

This issue

As we approach the end of what has truly been a semester unlike any other in the history of St. Mary's University we reflect on the resilience, dedication and commitment our students, staff, faculty and community members have demonstrated during this time.

This Fall edition focuses on that spirit of community and togetherness that has allowed St. Mary's to continue to be a beacon of light in an otherwise troubled time.

From initiatives such as the Field of Crosses Exercise Freedom Together Challenge that saw our community unite for a worthy cause, to the celebration of members of our community who have had a profound impact on our institution, we are steadfast in our commitment to social justice, to community and to each other.

None of this would be possible without the support and generosity that donors have shown to our institution. As St. Mary's continues its commitment to fostering critical thinkers who are passionate and compassionate about the world around them, it is the support from our community that makes this possible.



Field of Crosses Executives Murray McCann (left), Susan Schalin (centre left) and George Brookman (right) join St. Mary's President Dr. Gerry Turcotte (centre) in cutting the ribbon to start the Exercise Freedom Together Challenge.

Community for a Cause

St. Mary's University community unites to support Field of Crosses Exercise Freedom Together Challenge

On September 30, St. Mary's University and Field of Crosses Calgary united to host an Exercise Freedom Together Challenge initiative on the St. Mary's campus to raise money and awareness for the service men and women who have sacrificed their lives for the safety of others.

Members of the St. Mary's community rallied behind the initiative, raising over \$1,000 dollars as well as taking part in the 3km run and walk.

This initiative was born out of a partnership between St. Mary's University and the Field of Crosses that has seen many dedicated members of the St. Mary's community volunteer their time to help set up, take down and light the candles for the Field of Crosses memorial during Remembrance Day celebrations.

"To take part in the Exercise Freedom Together Challenge, is to do just that, exercise our freedom together as a community. To take time to honour the sacrifices made by our service men and women so that we may live our lives as freely as we do is something that I feel is quite important," said Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Mary's University.

"To me this is about our community coming together, to show our thanks and raise some money for the Field of Crosses initiative which does such an amazing job of honouring our fallen service members."

Over 40 students, staff and faculty took time out of their day to pledge donations and participate in the run. It is this dedication to community above self that is one of the pillars of St. Mary's University.

"Even though this is a difficult time for many of our students, they took the time out of their schedules to raise money and participate in this initiative," said Dr. Turcotte.

"The pledges raised, the time committed to this initiative highlight the spirit of community and giving that is at the cornerstone of St. Mary's University."

It is through the generous support of our donors and community members that our St. Mary's University students can continue to be leaders and champions in the community. Your help during these uncertain times helps alleviate some of the financial stressors so that our students can focus on their academic pursuits and their ongoing commitment to be leaders in the community.

President's Message

As we approach the end of what has been one of the most unique and challenging semesters in the history of St. Mary's University I give pause and reflect on the spirit of resilience, determination, and compassion that our new and returning students have shown during this difficult time.

Transitioning to an online learning environment has not been easy on any of us and yet our students, staff, and faculty have faced this challenge with grace and have continued to show that the spirit of St. Mary's is one that is unwavering, even in such uncertain times

Through this troubled time our university has remained committed to social justice, to community and to each other. As we all navigate our new-normal, it is the strength of our relationships that have helped carry us through. How we connect with each other



may have changed, but we are still connected, and I know it is this spirit of unity and togetherness that will help see St. Mary's through, and help our students continue to receive the same outstanding liberal arts and sciences education for which St. Mary's University has become known.

May these stories help you discover how your gifts and generosity support, encourage and inspire all members of the St. Mary's community. It is my hope that these stories motivate you to continue your support for St. Mary's University in a way that is most meaningful to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Gerry Turcotte".

Gerry Turcotte, PhD

Supporting Catholic Education

Providing top-notch Catholic teachers for the Catholic School Board is at the very heart of Terry and Janet Allen's support for St. Mary's University.

Terry and Janet Allen were involved in what would become St. Mary's University, well before it became established as a leader in Catholic post-secondary education. They were introduced to the vision of St. Mary's early on by friend and dedicated Catholic education champion Monsignor Joseph LeFort, who was involved in the creation of St. Mary's from the very beginning.

"My perspective was largely formed by Monsignor LeFort," explained Terry. "Why did he care so much about a Catholic University? He had one single objective and that was the education of Catholic Teachers for the Catholic School Board."

"Everything needs a focus and that focus was how are we going to produce homegrown Catholic school teachers for our Catholic school system, because in the future and beyond that's what we need," said Terry. "St. Mary's is doing an amazing job."

The Allen family recognizes the annual need for Catholic Teachers in the Catholic School System here in Calgary and throughout Western Canada, and take pride in what St. Mary's has become from its once humble roots.

For over thirty years, the Allen family have been committed to helping St. Mary's provide the best Catholic education and award winning Catholic teachers.



Terry and Janet Allen, long-time supporters of St. Mary's University

"The number one purpose for donating to St. Mary's is the incredibly important need for Catholic school teachers in the Calgary system, the Alberta system and Western Canada," said Terry. "There really is something valuable here, something lasting and permanent. By continuing to supply outstanding Catholic teachers that give our youth strong Catholic leadership, St. Mary's is fulfilling its goal."

The continued support of community members such as the Allen family allows St. Mary's University to continue to nurture aspiring teachers and prepare critical thinkers centered in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. In this time of need, this support is paramount in helping St. Mary's students pursue their dreams.

A Special Celebration

St. Mary's celebrates Knights of Columbus founder Father Michael J. McGivney Beatification

On Saturday, October 31, St. Mary's University was honoured to welcome members of the Knights of Columbus to campus to celebrate the Beatification of Father Michael J. McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus.

In May, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis approved the promulgation of a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of the founder of the Knights of Columbus, Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney, a Connecticut priest who served his flock during the pandemic of 1890, before himself becoming ill and dying of pneumonia.

Those in attendance gathered to view the livestream of the Beatification celebration mass that emanated from Connecticut and were on hand to view the unveiling of two special plaques in honour of the dedication and support the Knights of Columbus have given to St. Mary's.

"Father McGivney is an inspiration throughout the Church and here at St. Mary's, empowering us to discover the fullness of our identities in service to all as our brothers and sisters and his beatification is a testament to that," said Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President of St. Mary's University.



October 31, 2020 - Members of the Alberta Knights of Columbus pose with Bishop McGrattan and Dr. Gerry Turcotte at the Father McGivney Beatification Celebration. (L-R) Daryl MacDonald, Calgary Chapter President, Alberta Knights of Columbus, Vince Reyes, State Deputy, Alberta Knights of Columbus, Most Reverend Bishop William T. McGrattan, Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary, Gaston Launière, State Secretary, Alberta Knights of Columbus, Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President & Vice-Chancellor, St. Mary's University

"With Father McGivney having lived in a time of terrible loss and profound trial, and dying of the flu in the pandemic of 1889-90, there are just so many parallels with today's society that it is the perfect occasion to focus on his inspirational example."

Two plaques were unveiled after the livestream ceremony to honour the Knights of Columbus and local Knights Ken Beauchamp, Guy Blasetti, the late Leo Bunz and Wally Muscoby, long-time supporters of St. Mary's University and those responsible for the very successful fundraising campaign in 2014 that helped St. Mary's renovate and dedicate Fr. Michael J. McGivney Hall, a space that has proven to be one of the central heartbeats to the St. Mary's Community.

Exciting internship secured by St. Mary's history student

Quinn Demers, a fourth year History student at St. Mary's University, landed a very competitive trade-focused internship. He credits St. Mary's University Assistant History Professor Dr. Gayle Thrift for bringing the opportunity to his attention, who thought the internship would be of interest to Demers based on their past conversations in class.

Dr. Thrift is excited for all that Demers has done to succeed in earning this internship and believes it will provide valuable experience.

"Experiential opportunities such as these are important for our students who are stepping into a competitive workforce," explained Dr. Thrift.

"It's a chance for them to get hands-on experience and practical knowledge of how the study of history can be utilized in professional work environments. This is an integral facet of our History program at St. Mary's University."

After an interview with the research company offering the internship, Demers knew that this role would be a great fit for him and is excited for the opportunity where he will be running a series of interviews and dialogues with those who are familiar with traditional methods of trades that may be going obsolete. These include a brick maker in Canmore and a traditional wagon maker in southern Alberta, both of which are the last of their

craft. Demers also expressed his interest in Indigenous heritage trades, which will be satisfied through these interviews as well.



Quinn Demers pictured here during a StMU travel-study trip to Rome in 2018.

Dr. Pablo Ortiz, the Director of Student Affairs who spearheads opportunities such as internships for students at StMU says that "[internships] provide students the chance to enhance their education by acquiring career-related work experience before graduation. Students gain practical experience, develop a network of contacts, and obtain a better understanding of careers in their field. Internships allow students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills developed in the classroom in a practical work environment, enhancing both the academic and employment

portions of their University career."

Demers intends on using this internship in ways that will directly feed back into trades research.

"From this [internship], I am hoping to gain better experience as a history major and to also preserve local history in Alberta on a topic that may not be the most accessible in writing. ... If I can use this research to inform those who are curious about the subject, then I see this internship as an absolute success."

The gift of Education

Supporting St. Mary's University students through Giving Tuesday

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally altered the day to day lives of everyone, and for the students of St. Mary's these changes have brought about increased anxiety, stressors and financial uncertainty.

For many the pandemic has impacted their ability to work, to access the resources they need to continue pursuing their academic dreams, and at St. Mary's we want to help ensure that our students can focus on becoming the critical thinkers and leaders that our world needs now more than ever.

This year St. Mary's University's Giving Tuesday campaign will be in support of our Student Emergency Bursary Fund that was established to help eliminate some of the financial hardships brought upon by the current pandemic.

While we have been able to provide assistance to those who need it most during these difficult times, the reality is that there is still so much need, and through the generosity of members of our community, we know that we will be able to be there for our students and provide them the help when they truly need it most.

Whether it is access to equipment, internet, food, or some help to pay tuition, the Student Emergency Bursary Fund has been established as a resource for our students and with your help we can ensure that all who need help are able to get it.



This year Giving Tuesday will be on Tuesday, December 1. We ask that you consider a donation that will go a long way to helping ensure our students can continue pursuing their dreams.

To donate please visit www.stmu.ca/give

Upcoming Events

1

Virtual Open House

www.stmu.ca
Saturday, February 6, 2021
10:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m.

2

President's Dinner

www.stmu.ca
Thursday, March 4, 2021
6:00 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.



The *Marian Update* is published by St. Mary's University and distributed to alumni, friends and supporters to celebrate University accomplishments and share news and information throughout the St. Mary's community.

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