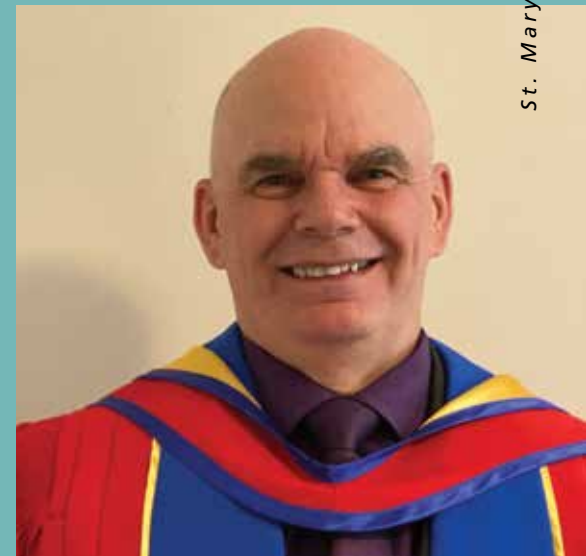
## St. Mary's Order of Excellence **Verna Wright**

St. Mary's University most prestigious award, the Order of Excellence, honours community members who have contributed in an impactful manner to the University over a period of time. Verna Wright is a shining example of that commitment and contribution. Working at St. Mary's for 15 years, Wright wore many hats, including serving as the front desk Coordinator of Enrolment Services and most recently as Associate Registrar. She was passionate about making students' experience at St. Mary's the best it could be, and always went the extra mile for coworkers and the University, and always with grace, humility, patience and kindness. She fostered collaboration and cooperation and was a role model to many.



## Dr. David Lawless Award for Scholarly Achievement **Dr. Ronald Porter**

The Dr. David Lawless Award for Scholarly Achievement is awarded to a member of the full-time faculty in recognition of major scholarly achievements. Dr. Ron Porter has a wealth of expertise in attitude measurement, psychometrics, exploratory factor analysis, personnel selection and social influence. Recently, his interest in indirect implicit attitude measurement netted a prestigious Insight Grant from Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. His studies aim to enable organizations to identify employees' attitudes towards socially sensitive topics, allowing organizations to develop and maintain a more positive work climate. Dr. Porter's research and grant helped establish an experimental psychology research lab at St. Mary's in January 2020.







## Award for Teaching Excellence Dr. Katarina O'Briain

The Award for Teaching Excellence recognizes faculty who demonstrate outstanding teaching that enhances the learning experience for students and advances teaching excellence. Dr. Katarina O'Briain is passionate, professional, caring and inclusive. She has a breadth of knowledge and comfortable delivery of challenging content, and continues to deepen the classroom experience across all of her courses. She added important studies in Black Atlantic and Major Authors to augment the English degree, and from later Shakespeare to research methods to the capstone course, offers students educational excellence in the Humanities. In these uncertain times, Dr. O'Briain has secured her students a generative space of critical inquiry and solace.



## Star Award Julianna Driscoll

The Star Award recognizes students or alumni who exemplify the mission and values of St. Mary's by working toward a vision of social justice and the common good. Julianna Driscoll, a 2021 Bachelor of Arts graduate and entering student in the B.Ed. program, embodies these values. Driscoll consistently volunteers for President's Volunteer Team activities and is a tireless advocate for her fellow students, serving as Vice President of the Student Legislative Council. She took seriously the importance of community during the pandemic and helped coordinate card-writing initiatives to boost the morale of United Active Living residents, organized virtual social events to support students (including the highly successful Student Talent Show), as well as events supporting student mental health and Black Lives Matter.





# Welcome home!

For the first time since pivoting to online learning more than 18 months ago, St. Mary's University welcomed students "back home" to the campus Sept. 2–3, 2021.

More than 150 first-year students took part in fall term New Student Orientation Days, embarking on their post-secondary journeys with new information, activities and, most importantly and most welcome, in-person socialization with fellow classmates.

Activities may have looked a little different and extra precautions were taken to ensure everyone's safety, but the impact and energy were palpable. There was definitely excitement in the air — and a few first-year jitters — as students got to know each other, tour the campus and take part in ice-breaking events.

This was also the first time faculty and staff were back on campus with students in over a year!





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