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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

St. Mary's University launches Igniting the Fire: Storying the Urban Warrior

An Indigenous-centered educational course that explores storytelling and expression through the arts

CALGARY – On Wednesday, May 18th, St. Mary's University launched a five week course for Indigenous learners, age 18 and over, who have experienced barriers to education. This course focuses on increasing engagement for Indigenous learners who are currently not involved in school and who have faced barriers to education.

Through a decolonizing framework, working with Indigenous writers such as Crystal Many Fingers, performers such as Michelle Thrush, Telly James and Tamara Lee-Anne Cardinal, Elders and teachers, the course will explore storytelling and expression through graphic novels, drama and art. "This course will give Indigenous adults an opportunity to experience their own personal stories in new ways," said Michelle Scott, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Liaison. St. Mary's University will be covering all course materials, costs of Calgary transit tickets if needed and a hot meal every day of the course. "The next five weeks will provide a rich foundation to begin to examine the ways in which drama and visual art act as transformational forms for Indigenous learners as they to begin to explore their stories," said Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell, Vice-President Academic & Dean.

This non-credit University course will run Wednesdays from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. and Fridays from 11:00 a.m – 2:00 p.m., from May 18 to June 17. The course will be conducted with ceremony and Casey Eagle Speaker, an Elder at St. Mary's University, will be there to support the students in their journey along with Del Majore, a member of St. Mary's FNMI Advisory Council and Aboriginal Wellness Worker with Alberta Health Services. The goal of this is transformative possibilities where Urban Indigenous learners can imagine a powerful identity and path for themselves.

About St. Mary's University:

St. Mary's University is an innovative teaching and research university that provides affordable, accredited and highly valued degrees in the Liberal Arts, Sciences and Education located on a historic site in Calgary, Alberta. The students at St. Mary's are inspired to combine academics with a passionate commitment to ethics, social justice and respect for diversity of opinion and belief.

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