

StMU returns to its roots in historical drama production

Drama program to premiere *The Midnapore Cycle*, an original, site specific play performed outdoors in June

By Natasha Holm and Sarah Henderson
Photo illustration by Brianna Schretlen
(Photos courtesy of The Glenbow Museum)

Expect a once-in-a-lifetime experience this June as the Drama program premieres *The Midnapore Cycle* by Mieko Ouchi, a play that chronicles the history of the land on which St. Mary's University College sits and the people who inhabited it. Performed outdoors and written entirely in verse, this unique site specific play literally walks audiences from scene to scene and brings history to life.

The Midnapore Cycle has been a labour of love for adjunct drama professor Marilyn Potts, who spent the last three years securing the funds necessary to produce it. She was able to commission the talents of playwright and Governor General award nominee, Mieko Ouchi, to write the original script, which traces the evolution of the land from its native roots to the present, bringing to life historic characters, including dancers, hunters, historians, missionaries, storekeepers, nurses and firefighters.



With valuable support from partnering organizations including the Calgary Foundation, the Cohen Foundation, Pembina Pipelines and generous individual donors, nearly \$50,000 has been raised for this production. Many dedicated theatre professionals have also teamed up with the community and student-based cast and crew to participate in the project.

In addition to the play itself, St. Mary's is working with Calgary-based Pyramid Productions to produce a feature-length documentary, which will chronicle the

production and include behind the scenes footage. It will be released to all secondary schools in Calgary, the Calgary Public Library, the Glenbow Museum, granting agencies and participants, providing Calgarians with a meaningful legacy of their history.

Public performances of *The Midnapore Cycle* run from **June 10 - 13, 2010** with a matinee and evening performance each day. For tickets or to make a donation, visit www.themidnaporecycle.com or call (403) 254-3741.

Join us in community building

APRIL

- 14 **End of Term Liturgy of Thanksgiving**
11:30 am in Midlands Building
- 15 **Year End Choral Performance**
With performances of Vivaldi's *Gloria* and excerpts from the Broadway show, *The Lion King*
8:00 pm in Midlands Building

JUNE

- 10-13 **"The Midnapore Cycle"**
Annual Drama production
For tickets, visit themidnaporecycle.com or call (403) 254-3741
- 25 **Convocation**
2:00 pm in Midlands Building
Reception to follow
RSVP to Katherine Matiko
at (403) 254-3706 or
katherine.matiko@stmu.ab.ca

Brian Keating inspires guests at 15th Annual President's Dinner

On February 9, St. Mary's hosted nearly 300 donors and supporters at Heritage Park's historic Gasoline Alley Museum for the 15th Annual President's Dinner. Guests enjoyed a wonderful meal and inspiring talk by Brian Keating, head of conservation outreach for the Calgary Zoo. Brian brought to life Ernest Shackleton's expedition to the Antarctic and described how the explorer's leadership exemplified perseverance, commitment and character; values a St. Mary's University College education strives to instill in its graduates. The \$41,000 raised will directly support students. Thank you to our platinum, silver and media sponsors for their generous support:



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MARIAN UPDATE

YOUR ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2010

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Better get blogging

Bachelor of Education (BEd) students use blogs, interactive online diaries, as teaching and learning tools

By Dr. Krista Francis-Poscente
Assistant Professor, Education

As an assistant professor of Education, my task is to help prepare teachers to inspire a new generation of students in Catholic schools. In this past year, 32 BEd students - the program's first class to graduate in June - have grappled with what it means to teach in an increasingly digitally networked education system. Alberta Education's Information Communications Technology (ICT) initiative has become a catalyst for educational reform. As schools increase the availability of technologies, teachers are at the cusp of this transformation. Considering most teachers did not experience learning with digital technologies when they were in school, creating effective pedagogies for teaching and learning in the 21st century is challenging.

On January 24, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI's message encouraging priests to get blogging made headlines around the world. He recognized the power and

unlimited capacity of digital technologies for communication. Consecrated men and women are now charged with using the Internet to spread the Word and reach Catholics worldwide.

Similarly, I asked my class to get blogging. Entering the digital age is now a pedagogic responsibility for teachers not only to empower themselves but also their students with the media tools of our time. Initially, there was opposition to this assignment. However, as future educators, avoiding digital technologies is not possible. Students soon found that communicating on the Internet was straightforward. Knowing where to start was half the battle. Once they dipped their toes in the (digital) water, they embraced their newfound skills with pride. Our class blogs became powerful learning tools for shaping our learning community. Below is an excerpt from one student's blog reflecting on the purpose of teaching with technology:



BED students at St. Mary's incorporate new classroom learning methods, including blogging

"I had never thought about checking to make sure there is a purpose to the technology in my classroom, and that it aids in understanding instead of distracting from it. I have noticed that many forms of technology present in the common classroom have to do with presentation programs like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, which have more to do with presenting and editing work and do not necessarily result in understanding. I think... technology can be used for so much more, helping to enhance understanding by using things like simulators, computer assisted instruction and threaded discussion forums."

Teaching children how to communicate, collaborate, build, design and create with digital technologies will empower them to learn and thrive. St. Mary's future teachers are well poised to capture imaginations and inspire the next generation of Catholic students.



StMU celebrates historic site, outstanding review, new partnerships

by Dr. Terry Downey, President



This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Fr. Lacombe Home originally located at the centre of what is now the St. Mary's University College campus. For those of us who spend our professional lives on this historic site which houses the restored Fr. Lacombe classroom building constructed in 1913 (now the Le Fort Centre), we are ever conscious of the rich tradition of service in Catholic education and social justice that is the legacy of the legendary Fr. Albert Lacombe. Inspired by this heritage, each year we strive to enhance opportunities for students on this campus.

During the 2009-2010 academic year, St. Mary's continued its dramatic growth and development including:

- in 2004, at our first convocation to award BA degrees, only three students were awarded degrees. This year 88 students will receive BA and BEd degrees, an almost 3000% increase in degrees granted in only six years;
- after a comprehensive external review of all aspects of our operations, the provincial government's Campus Alberta Quality Council has commended St. Mary's on the "high

calibre" of the faculty, "quality degree programming" and "scholarly culture." The Council's conclusion that no further comprehensive evaluation of St. Mary's will be required is a remarkable vote of confidence in an institution that has been offering degrees for only half a decade;

- in surveys of student satisfaction conducted annually by Alberta's Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology, the enthusiastically favourable responses from St. Mary's students are among the very top in the province, a tribute to our professors and staff;
- our academic standing now extends into all of Alberta as indicated by transfer agreements with each of Alberta's large public universities;
- we are currently in discussions with Dalhousie University in Halifax regarding its MBA program to provide secure admission each year for qualified St. Mary's BA grads;
- we have signed a Memorandum of Agreement with The Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine to facilitate student exchanges and are negotiating similar arrangements with the Catholic University of Australia and the 150-year-old St. Mary's University College in London, England which will shortly become St. Mary's University, the first new

Catholic university in England since the Reformation;

- I am currently serving as the elected Canadian representative on the American Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities which puts St. Mary's University College at the table with the very best Catholic universities in the US;
- under the leadership of Campus Ministry, social justice issues and initiatives are being integrated into daily life at St. Mary's through community outreach and consideration of the systemic origins of poverty and injustice;
- in addition to our regular degree programs, we continue to offer non-credit university courses for non-traditional learners including the working poor, single mothers, those living in a shelter or new immigrants thereby providing opportunities for participants to experience university, get out of discouraging or destructive life situations and turn their lives around.

On behalf of the faculty, staff and students of St. Mary's University College, I extend sincere thanks to our donors and all supporters who enable remarkable accomplishments each year in Catholic education and social justice in the exemplary tradition of Fr. Albert Lacombe.

Becoming a teacher a calling for BEd graduate

By Marcelina Johanson

After spending a rewarding summer in 2007 organizing activities for young children at a community park in Edmonton, Adam Andrusiak had an epiphany.

"A light bulb went off in my head," he said. "I thought, 'well, if I'm enjoying being around kids so much, maybe a degree in education is something I should consider'"

At the time, the then 23-year-old was pursuing a degree in finance at NAIT. Although he graduated from the program in 2008, he didn't see himself working in the financial field.

Instead, he did an Internet search for education programs and found the perfect fit at St. Mary's University College because of the focus on forming teachers specifically for Catholic schools.



BEd student, Adam Andrusiak

"I love that spirituality is a focus of the program, not just a side course because you live it as both a teacher and a person," said Adam, now 26.

As part of the program's curriculum, Adam is currently participating in his third practicum at Good Shepherd School in Okotoks. During the intense 10-week course, students are expected to take on more teaching responsibility while being observed by their host teacher. At Good Shepherd, Adam has also enjoyed building

relationships with fellow teachers and being warmly welcomed as one of the staff.

"Practicums help you decide if you really want to teach," he observed. "I've really loved it. I'm learning a lot and growing."

Adam is proud to be part of the first graduating class from the Bachelor of Education program this June and counts among the highlights of his experience at St. Mary's volunteering at the Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre to serve lunch to the homeless and hosting a math fair for local elementary children.

"We have journeyed together in the program," he said. "It's wonderful to have small classes -it's been a real strength. As a class we stick together."

With potential job prospects at schools in the Calgary Catholic School Board or Christ the Redeemer School Division, Adam hopes to begin his teaching career this fall.

"It is a calling," he said. "I feel you need a passion for it. It's not going to be an easy job but it is really rewarding. I get so much joy from being around students."



Students to explore marvels of ancient Rome

St. Mary's is excited to launch its first travel study to Rome May 3-18 for students in *Art 405: Rome from Constantine to Caravaggio: The Art, Architecture & Transformations of the City, 312-1600 AD*.

Accompanied by Dr. David Bershada and Dr. Jo Ann Telfer, 21 students will travel to the ancient city to explore some of the greatest artistic treasures in art and architecture in the Western World.

"This unique opportunity takes learning outside of the classroom, making it much more real," said Dr. Mark Charlton, Vice-President Academic and Dean.

While in Rome, students will also get to enjoy the pleasures of Italian gelato and spend their evenings on the major piazzas of the famous city.

If the trip is a success, additional travel studies with students and friends of St. Mary's may be considered to enhance the liberal arts and sciences courses offered at the University College.

If you prefer to receive an electronic copy of the MARIAN UPDATE, please e-mail development.office@stmu.ab.ca

St. Mary's joins international network of universities

After rigorous examination of our scholarly reputation, St. Mary's University College has been admitted to the **International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU)**, a worldwide network of Catholic universities that encourages information and academic exchanges and collaboration among members on research, admission and program offerings. Members are represented or directly invited to activities that are of academic and research interest carried out by international organizations such as UNESCO, the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

You're invited to the 11th Annual Golf Tournament

On August 12, 2010 help support student-athletes in the **Lightning Athletics program**

Dreaming of golf season? Dust off your clubs and save the date, **Thursday, August 12, 2010 at Calgary Elks Lodge and Golf Club** for St. Mary's annual fundraising golf tournament! Your day will include 18 holes of golf, a golf cart, tee gift, putting contest, live auction, steak dinner and prizes. A portion of the proceeds goes directly to support student-athletes in the Lightning Athletics program. **Registration opens May 1.**

To play in or sponsor this annual fundraiser, call (403) 531-9130 or visit www.stmu.ab.ca

