

## This issue

As the 2017 – 2018 academic year winds down at St. Mary's University, we take this time to reflect on the remarkable transformations that have occurred on campus. This has been a year of tremendous success, from transformative building projects to outstanding academic and athletic success.

In this Spring Issue of the Marian Update, we celebrate the wonderful new additions to our campus that have been made possible through the generosity of our outstanding supporters. In the past year alone we have seen the Library entirely redeveloped including the addition of the Gerry and Anna Maier Special Collections Reading Room. We have redeveloped our 80-year-old Carpenter's building into our amazing new, steampunk influenced Bookstore. We've created an expanded Bistro. And of course we have unveiled the remarkable Mauro Gallery within our historic water tower.

This issue also spotlights the St. Mary's University Lightning Women's Basketball team who, despite not having their own gym on campus, navigated through adversity to capture St. Mary's first ever gold medal in the Alberta Collegiate Athletics Conference (ACAC) and secure a spot in the National Championships held in Nova Scotia.

We invite you to join us and celebrate these amazing achievements, knowing that your support has made so much of this possible.

## One of a Kind

### The innovative and unique Mauro Gallery opens at St. Mary's University

On Monday, April 9th 2018 St. Mary's University opened the doors to a unique new space: The Mauro Gallery, within the historic Water Tower on the St. Mary's campus.

the music, the art and of course this remarkable, nearly 100-year-old tower that is now a state-of-the-art gallery. Just breath-taking."

The complex restoration and transformation work was accomplished by the skilled heritage architects at Chalmers Heritage Construction, who were able to allow the structure to meet the high expectations demanded of a modern art gallery while also highlighting the water tower's unique qualities. Two of the original water pumps have been fully restored, and strategically placed skylights allow for spectacular views from within the nearly 80-foot structure

Modern technology has also been incorporated into the space in the form of stylish lighting as well as audio and video equipment that will allow this space to be used for a multitude of different functions.

"We have already seen the potential for this gallery," explained Dr. Turcotte. "It brought together friends of conservation, of art, of

heritage, or learning, of faith: everyone gathered together in this space to celebrate. This is what it will be going forward – a meeting space at the very heart of the campus."

It is important to remember, however, that none of this would have been possible without the vision and support of Tom and Debra Mauro, master builders themselves, and patrons of the arts. "Words aren't enough to say thank you to the remarkable Mauros," said Dr. Turcotte. "They are visionaries, they are social justice advocates, patrons of the arts – and thank God for us, they are believers in St. Mary's University."

The Mauro Gallery has already become a central space at the heart of the campus, opened to visiting school groups, as a centerpiece for the recent City of Calgary Jane's Walks and soon to host a major Indigenous exhibition. The generosity of donors such as Tom and Debra Mauro allows St. Mary's to continue to revitalize, and to reimagine the possibilities, for our extraordinary campus. It is difficult to place a value on this remarkable gift.



The Mauro Family celebrates the opening of the new Mauro Art Gallery.

This amazing new space was made possible by a generous donation from Tom and Debra Mauro whose commitment to St. Mary's and the initiatives on campus has helped ensure that St. Mary's continues to provide innovative new spaces and opportunities for students and the community.

The historic water tower left a lasting impression on Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Mary's University on his initial campus visit in 2011 after arriving in Calgary from a previous position in Sydney, Australia.

After six years of planning his vision and dream finally became a reality for all to share.

"It's hard to describe what it feels like to see a long-held vision come together," said Dr. Turcotte.

"Especially when you have such a clear idea of what the project can look like and then, to your amazement, it exceeds all expectations. That's what it was like at the launch when everything came together: the amazing space, the delighted crowds,

# President's Message

It is fair to say that 2016–17 was a remarkable year for St. Mary's, one that saw a record number of major infrastructure projects completed, new projects started, and awards won.

St. Mary's continued to experience record growth that was unparalleled in Alberta, with enrollment exceeding 70 per cent in the last five years alone. As such, the redevelopment of so many of our key spaces was especially needed, and we thank many important donors for making this possible. Our Heritage Centre, The Mauro Gallery, and the new café and bookstore, are already making a huge difference, though this is the first important step in a plan designed to meet the needs of our students well into the future.

Our Lightning Women's basketball team was able to overcome extraordinary odds and win the gold medal in the ACAC as well as a trip to Nationals. This after twice winning silver in the previous years. What makes this achievement particularly noteworthy is the fact that we have the only athletic team in the country that has to leave campus for home games. But the



fact that we don't have our own gym — something that I hope we can rectify in the next few years — didn't hold them back. Our champions set the pace and won the gold! Now all we need is a new gym in which to hang the championship banner!

This is only one of the inspiring stories that make St. Mary's remarkable. May the stories in this issue of the Marian update help you discover how your commitment and investment help so many to have a remarkable learning experience at an institution committed to academic excellence, student success, ethics and social justice. It is my hope that these stories inspire and motivate you to support St. Mary's in a way that is most meaningful to you.



**Gerry Turcotte, PhD**  
*President*

## PVT wraps up first year

It has been an amazing first year of existence for the St. Mary's University President's Volunteer Team, an initiative borne of the idea that as a community united, St. Mary's students, faculty and staff can work alongside those in need while coordinating charitable volunteer efforts and increasing the scope and impact that these initiatives can have on the community.

This year alone the President's Volunteer Team has helped to build a home for a deserving family with Habitat for Humanity; raised money in support of the WE Day benefit concert – which raises money to build and support schools in Kenya and China; cooked and served meals to the hungry at the Mustard Seed; sent over 100 volunteers to Our Lady Queen of Peace Ranch Christmas party to help make the day special for children and their families; walked in support of The Coldest Night of the Year which raises money for the homeless; and cooked a nutritious and delicious meal for the families at the Ronald McDonald House.

Social justice and commitment to the community are at the very core of the St. Mary's Catholic intellectual tradition, and going forward the President's Volunteer Team will take our early success to new heights.

"We have learned in our first year of the PVT that we don't need to be perfect, what really matters is that we show up and how we show up," explained Nancy Quan, director of Campus Ministry at St. Mary's



*Members of the President's Volunteer Team who helped prepare meals at the Mustard Seed.*

University. "We will continue to trust in the goodness of our students and simply provide them with the opportunities to engage people in the community. It has been my honour to work and serve alongside our students, staff and faculty."





*Gerry and Anna Maier at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Special Collections Reading Room along with Brad Neufeldt, Director of Library Services and Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Mary's University.*

# Gerry and Anna Maier Special Collections Reading Room Unveiled

On Friday, November 17th St. Mary's University was honoured to celebrate the refurbishment of St. Basil's Library and the very special Grand Opening of the new Gerry and Anna Maier Special Collections Reading Room.

Mr. and Mrs. Maier's generosity has forever changed the landscape of the St. Mary's University campus by making an invaluable impact on the university's high standard of excellence, and allowing it to acquire important resources that will further strengthen the foundation of academic experience for which it has become known.

St. Basil's Library serves as the trusted keeper of intellectual and cultural records providing research and learning services that foster innovation and experimentation. It has become the academic heart of St. Mary's where students and faculty are provided the tools and resources for research, collaboration and discovery, none of which would be possible without the generous support of members of the community such as the Maiers and countless others who have helped ensure that St. Mary's can continue to collect, preserve and provide access to a broad spectrum of materials.

The Gerry and Anna Maier Special Collections Reading Room,

created through a generous \$200,000 donation, will provide a rich collaborative work space for St. Mary's students to study and conduct their research with unparalleled access to rare holdings and Special Collections, including the Heritage Edition of the Saint John's Bible, whose acquisition was originally made possible by a lead gift from the Maiers in 2012.

During the event Mr. Maier spoke on how delighted he was to support St. Mary's University and be part of the community that is really helping to uplift the university while providing unique and invaluable resources to its students. He also mentioned how he is thrilled that the Gerry and Anna Maier Special Collections Reading Room will house so many special texts and collections – including volumes one through twelve of *The Christians: Their First Two Thousand Years*, which the Maiers also donated to St. Mary's.

"Gerry and Anna Maier are renowned as major philanthropists in Calgary and beyond," notes President Turcotte, "and they are especially known to support projects that encourage faith and learning. Their important gifts to St. Mary's University over the last few years have had a profound impact on the quality of student intellectual life on campus."

# A monumental victory for Lightning Women's Basketball team

Against all odds, the St. Mary's University Lightning Women's Basketball team captured the first Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) championship in team history this past year.

The Lightning women had reached the ACAC final the previous two years, but it was the third time that was the charm in claiming the title.

St. Mary's is one of the only universities or colleges in Canada that does not have its own gym and therefore has the only ACAC team that leaves campus for home games.

"This is a team with heart and one that epitomizes St. Mary's University itself," said Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Mary's University. "This victory is truly a David and Goliath story; a story about a team with heart – at a university with heart."

For Lightning Athletics Manager Nathan Ruff, this victory symbolized the spirit and determination that embodies the student-athlete effort at St. Mary's.

"This victory was significant for us as a program and as an institution," said Ruff. "The fact that the ladies were able to overcome such unique adversities while maintaining



their level of excellence on the court speaks to the strength of character of the individuals that we recruit into our programs."

"Some people may have been intimidated by the challenges that our athletics programs face, but our coaches and players have always believed in each other and in the





program and this year we saw the fruits of their labour.”

Lightning women’s head coach Steve Shoults acknowledged that his team is often viewed as an underdog by those outside of the St. Mary’s community – in large part due to the lack of a facility for the team to train and prepare in, but he believes that for his team this year, the only real adversities were the ones that the team created for themselves.

“The great thing about where we are as a program is that we don’t see ourselves as a team with adversities,” said Shoults. “Not having a gym isn’t something we think about or use as a reason not to succeed; it’s an obstacle we’ve dealt and out of our control.”

It is the dream of everyone at St. Mary’s University to have a facility where our athletics teams can train and become the best student-athletes that they can be. A home for our teams, where the St. Mary’s extended community can come out and show support, would be a remarkable gift. A place for us to hang our first, of what hopes to be many, championship banners, is essential.

In order to turn this dream into a reality we rely on the

generosity of our community of supporters, whose commitment to our school has already helped create new and exciting spaces for our students to thrive in. Every little bit counts as we move forward towards a day when our Lightning athletes can have a home court to call their very own.



# The Voices of Treaty 7

St. Mary's University has become a place for people to come to learn about Indigenous Voices, and has become a safe place to do so. In this, the "Voices of Treaty 7" series came about as a way to collectively hear these stories and educate all in attendance.

"We thought if we offered the Indigenous Voices from what it meant to make Treaty then we were offering a different perspective," said Michelle Scott, Director of Indigenous Initiatives at St. Mary's University.

To have voices that were silenced for so long was a powerful experience for Scott, and she believes that it was significant for others in the greater community to understand what Treaty means to the Indigenous peoples.

"The common Canadian narrative is that the settlers and Europeans came and that the Indigenous peoples gave them their land, and ceded it to the Crown, but the important piece is knowing – from the Indigenous standpoint – what did it mean to make treaty," explained Scott.

Over the course of the sessions, Scott was surprised by the lack of general knowledge of what Treaty meant but also the willingness of those who attended the sessions to hear the stories and to learn the history.

"I was a little bit surprised with both how little people knew as well how open they were to hearing different perspectives," said Scott who was also encouraged by the extent to which those in attendance were willing to learn.

"It made me feel hopeful and excited by people's eagerness and desire to want know more, and to want to do better and want to take action. I was trying to invite people to share what they learned to the speakers and it's amazing when it's reflected back on what people have learned."

To Scott, this particular series was a significant step in helping lead St. Mary's in the right direction towards reconciliation and making a welcoming and inclusive environment.

"I think that every step we take to bring more Indigenous knowledge, more Indigenous voices, more ceremony, more spaces of having these kinds of conversations and inviting community in, the more we are stepping into our role as a place to hold these conversations and to gather and to have more and more people witness and become more involved in their own path and our path towards reconciliation. By inviting others to join us

along the way then we learn alongside each other and journey together."



*A member of the Voices of Treaty 7 panel discusses his personal insight into what making Treaty means.*



*A publication by Dorothy First Rider and Sarah Carter.*



*Members of the Voices of Treaty 7 discussion panel.*



# St. Mary's student shines at Biology Symposium

This year members of the St. Mary's University Biology program were invited to attend the Prairie University Biology Symposium – an inclusive opportunity to network with peers and highlight areas of interest in the diverse topic of biology.

For Bethany Topping, a second-year biology student at St. Mary's University, the opportunity presented her the chance to deliver her own presentation on a research paper written for an Introduction to Ecology and Evolution course with St. Mary's own Dr. Mary-Anne McLean, Associate Professor of Biology.

"After presenting I had many doubts about my presentation skills, topic choice and the amount of information that was needed to back up my topic," said Topping. "But ultimately, none of it mattered. Anyone I spoke with afterwards was kind and supportive and was interested or intrigued by my topic choice. Moreover, the graduate students were quite impressed to hear that a second-year undergraduate student had presented at this conference."

Dr. McLean said she was "delighted" that some of her students from St. Mary's took the initiative to attend the conference and had special praise for Topping deciding to present to her peers.

"I was delighted that several of our students went and even more so that Bethany presented," said Dr. McLean. "This was really good experience for her to present at a meeting of hundreds of students."



Bethany Topping

"Their attendance and the talk reflect well on the biology program at St. Mary's University, showing that our students have initiative and are exploring their possibilities. It also says that they feel comfortable with their knowledge and skills."

## Dr. Michael Duggan named first recipient of St. Mary's University Order of Excellence

Dr. Michael Duggan, CWL Chair for Catholic Studies and retiring Professor of Theology, became the first person to be awarded the prestigious St. Mary's University Order of Excellence at our recent Convocation. The Order of Excellence honours a member of the St. Mary's University community who has contributed in a transformational way to the life of the university, and of the community more widely. The award is open to anyone who is part of the University community including but not limited to faculty, staff, students, and volunteers. The award recognizes a recipient's impact in promoting the University in a positive manner; nurturing or building relationships between the University and the community; fostering collaboration and cooperation within the University; and building excellence within the University. In the case of Dr. Duggan, he did all this and more, in a career that spanned twenty years at St. Mary's.

Dr. Michael Duggan has been an outstanding ambassador for St. Mary's and has been integral in the wider recognition that the University has achieved nationally and internationally. As the first CWL Chair for Catholic Studies, Dr. Duggan has fostered dialogue and advanced scholarship locally and worldwide. He has achieved this through collaborative efforts with his academic colleagues, by nurturing meaningful and fruitful relationships both within and outside of the Diocese of Calgary, and fostering inter-religious dialogues with the Jewish and Islamic communities of Calgary. Dr. Duggan is recognized internationally for his outstanding reputation as an expert in the Hebrew Scriptures, with a particular focus on the



Second Temple era. Dr. Duggan has contributed to a culture of excellence within St. Mary's University and has led by example, especially in living the University's mission to "prepare our students to become lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and compassionate members of society."

# St. Mary's University recipient of Premier's Council Award

St. Mary's University continues to be a leader for post-secondary institutions as a champion in providing a safe, supportive, accessible and inclusive environment for all students and these efforts were recognized on December 1, 2017 by the awarding of the 2017 Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Award of Excellence for Education.

The annual Premier's Council Awards publicly acknowledge initiatives and accomplishments of groups, businesses and organizations to develop barrier-free, inclusive communities within Alberta, with the Award of Excellence – Education awarded to an educator, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free and inclusive educational or training program.

St. Mary's was nominated for the award by a member of KLM Captioning Services who, since 2014, has provided simultaneous close captioning to a St. Mary's student in each and every class session. By being in the classroom the nominator has been able to witness the willingness of St. Mary's faculty and staff to embrace students that require additional academic accommodations due to experiencing a permanent disability.

For Rafael De La Peña, Director of the Centre for Learning, Access and Student Success (CLASS) at St. Mary's University, this award demonstrates that St. Mary's is headed in the right direction.

"For me, being nominated and then receiving this award is reassurance that we at St. Mary's are on the right track," explained De La Peña. "While we still have a way to go and room to enhance what we do, it is rewarding to learn that our policies, procedures and services are having the intended effect on our students' learning experience."

"Winning this award celebrates and recognizes all our students, faculty and staff for their collaborative efforts and commitment to having a barrier-free, inclusive community for persons with disabilities."



Rafael De La Peña posing with the Premier's Council Award on the St. Mary's campus.

De La Peña also believes that the Premier's Council Award highlights St. Mary's University's Academic Accommodation Services and the faculty, students and staff that implement them, as well as the recently formed Accessibility Committee, created and lead by St. Mary's University's Vice President of Student Services Bob Hann.

"At St. Mary's we have a shared belief that any and all students deserve the same opportunities to thrive and grow in all of our programs."

## Coming Events



### 1 Stampede Breakfast

St. Mary's University  
Thursday, July 12,  
9:00 a.m.

### 2 Indigenous Voices - Stories of THIS Land

St. Mary's University  
Wednesday, August 15  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### 3 Golf Tournament

Silvertip Golf Resort, Canmore  
Friday, August 24

### 4 Ghost Tour

St. Mary's University  
Tuesday, September 18

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.

#### Managing Editor:

Thérèse Takacs, Vice-President, Advancement Tel. 403.254.3139 therese.takacs@stmu.ca