



# Coming TOGETHER

2020 Report to Community



# Contents

Respond .....	2
Lead .....	4
Record .....	10
Adapt .....	14
Inspire .....	17
Build .....	20
Learn .....	22
Engage .....	26
Grow .....	30
Relate .....	32
Teach .....	34
Expand .....	37
Give .....	38
Perform .....	40
Compete .....	42
Support .....	43
Achieve .....	46

## Our 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.

## Our 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.



# Message from the President



The title of this year's Report to Community is *Coming Together*, and you will see as you read through some of the remarkable accomplishments and initiatives undertaken by our university over the past year, that we have all collectively come together during a time unlike any other we have come to know.

Our world has been changed irrevocably by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has altered the way we work, learn, interact and live, and yet in many ways it has brought us closer together as a connected community — connected in new and exciting ways that have brought about new possibilities.

This has been evident on our campus as our community of students, staff and faculty united and came together to support each other as we transitioned to online learning and working environments. This was not easy, but the grace and resilience demonstrated by our community showed that when we are all working towards a common goal, anything is possible at St. Mary's University.

Anne Bradstreet once wrote: "If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome." 2020 has provided this taste of adversity and yet at St. Mary's we are already starting to see the light of hope and achievement shining through. In the preface to *Communion and Hope*, Pope Francis reflected that the crisis reminds us that, "especially in times of need, we depend on our solidarity with others. In a new way, it is inviting us to place our lives at the service of others. It should make us aware of global injustice and wake us up to the cry of the poor."

Even during uncertain times, St. Mary's has celebrated the Catholic Intellectual Tradition that insists on a well-rounded education that not only develops the whole person — mind, body and spirit — but also prepares the heart and mind for service to others. St. Mary's remains dedicated to providing our students with the finest liberal arts and sciences education possible. Whether it be in person or online, our small class sizes and our commitment to the individual will ensure that we are there for our students, providing them with the incredible education they deserve and helping nurture the skills and critical thinking for which St. Mary's students have become known.

And we will prepare them to go out into the world and change it for the better. Nothing else is as important.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerry Turcotte". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Dr. Gerry Turcotte  
President and Vice-Chancellor

**R**ising to a year of  
challenge with  
hope, courage,  
resilience





In the future, when we look back on 2020, we will see a year that left a profound impact on our lives. The onset of a global pandemic fundamentally altered every aspect of our being — from lockdowns, to social distancing, to virtual classrooms — and every aspect of our day to day interactions with our world and each other has been impacted.

This was also the year that we collectively, as a people, decided that enough was enough, that racial inequality is a systemic problem and that we will no longer sit by and allow this to continue.

The impact of these two major forces has shaped how we at St. Mary's University have gone about providing the best education for our students — because at the root of these major life events is the common thread of humanity.

When we don our masks, practice physical distancing and attend classes or meetings virtually, we are doing so to protect those who may not be able to protect themselves. To ensure the health and safety of our communities, we have all made sacrifices and changed the way we approach our lives. Teachers have delivered online lectures and classes for the first time. Students have attended these lectures and classes because we know this is what we have to do.

We may not know how long we will need to have these precautions in place, but we will continue to do so while working with government officials to ensure our community is able to thrive in a safe and responsible manner. Masks, dividers and social distancing will be temporary, but the interconnection and the importance of looking after our neighbours will endure.

St. Mary's was in a strong position to rise up and meet these challenges head on. Our size, often a selling feature to potential students, has enabled us to be nimble amidst the uncertainty, transitioning from in-person to online learning environments in just two days. This adaptability and responsiveness highlighted the resilience of our institution and has also shone a light on the spirit of St. Mary's and all who comprise this post-secondary community. That our students, staff and faculty have continued with their

studies and their work shows that, even through adversity, the spirit of St. Mary's cannot and will not be defeated.

We also understand that we have to do better to help end systemic racism in the world, to help effect real change in our communities.

St. Mary's University shared in the sorrow and anger that erupted in the wake of the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in the U.S., and the worldwide protests that followed. These senseless killings, and countless more deaths and injustices, are part of a decades-long legacy of violence against people of colour and other marginalized citizens. While these specific tragedies occurred in the United States, a culture of inequality and injustice is not contained by borders. Systemic racism is rampant in Canada and continues to have a negative impact on the lives of Indigenous peoples, people of colour and other members of visible and non-visible communities.

As a university founded in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, St. Mary's decries the violence and injustice that continue to impact our community. We re-commit ourselves to creating, promoting and nurturing an inclusive, safe and equitable environment on our campus. But more than this, we actively strive to empower our students to champion justice and to change our society for the better.

Recognizing that intent needs to be followed by concrete action, St. Mary's has taken important steps forward, including creating a new course on anti-racism through our Indigenous Initiatives program. The President's Volunteer Team will continue to prioritize action that specifically works alongside other non-profits to provide supports for Calgary's most vulnerable and marginalized communities. Through these, along with the continuation of our Humanities 101 program, which is offered free of charge to people from the city's most economically marginalized communities, we will do our part to effect change by committing ourselves to equality for all.

Because this is how St. Mary's lives its mission to prepare engaged citizens and compassionate members of society.

# 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.

# Message from the Chancellor



As Chancellor of St. Mary's University, I have witnessed the growing strength and conviction of a Catholic university that is dedicated to the mission of becoming an intellectual community of higher learning, open to the service of others even in the face of a global pandemic. The star that guides this university in the south of Calgary is the Catholic intellectual tradition through which students are offered the gift of a strong liberal arts and sciences education and the social teachings of the Church.

When we are experiencing restrictions and many are feeling distanced, it is through the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom that students and professors connect to advance the desire to learn, to enter into dialogue and to be formed by the rich encounter of faith and reason. Although this is taking place primarily through virtual formats and small face-to-face cohorts, we are nonetheless called to recognize the essential values that come to young people through the gift of learning. Enduring values such as the pursuit of truth, the commitment to serving the common good, and the promotion of the beauty in living our human dignity are marks of a truly Catholic education.

In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis is calling for a new fraternity and a social friendship that reflects such essential and enduring values. "It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. No one can face life in isolation ... We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead" (FT, no. 8).

For more than 30 years, St. Mary's University has been helping students to look ahead by offering the gift of learning through an educational experience in the Catholic intellectual tradition, one rooted in faith which promotes the authentic dignity of the human person. As we look ahead through this time of pandemic toward a future of hope, it is the values of justice and compassion which are the gifts that we as a community can give to serve others, especially the most vulnerable. Those who graduate from this university know they have not simply acquired the skills necessary to pursue a career but, more importantly, they are entrusted with the call to seek out and serve others through personal and communal endeavours that they will undertake for the common good of society and the global fraternity and social friendships in the world.

It is an honour to serve as Chancellor and to support this academic community of St. Mary's University. This is a university community that continues to witness to the enduring value of a Catholic intellectual tradition — especially in the midst of this pandemic — because it will inspire the compassionate, respectful and altruistic leaders of tomorrow. This is a learning community "in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William T. McGratton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Most Reverend William T. McGratton  
Chancellor

# Message from the Board of Governors



With 2020 being my first year as Board Chair of St. Mary's University, this year has highlighted for me what a dynamic, resilient and dedicated institution St. Mary's truly is. An environment of learning that is one of a kind, with dedicated faculty and staff who are deeply committed to helping students maximize their potential and achieve their educational dreams. Even in the face of a global pandemic, the spirit that has been demonstrated from every single individual has truly been a sight to behold.

While this year may not have gone exactly how we all would have liked or expected, there are certain truths that have remained the same. A strong liberal arts and sciences education based in the Catholic intellectual tradition creates an atmosphere of community that affords students the room to grow and become compassionate, critical thinkers who are ready, willing and able to apply their faith, knowledge and skills to help make the world a better place.

I am honoured and privileged to serve as the Chair of the St. Mary's University Board of Governors, and to work collaboratively with a group of passionate, 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 being part of St. Mary's as it reaches new heights and provides a place for our students to grow and achieve their enormous potential.

Gary Strother  
Chair and Treasurer  
Board of Governors

## Board of Governors

as at Oct. 28, 2020

- Most Reverend William T. McGrattan.....Chancellor
- Mr. Gary Strother .....Chair and Treasurer
- Ms. Michelle Gagnon.....Vice-Chair
- Mr. Scott Morrison .....Chancellor's Designate
- Dr. Gerry Turcotte .....President and Vice-Chancellor
- Dr. Luke Bresky.....Faculty Representative
- Mr. Chris Kibwana.....Student Representative
- Mr. Devin Elkin.....Community Advisory Council  
Representative
- Mr. Adam Bowen.....Administrative Staff  
Representative
- Mr. Michael Rooney.....Alumni Representative
- Most Reverend Gregory Kerr-Wilson .....Ecumenical Representative

## Members at Large

- Mr. Lee Funke
- Ms. Mary Comeau
- Mr. Larry Day
- Dr. Michelle Gagnon
- Mr. Roberto Geremia
- Ms. Rosanne Hill Blaisdell
- Ms. Annette BruisedHead
- Ms. Debra Mauro
- Ms. Cindy Provost
- Mr. Paul Valentine

## Officers

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



# Message from the Minister



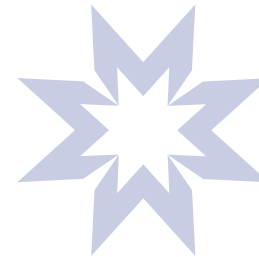
As the Minister of Advanced Education, it is my pleasure to contribute to St. Mary's University's 2020 Report to Community.

St. Mary's University has made significant contributions to Calgary's post-secondary community by providing a place for students to partake in meaningful academic and spiritual opportunities, while earning accredited and valued degrees.

I commend the administration, faculty, staff and students for their sincere efforts to build a learning environment that is focused on personal and professional growth — one that seeks to expand minds and abilities and encourages creativity, problem solving and new ideas. Your dedication to nurturing the whole student is commendable and will help build a legacy of engaged citizens who will contribute greatly to their communities.

St. Mary's University has my continued appreciation for providing high quality and accessible education for students from all corners of the world. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to expanding skills development and education opportunities for students.

The Hon. Demetrios Nicolaides  
Minister of Advanced Education  
Government of Alberta



# Message from the Vice-Presidents



*Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell  
Vice-President Academic*



*Ms. Thérèse Takacs  
Vice-President  
Advancement &  
Campus Services*



*Mr. John Deausy  
Interim VP Finance*

The 2019-20 Academic year presented challenges unlike any St. Mary's University, and the entire world, have ever seen before. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic forced St. Mary's University to mobilize and transition into online delivery as students, staff, and faculty transitioned to remote studying and working environments. Though it was not without challenges, the fact that we were able to accomplish this amazing feat in a mere two days is a testament to the strength of our community, the dedication of our staff and faculty and the patience, understanding and resilience of our student population.

Ensuring that St. Mary's programs continue to provide the best educational experience for our students is always our main priority and this cannot be achieved without working closely with faculty. We were able to finish the 2019-20 academic year remotely and headed into the 2020 academic year prepared to deliver most course remotely and preparing the campus for in-person classes and labs to be safely offered with COVID-19 protocols in place. This hybrid delivery has entailed an enormous amount of organisation, consultation, and learning on everyone's part.

Though our in-person convocation had to be cancelled, our community came together to ensure our graduating students got to celebrate their amazing achievement and be recognized for all of their hard work. The graduation boxes that were assembled and hand delivered by members of the St. Mary's staff, faculty and leadership were a way for us to let our students know how proud we are of their achievements at St. Mary's.

In September St. Mary's evolution and growth continued through delivery of new programs that build on the existing foundations at our institution and saw us welcome the first cohort of students for our Bachelor of Education (Secondary) to campus. The dedication shown by these, and all, of our St. Mary's students this year has truly been inspiring.

Our department of Information Technology has seen major advancements over the past year as capacity has increased to properly allow St. Mary's education to be delivered through online platforms. This department has played a pivotal role in ensuring that we had the digital infrastructure in place to be able to continue to provide our students with a quality St. Mary's education.

We have welcomed new faces to our community who have stepped in at a time of uncertainty and helped us navigate these uncertain waters. We have welcomed John Deausy to our Leadership team in the role of Interim VP Finance. With his help we have been able to ensure that we remain financially prudent and viable at a time when 'business as usual' is anything but.

Though in-person gatherings have since been limited, we were able to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our President's Dinner and welcomed Alberta's own, and country music superstar, Paul Brandt to serve as our special guest, who helped make our last in-person event prior to pandemic restrictions a night to remember. Under the leadership of President's Dinner Board Chair Lori Iovinelli this was one of the most successful President's Dinner's ever.

Together we have united as a community to support each other and persevere during these unprecedented times and ensure that our students are able to continue their academic pursuits.

Dr. Tara Hyland Russell  
Vice-President Academic

Thérèse Takacs  
Vice-President Advancement  
and Campus Services

Mr. John Deausy  
Interim VP Finance

# Message from the Student Legislative Council



The Student Legislative Council has always been a great opportunity for myself and many other executive members before me to help play a role in the student experience at St. Mary's University.

My first year as SLC President came with priceless experiences and amazing connections with many people throughout my time. I felt eager about coming into 2020 for all the opportunities that were planned in the upcoming winter semester. It was unfortunate that our opportunity to serve the students in person was cut short due to the global COVID-19 pandemic shutdown in March, though I know as a community, St. Mary's will come back stronger. We are committed, not only to our studies and our pursuits of social justice, but to each other, and it is this commitment that will help guide us through these difficult times.

Although there were many meetings and work still left to be done whether in person or online, I'm glad that St. Mary's had such a seamless transition to online learning and meetings so that we can continue to pursue our dreams of education.

I know I speak for my fellow SLC members when I say that we are so excited to be back as a council and will continue to serve the students of St. Mary's to the best of our abilities, with honour, dignity and compassion.

Chris Kibwana  
President  
St. Mary's University Student Legislative Council

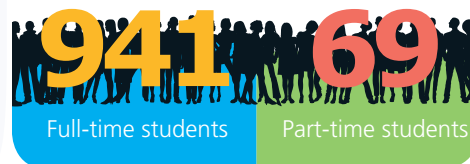
# St. Mary's University at a glance

## 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.

- critical and strategic thinkers
- effective communicators
- collaborators
- compassionate citizens
- creative innovators
- consider moral and ethical implications

## Snapshot 2019–20



## 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



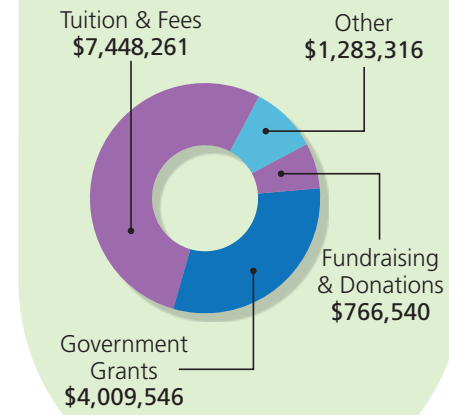
### Logo

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.

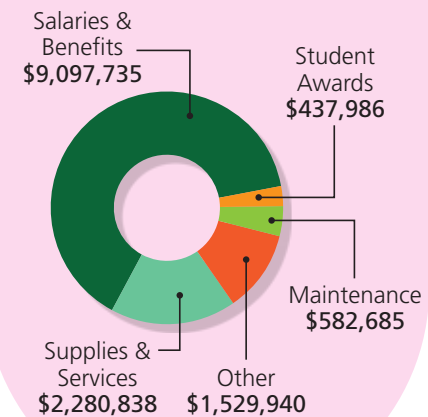
### Colours



## Operating Revenues




## Operating Expenses



## Student success



**14**  
Lightning Athletes were National Scholar Award Winners for academic achievement

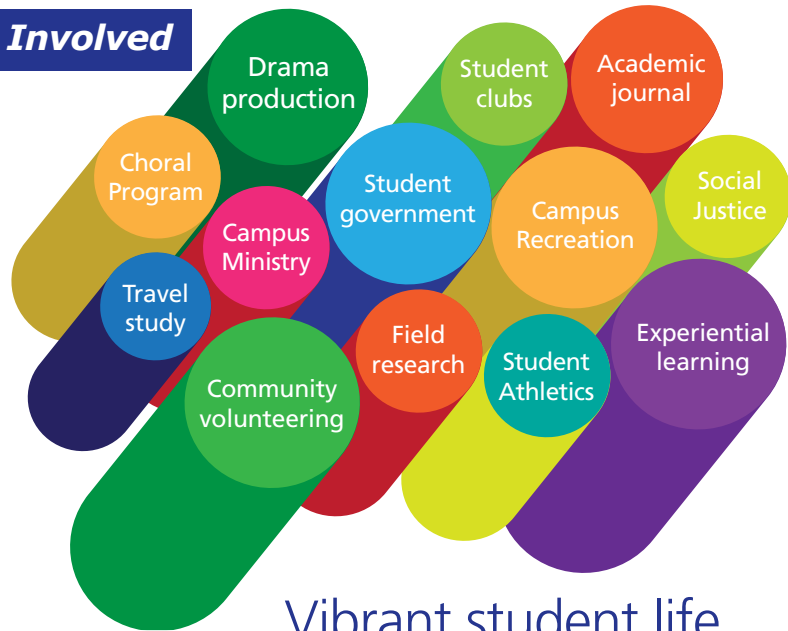


**48**  
President Circle Scholarships totalling \$53,525 awarded to new students entering from high school who achieve an average of 80 per cent or higher on averages calculated on the five best Grade 11 or Grade 12 admission subjects.



**283**  
Student Awards totalling \$444,469 handed out in 2019-2020

### Involved




**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

# Memorable Moments

## Reporting to the community

St. Mary's annual Report to Community Breakfast on Thursday Nov. 28 was held at the beautiful Glenbow Museum — the ideal place to highlight the University's past, present and future. The event was an important opportunity to speak to the community and to answer questions about upcoming initiatives and goals.



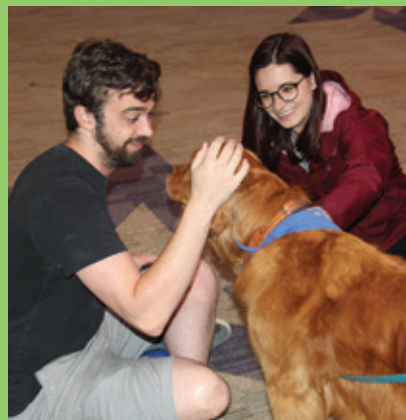
## Truth vs. lies

Patrick Walsh launched his new novel, *Truth Fiction Lies: Confessions of an Italian-Irish Catholic-American Immigrant to Canada*, in St. Mary's Owerko Hall on Nov. 15, 2019. Walsh read from his new work, which tackles a timely topic: "In today's world, how the hell do you tell TRUTH from LIES? This guy spent his lifetime trying to figure it out. Is he a Saint or a Sinner?"



## Four-legged PALS reduce stress

The Pet Access League Society (PALS) paid a much-welcome visit to St. Mary's University once again to hang out with students experiencing extra stress because of final exams. Excited pups and their owners met with students as they popped in and out of McGivney Hall. Both the dogs and the students benefitted from the visit, with one student saying, "I have an exam in half an hour. This is very helpful!" and another commenting, "I could stay here all day."



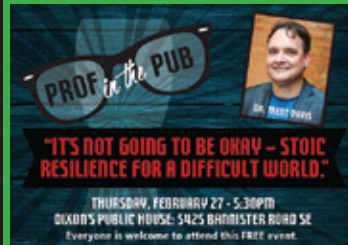
## Q&A for B.Ed.

St. Mary's University Bachelor of Education – Elementary alumni Erin McQuitty, Mike Porter, Serenna Hughes, Kristin Ford and Courtney Urbani took part in a Q&A Night on Tuesday, Feb. 4 to share some of what they've experienced as teachers. Current B.Ed. students had the opportunity to peek inside their future careers.



# Profs in the Pub

St. Mary's faculty once again took to the community to share their knowledge in the University's engaging and free-of-charge Profs in the Pub series. Dr. Mary Ann McLean shared her interesting research on native ants and alien plants on Oct. 24, 2019, and Dr. Trent Davis spoke about stoic resilience on Feb. 27, 2020. Both were held at Dixon's Public House and were open to members of the community, as well as St. Mary's staff members and students.



# A win for students!

The annual Valentine Cup ball hockey game returned to St. Mary's on Friday, September 13 with a thrilling game that saw the student team overpower the University's staff and faculty team by a score of 5-2. While rain threatened, it held off just long enough for the teams to leave it all on the Valentine Family Court in front of the Valentine family, Paul, Shirley and Ted, and members of St. Mary's staff and faculty.



# Showcasing students' creative writing

The latest issues of Sightlines, a St. Mary's University publication showcasing the best of students' creative writing, was launched on Oct. 4, 2020. The quality and depth of work by student authors once again garnered rave reviews.



# Students for Social Justice

On Feb. 25, 2020, St. Mary's University was proud to host a panel, organized by St. Mary's student Sonica Kanda and comprising diverse students, in honour of Black History Month. Panellists shared their personal insights, thoughts and experiences, prompting discussions and questions about why Black History Month is so important today.

## St. Mary's goes virtual in unprecedented times

To say that the COVID-19 pandemic caught everyone by surprise and turned "normal" upside down is an understatement at best. Post-secondaries across Alberta and beyond found themselves in uncharted territory. St. Mary's responded quickly to this unexpected challenge by doing what it does best: focusing on the success and well-being of students, capitalizing on the flexibility inherent in a small university and relying on the ingenuity of faculty and staff — all to provide the highest quality, albeit different, educational experience.

Two signature events highlighted what's possible when new ideas and technology are combined to enable people to connect and learn in a new way. National Indigenous Peoples Day and the Eugene-A-Thon.

## National Indigenous Peoples Day

National Indigenous Peoples Day was celebrated virtually on June 18, 2020, through a Microsoft Teams event hosted by St. Mary's University. Indigenous Elders Casey Eagle Speaker and Grandmother Doreen Spence were on hand to speak about celebrating the land and cycles of life via an open discussion with the entire St. Mary's community.

This event provided participants with the opportunity to discuss, ask questions and expand their knowledge about Canada's Indigenous Peoples.





# Eugene-a-Thon connects with a whole new audience

June 18, 2020, saw the debut of a once-in-a-pandemic event: a six-hour Eugene-a-Thon. This quirky, virtual Inspiring Conversations event, presented in association with Wordfest Calgary, featured none other than St. Mary's playwright-in-residence Eugene Stickland. Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell, Vice-President Academic, took part in one of the event's segments, a discussion about Stickland's new novel, *First and Last*, the book version of a play commissioned by St. Mary's University and performed by St. Mary's Drama program and later by Rogue's Theatre.

The partnership with Wordfest enabled St. Mary's to connect with a whole new audience by reaching out to more than 25,000 on Wordfest's mailing list. This was an ideal audience for not only the Eugene-a-Thon, but also for the entire Inspiring Conversations series, providing an invaluable marketing channel.



# Spirit of St. Mary's shines bright as students adapt to the 'new normal'

A student leader shares her thoughts on learning in a new environment — and tips for navigating a successful transition to remote learning

For Mikayla Pritchard, St. Mary's University student in the Bachelor of Arts (Liberal Studies) program and member of the Student Legislative Council, adjusting to the reality of transitioning to remote learning — a move necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure the safety of students, while still maintaining the close connections and quality education for which St. Mary's is known — was relatively smooth.

Each student will have their own experience, however, and adjusting to this new form of instruction is different for each student. To assist peers in their successful adjustment, Pritchard offered suggestions on how to adapt to this educational environment.



*What has been a big change for many students is the shift from the small classroom setting into the online virtual world of learning. For those who are struggling with this change of schooling, remember to take it one day at a time. Write down a schedule for what you want to accomplish in each day of the week in order to stay on track. Take breaks when you need to. Reach out to your professors for help. Find things that motivate you to accomplish what you need to finish throughout the day.*

*St. Mary's University has been extremely resilient throughout this process thanks to the hard work and dedication from the staff and faculty. Being able to have the accessibility to learn from home would not have been successful without their commitment and many sleepless nights organizing class material and understanding how the online class sessions work.*

*It is because of their quick response that we, as students, can still be educated during this time. So, Thank you very much!*

# Indigenous Scholar, leader Dr. Leroy Little Bear advocates for wiser decisions

Since the introduction of St. Mary's University's first Indigenous Strategic Plan in 2013, led by the central voices of the Indigenous Advisory Council, St. Mary's has been honoured to invite Indigenous Scholars to take part in various on-campus events and discussions.

St. Mary's Inspiring Conversations series has proved to be one of the most successful methods of bringing faculty, students and staff together — all while welcoming and engaging the Calgary community in important conversations of truth-telling and reconciliation.

On Feb. 26 2020, Dr. Leroy Little Bear, founder of Canada's first Native American Studies Department and a leader and advocate for First Nations education, rights, self-governance, language and culture, spoke to the St. Mary's community about Indigenous Science and Blackfoot Metaphysics — drawing an impressive crowd of more than 300 people.

This Inspiring Conversation facilitated open discussion

among students, faculty and the greater Calgary community, provoking thought about pre-conceived notions regarding science, metaphysics and Indigenous Studies.

St. Mary's believes that any time the University chooses to centre Indigenous voices and Indigenous ways of knowing in the Western academy, it is a move towards decolonization. Collectively, we are all part of the story and of the Land, and the more we build partnerships and collective hope, the wiser the choices we can make collectively.

St. Mary's University is located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikuni, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina and the Iyârhe Nakoda. We are situated on land where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, and that the traditional Blackfoot name of this place is Mohkinstsis which we now call the City of Calgary. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.



*St. Mary's Director of Indigenous Initiatives Michelle Scott (L) and Vice-President Academic Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell (R) welcome Dr. Leroy Little Bear to the campus as part of the Inspiring Conversations series.*

# Inspiring a conversation

## Ripe with Possibility

On Jan. 16, 2020, St. Mary's University welcomed acclaimed Canadian artist Lise Melhorn-Boe to the campus as part of the University's ongoing Artist Talk series. Her presentation and accompanying art exhibition in the Mauro Gallery (located within the historic water tower) inspired people to see well-known items through a different lens.

Entitled "Ripe with Possibility: Re-defining the book through an artist's eyes," the event gave attendees the opportunity to experience Melhorn-Boe's sculptural "bookworks." These unique multi-media creations challenge the traditional definition of "book" by incorporating unconventional structures and materials. In creating them, Melhorn-Boe prompts people to consider that a book doesn't necessarily have to be a rectangular codex that opens from the left, but rather, it can be a structure that augments the text and becomes a visual object on its own.

The structure and style of Melhorn-Boe's art changes the conversation about books and is especially relevant today given the topical gender issues in society. By consciously taking everyday items and using traditionally gender-stereotyped techniques/skills (instead of art media like painting or drawing), she takes totems of gender stereotypes and reclaims them and the ideas they reflect to shift perspective and change the narrative.

Melhorn-Boe has been making and exhibiting books and sculptural bookworks for almost 40 years, exhibiting widely across Canada and the United States as well as in Europe and South America. Her works are in several public collections.





# President's Dinner silver anniversary sparkles with support, celebration

March 5, 2020, marked a major milestone and was an evening to remember, as members of the St. Mary's University community came together at the historic and elegant Fairmont Palliser hotel to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the annual St. Mary's President's Dinner.

St. Mary's student Brandon Lorenzo, an aspiring country music star, kicked off the event with a wonderful rendition of O Canada, setting the tone for the evening's musical centrepiece: a performance by country music superstar Paul Brandt.

Hosted this year by Linda Olsen, award-winning Global Calgary news anchor and 2020 St. Mary's University Honorary Fellow, the President's Dinner welcomed treasured friends who have contributed to St. Mary's many successes.

Glasses — many of them filled with the President's Dinner signature cocktail, The Starlight Martini, created by none other than St. Mary's own Dr. Peter Doherty — were raised to toast another successful year at St. Mary's and to the many more to come.

Continuing this long-standing tradition, attendees built on their support by bidding on new and exclusive silent auction items, including a signature St. Mary's Hillberg & Berk bracelet. In doing so, they affirmed their support for the University, its students and the future path forward.





# W E E



# Of bats and birds

## Growing understanding of the natural world

Being located next door to Fish Creek Park gives St. Mary's University students, faculty and staff a unique and personal connection to one of Calgary's most remarkable natural places. This inspires the University to foster a greater understanding of the natural environment both near and far. While local field trips and in-park research are a boon to teaching and learning, the annual Darwin Day and Inspiring Conversations events also welcome the community. All are integral to increasing knowledge about the wider world and the importance of its wise stewardship. Learning took flight in two signature events in 2019–20 that focused on very different winged species: bats and birds.

## Darwin's Theory of Evolution

St. Mary's University celebrated its annual Darwin Day — commemorating the birth of Charles Darwin and his many contributions to science — on Feb. 27, 2020. Dr. Scott Lovell, Assistant Professor of Biology, spearheaded the event, which focused specifically on Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

Dr. Robert Barclay, a professor from the University of Calgary's Department of Biological Science and an expert on bats, was guest speaker. His lecture, entitled: Bats: Evolutionary Enigmas Facing Environmental Challenges, was a comprehensive look into ways that various types of bats have evolved to their environment.

More than 80 students, professors and members of the Calgary community in attendance were keenly interested in learning about the world's second most species-rich group of mammals (with 1,300 species worldwide) and their diverse evolution, which includes the ability survive deadly mold, and making habitats out of plants in the rainforest — affirming their place as evolutionary enigmas that are the perfect reflection of Darwin's Theory of Evolution in action.





# Saving the city's birds from skyscraper perils



Every year, thousands of migratory birds die because they strike buildings in downtown Calgary, often in the spring and fall. On Nov. 23, 2019, as part of St. Mary's Inspiring Conversations speaker series, faculty, students and members of the community learned about the work of and evidence collected by the Calgary Migratory Species Response Team.

Dr. Scott Lovell, Assistant Professor of Biology, is part of a group of some 40 volunteers studying the impact of buildings and lights in the downtown core on migrating species of birds and bats. He is on the front lines, rescuing those that have been injured due to urbanization, and compiling scientific data that can help inform future city design.

Despite significant changes to Calgary's downtown core, little research has been done since 1997, when the last count looming at the impact of buildings on birds and mammals was done. From Sept. 1–Oct. 31, 2019, Lovell and student volunteers scoured the area just before dawn, at dawn and at night, looking for birds and animals that had struck buildings. Of the 107 strikes, 19 living birds and animals were taken to the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society and the

remains of 88 were taken to St. Mary's Biology department for further study.



# Grad goes from St. Mary's to Harvard



St. Mary's University alumna Audrey Lee (BA – Psychology 2014) has taken her passion for helping others to the heights of academia — to Boston's Harvard University.

Lee completed her internship at Indiana University School of Medicine and graduated from Seattle Pacific University with a PhD in Clinical Psychology. In her final year there, she received the Clinical Psychology Outstanding PhD Graduate and Shea Developmental Psychopathology Dissertation Excellence Awards. She accepted a postdoctoral fellowship position with Harvard School of Medicine and is working at Boston Children's Hospital, the top-ranked pediatric hospital in the U.S. and also the world's largest pediatric research enterprise, where she is specializing in assessment of neurodevelopmental disorders.

Lee's parents appreciate St. Mary's for providing the well-rounded education for their daughter to develop academically, emotionally, personally and spiritually, quoting a Chinese proverb: "When you drink water, think of its source."

## 飲水思源

*To my Psychology professors Drs. Doherty, McArthur and Syrnyk, I am extremely grateful for the foundation in Psychology you provided me with during my undergraduate training. Your support of me as a human being, aspiring researcher and clinician has made a world of difference. The path towards a PhD truly takes a village, and I am privileged to have had you all as teachers and mentors. Your classes prepared me very well for graduate-level courses.*

*Thank you for fostering my curiosity and passion for psychology ... you allowed me to grow and gain courage to participate and ask questions in class. Thank you for the research opportunities. That first taste of conducting research has fuelled my persistence through the last six years of my PhD training.*

*Audrey Lee*

# Exercising freedom together

St. Mary's University is extraordinarily proud to support Field of Crosses Calgary, which every year offers a poignant tribute to lives lost in the defence of freedom. More than 3,500 crosses are displayed along Memorial Drive from Nov. 1–11, each memorializing an individual soldier from Southern Alberta who made the ultimate sacrifice in war.

On Sept. 30, 2020, St. Mary's collaborated with Field of Crosses to host an Exercise Freedom Together Challenge on the University Campus. The campaign invited Calgarians to celebrate their freedom by taking part in an exercise challenge to help raise awareness and funds to benefit the Field of Crosses nonprofit organization.

More than \$1,000 was raised by individuals and teams of five people, and St. Mary's President Gerry Turcotte presented a cheque on the participants' behalf to the Field of Crosses. Each participant donated \$5 and also posted photos on their social media channels, chronicling their progress running or walking 3 kms — while physical distancing. They encouraged and challenged friends, family members and colleagues to spread awareness and to donate to Field of Crosses.

The Challenge was an excellent way to welcome people to St. Mary's wonderful campus environment, encourage fitness and, most importantly, pay respect to and honour the service of men and women who sacrificed their lives in combat.



St. Mary's President Dr. Gerry Turcotte (middle R) presents Field of Crosses executive members Susan Schalin (L), Murray McCann (middle L) and George Brookman (R) with a cheque for the pledges earned by the St. Mary's community taking part in the Field of Crosses Exercise Freedom Together Challenge.



# School art graces St. Mary's annual Christmas card

Students from schools across Calgary were invited to take part in a one-of-a-kind artistic project last fall: creating the design for St. Mary's annual Christmas card.

The first Christmas Card Artwork Competition was announced in October 2019 and drew a host of entries from students vying for the top prize, and for the opportunity to have their artwork displayed in a special exhibition of submissions in the Mauro Gallery (located inside the historic water tower). The four winners — Grade 6 students Kira, Sarah, Spencer and Teagan, all from St. Teresa of Calcutta School — were announced at a small Gallery event celebrating the student artists.

Students were encouraged to let their imaginations run wild and be creative, and to submit drawings, paintings, stamped works or works in any other media. The winning designs were printed on cards used by St. Mary's administrators, faculty and staff to extend holiday greetings, and winning designers also received printed cards for their own family's use.





## Rallying the community to support St. Mary's

The Community Influencers Breakfast held in fall 2019 was an initiative created by the St. Mary's University Community Advisory Committee, as part of a wider strategy to promote awareness and goodwill concerning the development of internship/work-study/volunteer/general employment opportunities for St. Mary's students.

A select group of influential guests were invited to a "power breakfast," which included an opportunity to learn from students and employers who have benefited from internships or work-study agreements.

The immediate goal was to encourage more (and more diverse) members of the greater community to imagine themselves, or people in their networks, taking advantage of the valuable resource that St. Mary's students represent as volunteers, interns and employees. The broader goal, consistent with the mission of the committee, is to generate wider recognition of St. Mary's as an asset to the local community and its economy.

Attendees at the inaugural breakfast were drawn from various economic sectors, the Calgary Catholic School District and local government. It was highlighted by the participation of former Olympian double gold medallist Catriona Le May Doan.



# CWL annual lecture opens universe of ideas

On Oct. 2, 2019, St. Mary's University welcomed Dr. Adam D. Hincks, SJ, to campus for the 2019–20 **Catholic Women's League** annual Lecture in Catholic Studies to lead a discussion on how science, philosophy and Catholic Theology explain the origins of the universe.

His lecture — “Do the Big Bang and Faith Collide?” (hint, they do not!) — drew a capacity crowd of almost 400 to McGivney Hall for a night of insight, riveting discussion and more than a few eye-opening revelations about the relationship between science and religion, and how to reconcile the seeming conflict between the two.

Dr. Hincks earned his PhD in Physics from Princeton University, specializing in cosmology. He is also a Jesuit priest who has studied theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and is an Associate Scholar of the Vatican Observatory.

Dr. Hincks shared his belief that there is no conflict between science and the Christian Catholic tradition. He cited the creation story in the Bible and scientific advances regarding the age the universe as examples of open dialogue among disciplines, noting that science is starting to answer questions that are helping to interpret creation stories.



This aligns with the thoughts of Dr. Peter Baltutis, St. Mary's CWL Chair of Catholic Studies and Associate Professor of History and Religious Studies, who shares the view that no one discipline reigns supreme when speaking about truth. He pointed to Pope Francis, who speaks about a culture of encounter and going to the margins, which he interprets as a call for academics to see where questions being asked interact with theologians or people outside of faith all together.

If the robust question-and-answer session following the presentation was any indication, attendees' perceptions were definitely challenged and may have been changed. There was no doubt that this captivating and enlightening discussion opened all to the idea that science offers insights to drive forth culture and understanding of the world, and faith offers questions on how to apply these sciences ethically.



# Riveting discussion explores rise of anti-Semitism

In September 2019, Dr. Melanie Schmoll, well-known political scientist, educator and historian, led a timely discussion about the possible resurgence of anti-Semitism, with a presentation titled “New Anti-Semitism in Germany — or the Same Old Evil?”

Her presentation explored whether there was a resurgence in anti-Semitism, if it was the “same old evil” or if this increase is tied to what is being described as “imported anti-Semitism” tied to the increase in refugees, particularly in Germany.

Dr. Schmoll believes such conversations are important at any time, and have added significance in today’s divisive political climate. She noted that it was important for people to be aware and to stand up, take part in and protect democracy.

It was clear during the question-and-answer portion of the lecture that she had succeeded in getting people’s attention and inspiring many conversations.



VP Academic Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell and Dr. Melanie Schmoll

## Making some noise to end the stigma of mental illness



The Classroom Building at St. Mary's University was buzzing on Jan. 29, 2020, for Bell Let's Talk Day, an initiative that focuses on raising money for and awareness of mental illness across Canada. During the day, students engaged in mindful activities, were visited by a therapy dog and had access to free mental health resources.



Lesley King, University Counsellor, and Nathan Ruff, Sports Manager, teamed up to get the entire University talking, noting that mental health problems are more common than people think. Initiatives like this are important because it is not always easy to talk about mental health issues, and people need to know they are not alone.

Lightning student athletes also took part in the ACAC's annual Make Some Noise for Mental Health initiative once again this year, which focuses on the unique challenges and stresses faced when balancing academic and athletic demands.



# Getting savvy with social media to share Library collections, services



St. Mary's University welcomed a guiding light to the family in 2018 when Jessica Macaulay joined the St. Basil's Hall Library Team as an Acquisition & Circulation Specialist. A large part of her role as circulation specialist is actively promoting Library collections and services to students, staff and faculty — and social media is a big part of her strategy.

Macaulay came to St. Mary's with a wealth of experience in various sectors, having spent 14 years working with youth non-profit organizations (including Scouts Canada and the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award). She also has significant experience using social media to engage with teens aged 14–19 for both entertainment and informational purposes.

That social media savvy has helped create a strong and engaging virtual presence for the St. Mary's Library. It is a valuable tool and resource for keeping students, staff, faculty and the community at large connected to and informed about all of the exciting things the Library has underway.

Adding to the perspective Macaulay brings to the team is the fact that she honed her social media skills in Scotland. While serving for a year as an intern, she drafted and launched the social media strategy for the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Research Collections. She continued to manage those accounts for a year following her return to Canada after completing the internship.

With her BA (Hons.) in English Literature, M.Sc. (Hons.) in Material Cultures and History of the Book and Master of Library and Information Science (Hons.), Macaulay is the go-to person when it comes to talking about the value of interdisciplinary/intersectional education. Her knowledge combined with skills in technical writing, understanding and analyzing cultural trends, and conducting rapid research is proving particularly valuable as St. Mary's implements its strategic plans.





## History student lands internship blending knowledge, practice

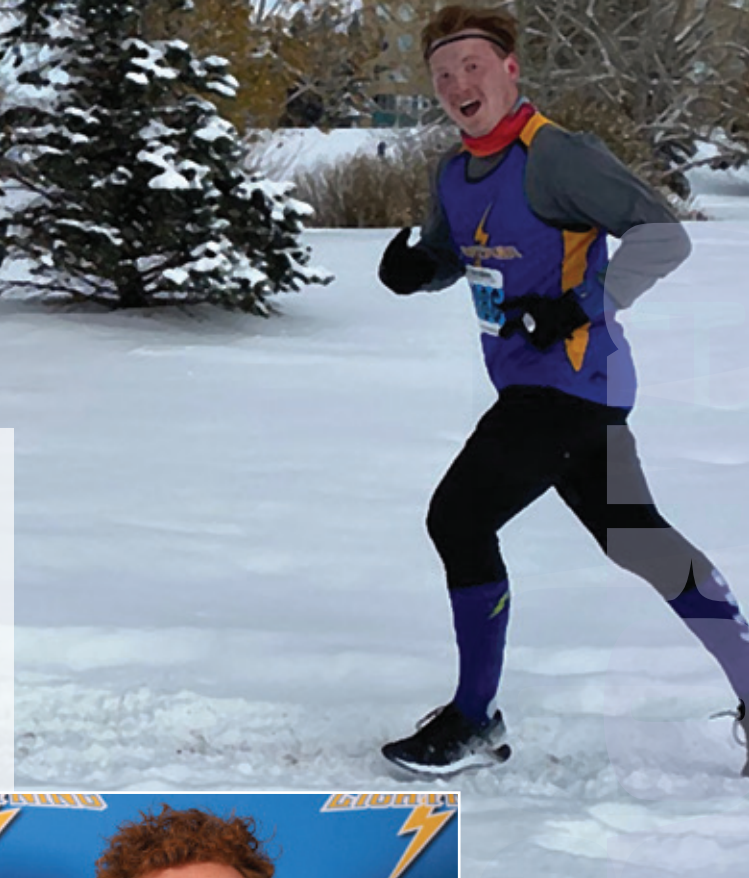
Quinn Demers, a fourth-year History student at St. Mary's University and Lightning student athlete, has made some history of his own. He secured a valuable internship with Heritage Trades Research Assistant working with Dave Chalmers from Chalmers Heritage Conservation Ltd. and the Calgary Civic Trust. and put his History knowledge to use conducting a series of interviews and dialogues with people who are familiar with and engaged in traditional trades methods that may be going obsolete.

Students who take part in internships gain practical experience, develop a network of contacts and obtain a better understanding of careers in their chosen field while they apply knowledge and skills developed in the classroom in a practical work environment.

Experiential learning opportunities such as these are an integral facet of the St. Mary's History program. They are important for students as they step into a competitive workforce, offering hands-on experience and practical knowledge of how the study of History can be used in professional work environments.

Demers knew that the internship would be a great fit. Among his many interviews were a brick maker in Canmore and a traditional wagon maker in southern Alberta, both of whom are the last of their craft. Demers is also interested in Indigenous heritage trades, which he also learned more about during the interviews.

He expects the internship to be valuable in his future pursuits in trades research, and is confident that this endeavour will directly impact the industrial and trade history of Alberta by preserving the original practices of trades in farming and carpentry.



# Articulating our Catholic identity

## Renewing vital relationships of faith and service

The first objective in achieving St. Mary's University's strategic priority of "Celebrating our Identity" is articulating who we are as a Catholic university. This is why we have redoubled our efforts to build and renew partnerships with other Catholic agencies and organizations who share our mission and values. That has included engaging in various diocesan initiatives, such as representing the Catholic diocese on social justice initiatives across the city, creating workshops for lay pastoral visitors on mental health and spirituality, providing curriculum leadership in the permanent diaconate formation program, participating in the bishop's pastoral response to COVID-19, and working collaboratively with the St. Francis Xavier campus ministry and young adult diocesan initiative.

In the past year, St. Mary's welcomed various members of our religious communities to campus, inviting them to engage with students and share the wealth of their experience in how to live dedicated lives of service to others. St. Mary's degree in Catholic Studies and Social Justice is now underway, a program of learning and growth that defines the University's core values and mission for our students. Through the compassion of many students, we have increased our pastoral presence at the Father Lacombe Care Centres. We have worked directly with Catholic school administrators in putting forward a government proposal to expand mental health support in our schools across Alberta during these uncertain times.

As we seek to renew and strengthen our Catholic identity through the wider Church, the other important work in achieving this objective is clarifying the value of the Catholic intellectual tradition as a foundation for higher learning. Recently, Dr. Norman Knowles, professor and former dean of arts and sciences, poignantly reminded us of the importance of St. Mary's as a Catholic liberal arts university. Knowles remarked that,

"Being a Catholic university means being conscious of God working in each person's life, recognizing the dignity of the individual as a unique creation and revelation of the divine." Knowles went on to explain how this core value of a Catholic university shapes the way we engage learning as a community:

"Because all persons are created in the likeness and image of God, all persons are to be treated with dignity and respect and stand before God as equals. Discrimination on any grounds simply has no place in a Catholic university. The Gospels call us to hospitality, to relationship and to service — to be faithful is to embrace the other, the stranger in our midst as sister and brother. We welcome all persons so that we may enter into conversation with them and learn from their experience and in the process more fully know ourselves. Such conversation is essential in our increasingly diverse, multicultural society and interconnected world. We must follow the example set by Pope John XIII at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council and not withdraw from the world but keep our doors open to the world."

By God's grace, and with the ongoing support of many who share this vision for St. Mary's University, we continue the good work before us.

*by Lance Dixon, Director of Campus Ministry*



# In darkness we see light

## Virtual Masses unite St. Mary's community

St. Mary's University has a sacred tradition of gathering for Mass every Wednesday morning. The sudden impact of COVID-19 called for a creative response to sustain a sense of community, and the Campus Ministry team responded quickly by creating a "virtual" Mass.

Gathering with familiar faces and voices online enables everyone to appreciate more fully the gift of God's sacraments in daily life, learning to lean more attentively into the presence of the Holy Spirit and to listen more deeply to the Word of hope and life in gospel stories that promise to sustain us even in the times of uncertainty and doubt.

The virtual Mass doesn't replace what we experience as we partake in the real Body of Christ, and in the presence of the living body of Christ, the Church, but it does benefit our community. It helps us be mindful of deeper spiritual connections to one another. As physical beings who long to join with others to delight in the wonder of being creatures made in the image of God, ultimately our union is in the bonds of love and peace, in our deeper spiritual connection to one another, which transcend the wonderful and, yes, also the fragile existence of our physical being.

Together through virtual Mass, when even two are three are gathered, Christ is there to meet us, reminding us in fact, that He never left.



## Finding faith at a social distance

Lance Dixon, Director of Campus Ministry, launched St. Mary's new thought-provoking, inspiring and enlightening podcast in March 2020, sharing conversations with people who are finding ways to live meaningful and authentic faith in today's complex world. Timely topics have explored race, mental health, science and religion, artists as evangelists, the future church, faith on the front lines of health care, and life in the time of pandemic, among others.



# Teaching and impact beyond boundaries

Whether providing expert media comment and analysis on important issues of the day, writing and editing books and journal articles, presenting at conferences attended by peers, or taking part in a host of other scholarly activities, St. Mary's University faculty, staff and administrators play a vital role in advancing knowledge and understanding. This, in turn, helps propel ripples of change that can improve lives, communities and societies, locally and internationally, for generations to come.

Following are highlights of just some of the many contributions made in 2019–20.

## Publications and presentations

**Trent Davis** "Adventures in teaching at home: 'Mr. Knuckles' becomes 'Mr. Knucklehead'" in *Antistasis*

**Jennifer Garrison** "Masculinity, masochism, and medieval penance" paper at New Chaucer Society, Durham, U.K.

**Tim Harvie** and **Matthew Eaton** "Laudato si and animal well-being: Food ethics in a throwaway culture" in *Journal of Catholic Social Thought*

**Laurie Hill** "Professional identity: Creating stories in the academy" in *Having it all: Women negotiating life in the academy*

**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 *Trauma and survival in the contemporary church: Historical, archival, and missional response*

**Scott Lovell** "You don't need a PhD to contribute: The role of citizen science in ecology" at Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society Fall Gala

**Alisa McArthur** "An Intergenerational life writing activity: The impact across generations" poster at APS Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill.

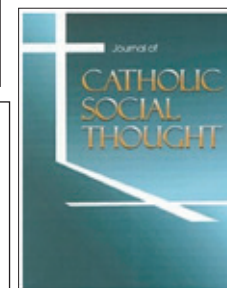
**Katarina O'Briain** "Frances Burney and the art of accident" in *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*

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

**Elizabeth Vergis** "Testing undergraduate students' understanding of concepts of evidence using adapted primary literature" poster at Canadian Society for the Study of Education, London, Ont.

**Jocelyn Williams** "Lost daughters of Winnipeg" in *Geist*

**Cory Wright-Maley** "More like life itself: Simulations as powerful and purposeful social studies" in *Information Age*



# In the media

**660 NEWS CityNews** LOCAL TRAFFIC VIDEO NEWS TIPS LISTEN LIVE

## Calgary post-secondary schools explore varying graduation plans

BY COLE FORTNER  
Posted May 23, 2020 9:52 am MDT | Last Updated May 23, 2020 at 12:29 pm MDT



Thinning graduation lists.

Timeline


- For Address University, SAT students and their families, not being able to have an in-person graduation has been tough.
- Option number one: host a virtual graduation.
- Option number two: postpone graduation until the fall and explore different plans.

CALGARY (CTV NEWS) — Post-secondary institutions around the city are saying farewell to graduates differently in 2020.

For all of Calgary's universities and colleges, graduations would have taken place over the next couple of weeks. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on gatherings, the schools have been forced to alter their plans to one of two options.

**THE CATHOLIC REGISTER** NEWS OPINION FAITH YOUTH FEATURES ARCHIVE SUBSCRIBE BOOKS ABOUT

Home | Opinion | Regular Columns | Regular Columns | Gerry Turcotte: The garden of the soul



A healthy garden is diverse and where everything comes together. Photo by Mickey Collins

## Gerry Turcotte: The garden of the soul

By Gerry Turcotte  
August 28, 2020

I am not a gardener. In fact, I moved into a house with a large garden a decade ago and I joke that I have killed off one species of plant each year. Except that it's not a joke.

My garden since beset with daffodils and jonquils, tulips and hyacinths — geraniums springing out left and right. Over time these luminous beauties have grown less populous and then disappeared for good. I tried tending the garden, but the vagaries of a Calgary summer — those glorious four days — coupled with long work weeks meant that my efforts were always too little, too late. Until this year.

COVID-19 has transformed our society and it has forced many if not most of us to work from home. With this new work arrangement comes a new reality. Removing a commute — even a short one — and being a step away from my yard during lunch breaks suddenly means that I am able to connect more closely with what a garden is and needs. Even during regular eight-hour days.

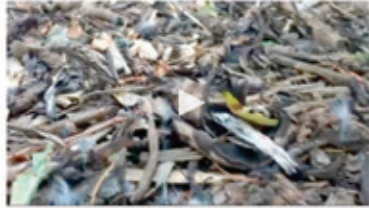
**CTV NEWS** Coronavirus in Canada Active cases: 7030 | Recovered: 87,565 | Deceased: 9183 | Total: 133,748

## Calgary volunteers track building strikes by migrating birds

CTV News Calgary

By @michelle.ctvnews Calgary Video Journalist  
@660news Calgary | @660news Calgary | @660news Calgary

Published November 10, 2019 1:09pm EDT  
Last Updated November 10, 2019 1:09pm EDT



SHARE

CALGARY — Each year tens of millions of songbirds migrate over Alberta on their way to warmer places, but not all make the journey safely, with many flying into buildings, injuring or killing themselves in the process.

Since the beginning of September, a group of nearly 40 volunteers from the Calgary Migratory Species Response Team has been patrolling downtown Calgary, gathering data on where birds are colliding with buildings.

The migration has now tapered off significantly but the group has collected over 100 birds and bats, with less than two dozen of those able to be rehabilitated and sent back into the wild.

"They design the city to make it very aesthetically pleasing to us, but lights like this that we have here, can cause problems for birds and bats," said Dr. Scott Lovell, an ornithologist and assistant professor of biology at St. Mary's University and a program volunteer.

**CTV NEWS** Coronavirus in Canada Active cases: 7030 | Recovered: 87,565 | Deceased: 9183 | Total: 133,748

## Field of Crosses lit by 3,000 candles on eve of Nov. 11

Ally Antonashyn  
CTV News Calgary

Published Sunday, November 10, 2019 10:44 AM EDT  
Last Updated Monday, November 11, 2019 1:45 AM EDT



SHARE

The Field of Crosses alongside Memorial Drive was lit up Sunday night by more than 3,000 candles in honour of the sacrifices made by Canadian soldiers.

"There's five acres of crosses here and each one of them was a real human being who got on a train, probably at the Palliser station in downtown Calgary, went to war, and didn't get to come home," said Thomas Leppard, executive director of the Field of Crosses Society.

**CALGARY HERALD** News Business Opinion Life Sports Arts Driving Health The GrowthOp Podcast

## Calgary post-secondaries considering online course models when it comes to fall semesters

Decisions must be made soon as students prepare to register for classes and make living arrangements for some form of September return

Kristen Anderson • Postmedia  
May 13, 2020 • Last Updated 3 months ago • 4 minute read



He said that, like most post-secondaries, St. Mary's is reviewing three scenarios: an online-only course model, in-person classes, and — what he said was most likely — a blended option which would operate both online and in-person components.

Turcotte said in conversation with other post-secondary institutions across the

**CALGARY HERALD** News Business Opinion Life Sports Arts Driving Health The GrowthOp Podcast

## Opinion: St. Mary's is the small university with big ambitions

Calgary Herald  
Mar 10, 2020 • Last Updated 6 months ago • 3 minute read



Gerry Turcotte, president and vice-chancellor of St. Mary's University, stands in the university's new Heritage Centre on campus on Tuesday Sept. 13, 2016. PHOTO BY GAVIN YOUNG /Postmedia

When St. Mary's was granted university status in 2004 and officially became the city's second university, I don't think anyone expected that our institution would become one of the fastest-growing post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

# Award-winning B.Ed program expands

St. Mary's University welcomed the first cohort of students in the Bachelor of Education (Secondary) program to campus in 2020.

The new program builds on the solid foundation of the well-known and highly regarded Bachelor of Education (Elementary) program. The two-year B.Ed. (Secondary) program is designed to prepare teachers at the secondary level (Grades 7–12 ) in all Alberta schools, public and private, faith-based and secular. It will have a particular focus on preparing teachers to teach in Catholic schools, responding to the need for qualified teachers in the Catholic school system.

The program is offered as a two-year after-degree and also as part of a single-entry stream where students complete a four-year Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree, followed by a two-year Bachelor of Education after-degree.



# Outstanding grad nominated for teaching award



*St. Mary's University graduate Kristin Ford (L) was selected as the Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools nominee for the provincial Edwin Parr Award for first-year teachers.*

St. Mary's University Bachelor of Education (Elementary) graduate Kristin Ford was chosen by the Christ the Redeemer School District as its nominee for the prestigious Edwin Parr Award, which recognizes outstanding first-year teachers in Alberta. The honour continues the long tradition of St. Mary's B.Ed. grads being singled out for their exceptional abilities.

At St. Francis of Assisi, Ford quickly proved she could adapt to and thrive under new circumstances. She taught a variety of classes, including Grades 1-2 physical education and health, Grade 7 social studies, Grade 8/9 drama, and learning support and enhanced reading.

Ford credits her mother, Paula, who, more than 25 years ago, was one of the leaders who established what is now the Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools, as being a role model and inspiration. She is also grateful for the mentorship of colleagues, and support and feedback from students, teachers and support staff who have helped along her teaching journey.



## Teaching in Taiwan expands global learning

A group of 10 St. Mary's University Bachelor of Education (Elementary) students completed international practicums in Taiwan over the past year, gaining invaluable teaching experience, skills and perspective that will help with teaching ESL/ELL students in the future.

Working in Taipei City, New Taipei City and Taichung City, the St. Mary's students not only learned new techniques to reach students, they also put themselves in their students' shoes as they navigated day-to-day activities (such as buying groceries and taking transit). Weekly video meetings with Deanne Barrett, their practicum advisor, fostered sharing within the group.

As they learned about and adapted to Taiwan's approach to education, the St. Mary's students experienced challenges, opportunities — and many successes. It took time to overcome language and cultural barriers in order to build the student relationships key to teaching, and for connecting with Taiwanese teaching colleagues. Discovering common interests proved to be an effective way to build those bonds.

The group recognized that they were in Taiwan for only a short time and were working temporarily within society. While they had the opportunity to demonstrate their teaching methods, their aim was not to change local culture. Rather, the focus was on learning more about the system and the students who learn in it, so these future B.Ed. graduates will be better able to meet the education needs of students who have learned outside the Canadian system.

Everyone participating in the practicums believes they have truly become part of their Taiwanese school communities, and all agree that the students, schools, colleagues and Taiwan itself will have a special place in their hearts forever.

# Giving the gift of service

Now in its third year, St. Mary's University's President's Volunteer Team continues to expand and make its mark in the community. More than 100 students, faculty and staff took part in three major initiatives and in monthly activities in 2019–20, reflecting the growing heart and culture of service at St. Mary's.

Over the past year, the PVT focused on one initiative per month that encompassed the breadth of needs and opportunities in Calgary, reaching out to agencies which could enable St. Mary's students to interact with some of the many people whose living situations are less than ideal.

Feed the Hungry (a Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary program which serves free Sunday meals throughout the year) and Pass it On (a clothing giveaway held each fall for families in need) were two major hands-on activities where volunteers could see the impact their gift of service could have on the larger community. Both reflected St. Mary's ethos of learning for a greater good, working alongside one another to serve and achieve the greatest fulfillment by building community in tangible ways.

In November, a large number of PVT members took part in one of the city's most public and poignant reminders of service and sacrifice: the Field of Crosses on Memorial Drive. Members helped to set up and take down the crosses before and after the Remembrance Week ceremonies, and, for the first time this year, to light candles at sunrise in front of each of the crosses. Standing alongside others from across the community to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom reflected the very best of St. Mary's and its values. The heart of the University — championing the dignity of the human person and giving back selflessly to others — was on full display.







Members of St. Mary's President's Volunteer Team took part in Pass It On, a used-clothing giveaway to help supply families in need with free fall and winter clothing and footwear. An initiative of St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Church, it is offered in partnership with the Calgary Catholic School District, the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society and other organizations, and was held in October at Father Lacombe High School.

# The show couldn't go on

*Ghosts in the Machine*, St. Mary's annual Junior Drama production, would have been a treat for audiences and the St. Mary's directorial debut for third-year BA (Liberal Studies – Drama) student Christian Myers — but like so much else in 2020, what was planned just wasn't to be.

Significant time and effort went into developing this production, only to have it remain dark. Myers started searching for scripts during the summer of 2019, and began hosting rehearsals for the eight students performing in *Ghosts in the Machine* in January 2020. He was drawn to the idea of modernizing a familiar story, akin to *The Breakfast Club* with an interdimensional twist, and was unsurprisingly saddened for the cast members and assistant director who would never be able to see the fruits of their labour on stage.

Myers, who has previously directed performances, attributed much of his inspiration and passion for theatre to his mentor and instructor, Joe-Norman Shaw, Director of Drama at St. Mary's. He hopes to build on that passion in the future, with his sights set on becoming a high school drama teacher or drama professor at a university following graduation.



## Spectres abound in *The Ghost Wilderness*

The Annual St. Mary's University Ghost Tour took a hiatus in 2019 to undergo creative re-imagining. In its place, St. Mary's University debuted *The Ghost Wilderness*, a dramatic play written by President. Dr. Gerry Turcotte.

Running Nov. 29–30, 2020, the play centred on a group of young people, in the heart of Alberta Ghost Wilderness, who stumble upon an abandoned building — and a secret it has kept hidden for more than 100 years. All proceeds were directed to supporting the St. Mary's Drama program.



# Long-time friends embark on new adventures

Two long-time friends of St. Mary's University are opening new chapters in their lives, while ending their time at the University. Both leave an indelible mark on the St. Mary's community, having truly nurtured bodies, minds and souls.

## Malcolm Edwards, Choir Director and Adjunct Professor

It is with more than a note of sadness that St. Mary's University says goodbye to Malcolm Edwards, who has been pivotal in developing the choral scene on campus. A leading light in local and national choral music, Edwards has helped establish the St. Mary's University Choir as one of the preeminent choirs in Calgary. Under his guidance, the choir has flourished and graced the stage at some of the city's premier performance venues — much to the delight of audiences.

## Tim Babey, St. Mary's Bistro

St. Mary's is also saying goodbye to Tim Babey from the Bistro. For years, Babey's nutritious cooking has helped the campus feel like a second home for students, staff and faculty who always savoured and appreciated the dishes Babey prepared. Whether it was a warm bowl of delicious soup or a slice of that famous (and ridiculously good) banana bread, Babey always served the entire St. Mary's community with a smile on his face.



*Malcolm Edwards*



*Tim Babey*

# Lightning put pedal to medal all the way to ACAC bronze

Against tough odds, the St. Mary's University Lightning Women's Basketball team captured their fourth Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) medal on March 7, 2020, defeating Olds College 71–57 in the bronze-medal game held at Medicine Hat College.

Limited to only seven players and coming off an emotional defeat in the semi-final game only the night before, the team, which had faced adversity all season long, drew on its experience in overcoming those lows to come together and battle for each other and the win when it counted —reflecting the culture of the team and St. Mary's as a school.



# Graduating from court to coach, and inspiring women in sport

After an illustrious four-year career with the St. Mary's University Lightning Women's Basketball team, Montana Romeril, one of the best student athletes to ever play for the Lightning, had pretty much done it all on the court: a 57-30 regular-season record, four consecutive playoff appearances, two Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) silver medals and one ACAC Championship.

Now, her impact will continue with a new focus, as Romeril has been accepted into the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association Female Apprentice Coach Program, which focuses on developing female coaching opportunities. Through it, Romeril will further develop the skills necessary to coach — and advance female leaders and women in sport — through work with her mentor and Lightning Head Coach Steve Schultz.



# Athletes of the Year 2020



**Emily Wagner**  
Captain, Women's Basketball  
Fourth-year BA (Liberal Studies)

**Johnpaul Okodua**  
Men's Basketball  
Second year Psychology



*Members of the 2019–20 St. Mary's University Lightning Cross-Country team.*

# Lifelong commitment to Catholic education reflected in more than 30 years of support

Helping to provide top-notch Catholic teachers for the Calgary Catholic School District lies at the very heart of Terry and Janet Allen's three-decade-long support for St. Mary's University.

The Allens were involved in what would become St. Mary's University well before it became established as a leader in Catholic post-secondary education and well before the introduction of the University's Bachelor of Education (Elementary) program. Introduced to the vision of St. Mary's by friend and dedicated Catholic education champion Monsignor Joseph LeFort — who was instrumental in the creation of St. Mary's University and whose memory is honoured on campus with the naming of the LeFort Centre — the Allens have now been steadfast supporters for more than 30 years.

The couple's passion for preparing Catholic teachers was sparked by Mgr. LeFort, who cared deeply about Catholic education. This requires the education and preparation of future generations of Catholic teachers for



*'The No. 1 purpose for donating to St. Mary's is the incredibly important need for Catholic school teachers.'*

Terry Allen

the Calgary Catholic School District, across Alberta and throughout Western Canada. This incredibly important and ongoing need is one St. Mary's University helps to fulfil with the B.Ed. program.

The Allens, therefore, directed their support to St. Mary's in order to help provide for these necessary homegrown teachers. This has been the focus of their efforts and is a particular point of pride, as they see what St. Mary's is today, the contribution it makes to Catholic education — and the highly respected and award-winning teachers who graduate from the University every year, ready to step into teaching roles in Catholic schools.

The Allens are pleased to be able to see the lasting, permanent value of the contributions they make to providing young people with strong, Catholic leadership, and to helping St. Mary's realize its mission by preparing outstanding Catholic teachers. They are confident that Mgr. LeFort would be proud of St. Mary's and its graduates today.

# Investing in liberal arts education delivers a great whole-person return

A commitment to investing in a strong liberal arts education that is focused on developing the entire student — mind, body and spirit — underpins Jamie Mackie's many gifts of support to St. Mary's University.

His service to St. Mary's over the past two decades has extended beyond financial contributions to include one of the most valuable gifts of all: his time. He makes a difference in many ways, notably through his involvement with the St. Mary's President's Dinner Committee and attendance at, and sponsorship of, numerous St. Mary's events and initiatives.

Well known in the Calgary business and finance communities through Richardson GMP and the Mackie Wealth Group, Mackie believes in donating to institutions where the money can make a difference. St. Mary's is an ideal fit because of the lack of lower government funding it receives and the value the University delivers on every investment.

Mackie's ongoing support helps St. Mary's provide the best possible



*'If people are looking broadly at where their charitable investment dollars can do the most good, then I think St. Mary's is a great choice.'*

Jamie Mackie

opportunities for students, while at the same time enabling the university to focus on the core values and characteristics that distinguish St. Mary's from other institutions. Maintaining the university's identity is crucial at a time when program options are expanding and campus development plans are underway. The need to manage very high and rising student demand, high quality education and a continued emphasis on human interaction and relationships is paramount.

With his unwavering support of St. Mary's and its mission to provide a strong liberal arts and sciences education — and to prepare graduates to become engaged citizens and compassionate members of society — Mackie helps to ensure that St. Mary's does not become a "student factory" and that it is able to retain the collegial environment and small class sizes that offer students a rich university experience while also forging close friendships that will last a lifetime.

# Paying a heartfelt tribute to a lifetime of support

It is through the generosity, commitment and passion of members of the community that St. Mary's University has become the institution it is today, and no family has played a larger role in the growth of St. Mary's than the Valentine family.

On Aug. 9, 2020, the University was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Ted Valentine, one of the cornerstones of the St. Mary's community and among its most dedicated and profoundly influential supporters.

A prominent businessman, proud family man and active philanthropist, Ted was a member of the St. Mary's "founding family," attending the first Steering Committee meeting in 1986 which aimed to establish a Catholic college in Calgary. He became a member of the first St. Mary's University Board of Governors, which marked the beginning of decades of support.

The Valentines — and their eponymous Valentine Volvo — have been instrumental in enabling students to pursue their academic dreams, enhancing access to post-secondary education and also



*'St. Mary's University has been a big part of the Valentine legacy in Calgary, and I am making sure that legacy will never be forgotten.'*

Paul Valentine

fostering academic and spiritual development. From helping to develop the scholarship and bursaries program, to donating an outdoor athletics court (the Valentine Family Athletic Courts), to participating in committees and sponsorships for various initiatives, there isn't a single facet of St. Mary's that hasn't benefited greatly from the family's generosity.

Alongside Ted's leadership, his wife, Shirley, reflecting on her formative years, was inspired to create the St. Isidore Bursary, which assists students from rural areas. Two of the couple's children continue the family legacy. Son Paul joined the St. Mary's University Board of Governors in 2013 and currently serves as Chair of the Finance Committee, while daughter Kathryn commits her time and resources to various St. Mary's initiatives and special events.

In the future, the Valentine family plans to continue Ted's legacy and hopes other schools can look to St. Mary's as a beacon of stability — and a shining example of a post-secondary institution that is a bastion of Catholic education in Canada.

# Convocation and COVID-19 bring out creativity — and a new way to celebrate

Graduation is usually one of students' most cherished memories. Walking across the stage and the conferment of a degree marks both literal and figurative steps along life's journey, signalling the culmination of years of hard work and the opening of new doors.

When that treasured ceremony was interrupted by a pandemic in spring 2020, St. Mary's University responded with some outside-the-box thinking — and the creation of meaningful, fun, hand-delivered Graduation Boxes to ensure each and every graduate could celebrate their achievement.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent mandatory lockdown forced St. Mary's University to postpone its usual in-person Convocation, but it did not cancel the desire to ensure that this remarkable chapter in students' lives was recognized and celebrated accordingly. Disappointment was transformed into different, giving grads once-in-a-lifetime memories.

More than 200 Graduation Boxes — containing everything from parchments, to alumni gifts, to celebratory goodies like confetti and bubbles — were hand delivered to St. Mary's grads by senior administrators, faculty, staff and other members of the University community. Volunteers jumped at the opportunity to make that important personal connection with grads, the hallmark of

St. Mary's while ensuring all public health protocols were followed to ensure safety.

Deliveries were augmented with a week of celebratory ads in the Calgary Herald and 13 amazing congratulatory video messages produced by Pyramid Productions, which were posted to St. Mary's social media channels and the website.

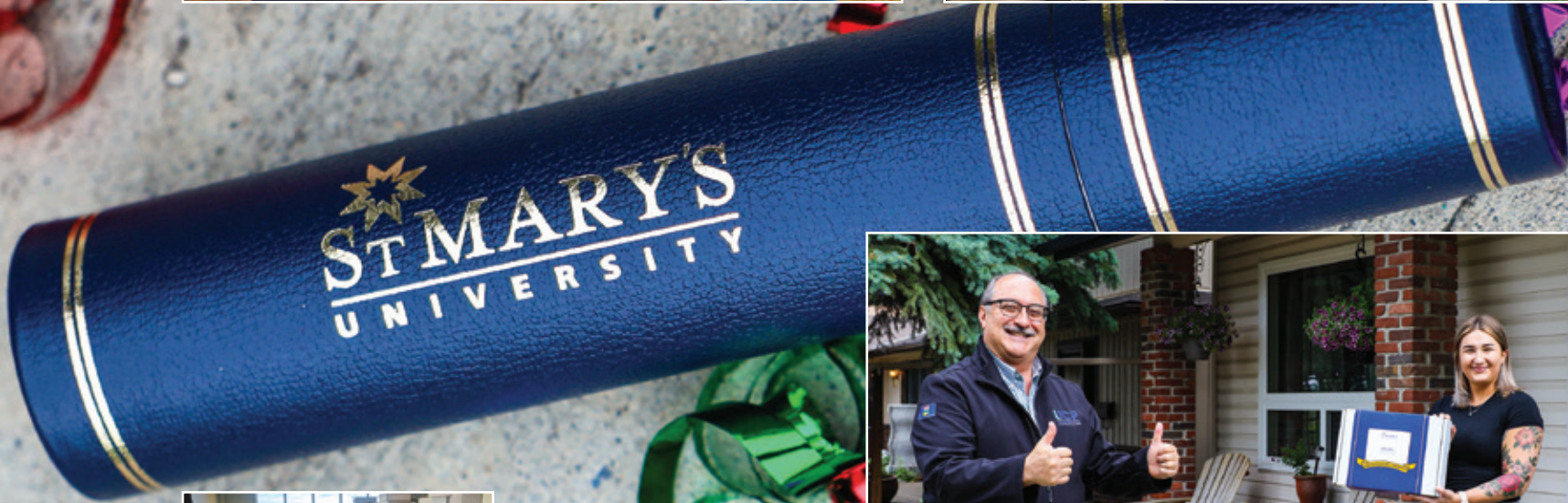
The hope is that graduates will have the opportunity to walk across the stage when it is safe to do so.



Class of  
2020







*Our MLA for Calgary — Fish Creek Richard Gottfried joined us in delivering Convocation boxes to our graduates. Thank you Richard!*

## 2020 DR. DAVID LAWLESS AWARD

Dr. Timothy Harvie



The Dr. David Lawless Award for Scholarly Achievement is awarded to a member of the full-time faculty at St. Mary's University in recognition of major scholarly achievements. A prolific scholar, Dr. Timothy Harvie has earned this award with his dedication and passion. He has published extensively in the diverse fields of social justice, political theology, embodiment, the political economy and animal theology. Most notably, he has established himself as one of the world's leading scholars in the emerging field of eco-theology, which draws upon the disciplines of philosophy and religious studies to (re)consider the ethics of human interaction with the non-human world. Dr. Harvie's extensive publications include the recently published *Encountering Earth: Thinking Theologically With a More-Than-Human World*.

## 2020 HONORARY FELLOW

Linda Olsen



Honorary Fellows are a small and select group of individuals honoured for their conspicuous contribution to the formation of St. Mary's University and in recognition of their significant and transformational contribution of personal time and effort for the benefit of others. Ms. Linda Olsen, Global News Calgary Anchor, has been one of the University's most vocal champions, using her position as a trusted media personality to help promote and celebrate many of the amazing initiatives undertaken by the institution. This collaboration has been instrumental in helping to nurture and build relationships between St. Mary's and the community. The proud parent of a St. Mary's alumna, Ms. Olsen has been an incredible advocate, partner, supporter, champion and key contributor to the growth of St. Mary's external profile.

## **2020** STAR AWARD

Ashley Grieve and  
Tiffany Biensch



The St. Mary's University Star Award recognizes students and alumni who have rendered outstanding service to the University and the community, exemplifying the mission and values of St. Mary's and working toward a vision of social justice and the common good. This year, St. Mary's honours Ashley Grieve and Tiffany Biensch, both members of the Class of 2020, for embodying St. Mary's values and for the commitment both of these tremendous students have demonstrated for caring for their community and the world.

## **2020** TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Dr. Laurie Hill






The recipient of this year's Teaching Excellence Award, Dr. Laurie Hill privileges the importance of relationships, critical reflection and authenticity in her teaching philosophy. She invites learners to join with her as "meaningful subjects of inquiry" in her classroom. Her dedication to creating a respectful and communal experience has earned praise and recognition from her students. Dr. Hill's teaching is characterized by care and compassion. She says: "The heart of teaching for me is the enduring pull of working with others and the pleasure of being part of a community, with a focus on helping learners to become the best version of themselves." Dr. Hill has a profound impact on the lives of St. Mary's students and creating the next generation of caring, compassionate teachers.

# Contact us

St. Mary's University  
14500 Bannister Road SE, Calgary, AB T2X 1Z4  
T: 403.531.9130  
F: 403.531.9136

[stmu.ca](http://stmu.ca)



-  St. Mary's University
-  [stmarysuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/stmarysuniversity)
-  [StMarysUC](https://twitter.com/StMarysUC)

