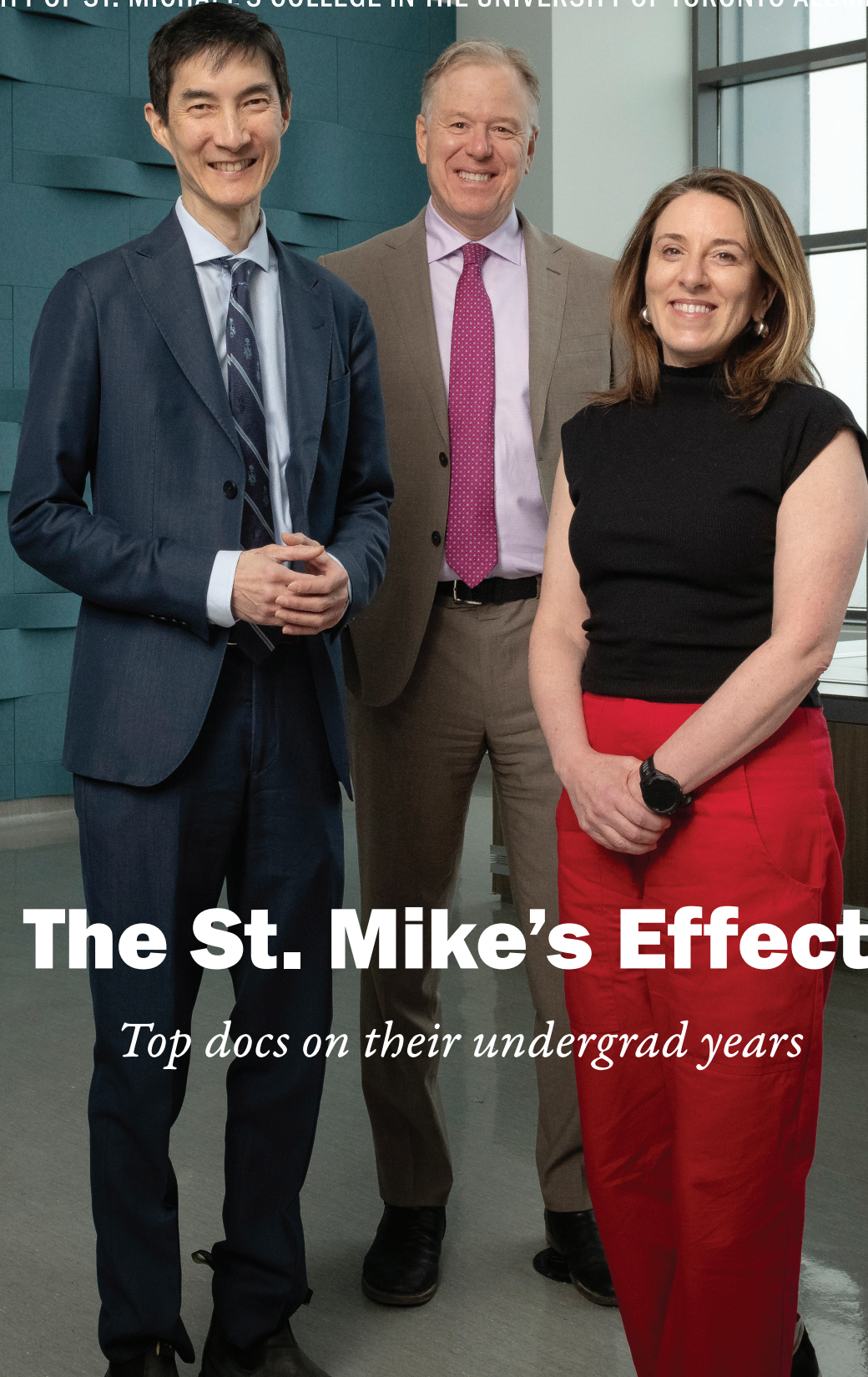


SPRING/SUMMER 2024

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# ST. MICHAEL'S

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ALUMNI MAGAZINE



## **The St. Mike's Effect:**

*Top docs on their undergrad years*

# St. Mike's Continuing Education Division Welcomes You!

We are excited to talk about some of our first courses, which will be offered this fall. Classes are open to alumni, friends, neighbours, and anyone who believes in the joy of lifelong learning.



## Irish Studies

From Gaelic games to language, literature, and music, this 12-week course offers a multifaceted exploration of Irish culture and heritage. The course, taught by Pa Sheehan, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, in St. Michael's Celtic Studies Program, begins September 3.

## Poetry, Prayer and the Political Moment

Led by academic, activist, and author Mary Jo Leddy, as well as by Susie Whelehan, a poet, facilitator and artist, this four-week course examines poetry to awaken participants to what is and become aware of our place in it, be it our neighbourhood, city, country or planet. Poems studied will include works by Margaret Atwood, Wendell Berry, Julia Esquivel and others. This course starts September 12.

## Contemporary Issues Through Children's Literature

This six-week course turns to children's fiction and non-fiction to examine critical issues from climate change to fake news. Classes involve a brief lecture by guest authors and a discussion on how to use books to open conversations with children and teens. This course starts Wednesday, September 18.

This is just a taste of what we'll be looking at in the coming months as we work to build three streams of offerings: professional learning certificates and diplomas; stand-alone courses for professional development; and general interest courses.



Want to learn more? Please watch the St. Mike's website – [stmikes.utoronto.ca](http://stmikes.utoronto.ca) – or email [ce.stmikes@utoronto.ca](mailto:ce.stmikes@utoronto.ca) for updates and additional courses, as well as news on the Diploma in Interfaith Dialogue and the Graduate Diploma in Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

# ST. MICHAEL'S

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## FROM FOUNDERS HOUSE

# Cultivating the Future

*Nurturing treasured memories*

**N**OW IS THE SEASON FOR cultivating gardens, and memories. ¶ Fresh off Spring Reunion 2024, my thoughts are filled with the stories I heard from alumni who returned to campus to reconnect with friends and recall their years at St. Michael's, whether that was 50 years ago, or five. The tales told anew of capers in the COOP, and inspiring mentors like Basilian Fathers Madden and Kelly, of Loretto and St. Joe's Sisters like Nims and O'Mara, of Professor Langan, and, of course, that fellow McLuhan. It was a week filled with good food, slide shows, and many, many toasts.

And in this week ahead, we will gather joyfully at St. Basil's Collegiate Church for our Baccalaureate Mass, and then twice process to Convocation Hall to speak some Latin, to confer degrees, and to unleash upon the world our latest group of alumni, the remarkable Class of 2024. It will be a time to connect and to celebrate with our graduates and their friends and family, and to tell new stories.

These events are annual milestones in the 173-year history of our university, important passages in the lives of our students and of our institution. For a president, they represent the lifeblood of our community and an opportunity to gather up many rich memories from the people who claim St. Michael's as their home. They are, quite simply, a big part of the history of our university.

While these memories are the past and present of St. Michael's, the cultivation of our history informs our future. As our St. Mike's 180 strategic plan states, we are Rooted in the Future: horticultural shorthand for understanding that where we have come from is the basis for how we move forward. To continually build a St. Mike's community that is

resilient and creatively responsive to the challenges of our own day and those of the next century and a half, we need to know who we are, and to keep faith with that past.

So, let me state plainly how thankful we are to you, our alumni, past and present, and for our current students. Your time with us and the stories you share are treasured memories we will nurture and tend to. They are the roots that ground us, and the seeds that promise a fruitful and bountiful future for St. Mike's. ♦



*David G. Sylvester*

*David Sylvester, PhD  
President and Vice-Chancellor*



# St. Mike's Continuing Education is Back

*Courses address broad range of issues*

IT WAS A SUBTLE BUT SIGNIFICANT moment in St. Mike's history when the *Exploring the Arts of the Book* course launched recently in the John M. Kelly Library. ¶ The four-week program on bookbinding, creating various books formats, and basic printing marked the return of St. Mike's newly relaunched Continuing Education Division, while its setting in the recently re-opened Print Studio was an opportunity for the extended community to engage with the impressive workshop space.

On hiatus for the past few years, Continuing Education is being brought back to life by the Division's Director, Dr. Michael Salvatori, who brings an extensive background in education to discussions with various stakeholders, including Catholic teachers, as he determines the needs and desires of the community. Manager of Program Development & Delivery, Roxanne Wright, and Executive Assistant Disha Makhijani round out the Continuing Education team committed to enhancing the learning opportunities offered by the Division.

Salvatori envisions Continuing Education as having three streams: professional learning certificates and diplomas, including Additional Qualifications courses for teachers; stand-alone courses for professional development, often tailored to a specific need such as examining issues related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and general interest courses aimed at lifelong learners.

The existing Graduate Diploma in Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability, as well as the Diploma in Interfaith Dialogue, will be housed in the Continuing Education Division.

Programs will include a variety of delivery options,



including on-campus courses, online courses, and courses delivered off-site.

"The university's mission statement notes that we are grounded in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. We will use that tradition to unpack topics that reflect universal values," Salvatori says, noting that delivery will focus on issues such as integrity and ethics, and human dignity, that are relatable for everyone.

For lifelong learners, Salvatori is now considering a broad slate of offerings for the fall, including a lunch and lecture series, language courses for travellers, a series examining contemporary issues through the lens of children's literature led by children's book authors, an Irish language and culture course, an exploration of the unique art, geography and people of the University of St. Michael's College through a lecture and walking tour series.

On the professional front, he is considering new certificate programs in fields such as Catholic education, health care, and social services, while for our most recent graduates, there will be courses offering critical skills for anyone making the leap from post-secondary education to the workplace.

"As the Division is renewed, we are purposeful in



ensuring it is deeply embedded in the vibrant St. Michael's community by engaging our amazing Faculty and community members as instructors and facilitators, our programming linked to the traditions and expertise of St. Mike's as well as using our stunning campus both as a backdrop for learning and as a centre-piece for our lecture and walking tour series," he says.

A recent Saturday, for example, saw Prof. Giulio Silano, who teaches in St. Michael's Christianity & Culture Program, offer a lecture on Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. His talk was followed by lunch and a tour of the Dante Garden which was created by Timothy Schmalz.

June's bookbinding course offered another impressive example of how Continuing Education plans to work with St. Mike's unique community and infrastructure to serve a broader audience.

The Print Studio, which was launched in 2002, had been shuttered in recent years, awaiting repairs and renovations, although it was used by community members to produce three chapbooks, small pamphlet-stitched booklets, during that time.

It was formally re-opened earlier this year. Thanks to the support of many people, including the Friends of the Kelly Library, the ventilation system was upgraded and the room was doubled in size to be able to fit students more comfortably as well as to offer printing demonstrations using the various 19th- and 20th-century printing presses housed in the second-floor space.

And so, as the *Exploring the Arts of the Book* course got under way, alumni members mingled with attendees with links to the Ontario College of Art and Design. All were clustered around tables stacked with the tools necessary to produce a handmade book, which instructor Andrew Huot

noted could be used for anything from simple note-taking to a one-of-a-kind Christmas gift.

Alumna Miriam O'Herlihy, who had enrolled in Continuing Education courses in the past, was one of the first to register for the bookbinding course and expressed

“After two weeks, I am happy to say that I have already learned how to make six booklets, the result of learning various folding techniques, all different but unique. The instructor is both knowledgeable and patient, two key ingredients for a successful course.”

—Maureen Dillon, SMC 7T6

delight at the rebirth of Continuing Education.

“I'm over the moon that the program is slowly returning. I signed up for the *Exploring the Arts of the Book* workshop and was delighted with the joy and creativity of the scholarly instructor,” she says. “I look forward to ... all the intellectual riches to come. Deep thanks for reinstating St. Mike's commitment to alumni learning.”

“I was attracted to the (bookmaking) course because it's a unique art form and learning about it would challenge my ability to learn and concentrate,” says Maureen Dillon (SMC 7T6). “After two weeks I am happy to say that I have already learned how to make six booklets, the result of learning various folding techniques, all different but unique. The instructor is both knowledgeable and patient, two key ingredients for a successful course.” ♦



For more information about Continuing Education:  
[ce.stmikes@utoronto.ca](mailto:ce.stmikes@utoronto.ca)



**REGIS ST. MICHAEL'S FACULTY OF THEOLOGY**

# RSM Team Responds to Eco-Anxiety

*Fall conference plans underway*



**C**LIMATE CHANGE IS KEEPING MANY young people up at night, their sleep interrupted by constant fear for the future. ¶ Now a team of academics from the Regis St. Michael's Faculty of Theology (RSM) is working with teachers and parents to respond to those fears, helping them to acknowledge the existence of concerns over climate change while also offering ways to calm some of that worry and foster a sense of resilience.

Known as climate anxiety or by other similar labels such as ecological grief, the syndrome is marked by a sense of dread about climate change and its impact, whether the fear relates to water shortages and food scarcity or forest fires and pollution. It can manifest itself in everything from disturbed sleep to a sense of hopelessness and fatalistic thinking.

A recent survey by *The Lancet Planetary Health* journal of 10,000 young people aged 16-25, located in 10 countries around the world, for example, indicated that 59% were very or extremely worried and 84% were at least moderately worried.

“Young people are caught in a moment of feeling overwhelmed. They can't imagine

their future,” says Dr. Hilda Koster, who is the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto Associate Professor of Ecological Theology and Director of the Elliott Allen Institute for Ecology and Theology,

In response, Koster has joined forces with Dr. Cynthia Cameron, Assistant Professor of Religious Education and the Patrick and Barbara Keenan Chair in Religious Education, to find ways to respond to this growing issue. Doctoral candidate Rosemary Boissonneau is lending her insights and experience to the team as well.

Under the banner of *Critical Conversations in Catholic Education: Climate Change and Eco-Social Resilience Project*, which is inspired by *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis's encyclical on



*Regis St. Michael's student Rosemary Boissonneau, Prof. Hilda Koster, and Prof. Cynthia Cameron.*

the environment, the three held two workshops in collaboration with local Catholic school boards for educators earlier this year to familiarize teachers, administrators and staff with terminology and concepts, and to introduce them to a growing body of research into the phenomenon.

Now the team is looking forward to the fall and its conference *Youth, Climate Anxiety, and Religious Education*, which takes place on campus on Saturday, October 5, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The free event, which is open to teachers, parents, and the broader community, will feature Professor Joyce Mercer of Yale Divinity School, who has written on the subject of children and climate anxiety. It will also offer panel discussions, opportunities for networking, and information tables.

"This is not only a how-to in terms of responding to young people's concerns, but the beginning of a conversation for (participants') own reflections on their own struggles," says Koster.

Cameron agrees. "Burnout with new

teachers is a growing challenge," she says. "Teachers are having to cope with student stress while also dealing with their own issues — for example, fears over what their own future, or that of their future children, will be like."

The eco-anxiety project, which is generously supported by the Association of Theological Schools, is the first of what Cameron and Koster see as many instalments in the *Critical Conversations in Catholic Education* series. The goal is to help school boards connect current issues through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching to day-to-day school life so that everyone from the gym teacher to the guidance counsellor can respond more knowledgeably to the concerns and challenges of young people today.

It is, they note, a prime example of RSM's mission to operate with an outward focus, and to serve the community by engaging in meaningful and constructive conversations in ecumenical, multi-cultural, multi-faith and social justice environments in service to the church and the world. ♦



*Dr. Andy Smith returns to Fisher House student residence.*

## The St. Mike's Effect:

*Top docs on their undergrad years*

*There is more than a passing connection between the University of St. Michael's College and Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, one of the country's largest and most influential hospitals. Three of the top administrators and clinical leaders at Sunnybrook, including President and CEO Dr. Andy Smith, are all part of the St. Mike's family. ¶ Recently, Smith, as well as Dr. Frances Wright, Sunnybrook's Chief of the Blake & Belinda Goldring Department of Surgery, and Dr. Albert Yee, who heads up the hospital's Orthopedic Surgery division, and the Holland Bone and Joint Program, and holds the Marvin Tile Chair, sat down with "St. Michael's Magazine" to reminisce about their years at St. Mike's and to talk about the impact that era has had on their lives today.*

**N**ESTLED ON A SHELF OVER Dr. Andy Smith's desk in his Sunnybrook office is a photograph of the St. Mike's quad, a visual reminder of a place he loves: a place, he says, that continues to bring him joy. Any time Dr. Smith is downtown for meetings, he tries to swing by for a stroll through campus. ¶ Now overseeing more than 12,000 staff, doctors, researchers, and learners at Sunnybrook, Smith's gift for working with people — and for people — was already evident in his undergrad days. On a recent tour of campus with University President David Sylvester, Smith stopped by Fisher House, where he was House President and then served two years as Don during the 1980s, and he recalled dormmates' struggles and successes, rhyming off the names of some who remain friends to this day.

Describing himself as “deeply filled with gratitude” for his time in Fisher House, he adds, “I still Zoom with the guys I lived with then.”

His appreciation for the individual was underlined when he visited the Dodig Family COOP, where students were setting up for a St. Michael’s Student Union (SMCSU) town hall. Dr. Smith was soon caught up in conversation with SMCSU Vice-President Yusuf Durmus, chatting about his own student experiences and asking Durmus about his.

“I said that I’m specializing in Finance and Economics at Rotman and he mentioned that he works with Rotman majors quite often,” recalls Durmus. “I also invited him to the SMCSU Townhall we were having in an hour or so and the SMCSU x Alumni Pub Night.”

The exchange ended with Smith handing Durmus his card.

“He’s awesome. I loved meeting him,” Durmus says.

If Smith relates well to students, no doubt it is because he remembers his own student days well. He had been considering applying to St. Mike’s when mentor and alumnus James Bourke, the owner of the Bowmanville, ON hotel where Smith worked as a teen, reinforced the notion that St. Mike’s would be a natural fit.

“I’d been worried about moving to the city, but I was immediately embraced by a supportive community. It took out the worry,” Dr. Smith says, recalling the social life in the Canada Room dining hall, where Father Madden and other priests chatted with students, and events like pub nights, or Fisher House winning the Dean’s Cup in 1989.

A surgeon specializing in colorectal cancer, Dr. Smith completed medical school and a General Surgery residency at the University of Toronto before completing a Surgical Oncology Fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He is a Professor of Surgery at the University of Toronto and has served as the Bernard & Ryna Langer Chair, Division of General Surgery at the University of Toronto.

He says the transition from the operating room to health care leadership came comfortably, in no small

part because of the opportunities he had for watching and learning from the various mentors in his own life, people of both deep confidence and humility, people who “emanated joy.”

It’s joy that drives much of Dr. Smith’s life today,

“I’d been worried about moving to the city, but I was immediately embraced by a supportive community. It took out the worry.”

whether it is the grin on his face as he revisits his student days, or the pride he takes in Sunnybrook, including in the environmental and social aspects of his work. He talks of Sunnybrook’s anti-racism efforts, his meetings with “the green team” every two weeks — often while walking through a nearby ravine — and the move to eliminate gases from operating rooms that contribute to global warming.

Servant leadership is a recurring theme in the conversation, and especially the notion of offering help.

As he offered congratulations to the class of 2019 at their convocation ceremony in Convocation Hall, he held out this advice: “Always ask the question: ‘How can I help?’”



### Dr. Frances Wright

TODAY, DR. FRANCES WRIGHT is Sunnybrook’s Surgeon-in-Chief and holds the Blake Goldring Chair in Surgery. A specialist in melanoma and breast cancer, her career experience includes serving as a professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Toronto and as the provincial lead for Surgical Oncology for Cancer Care Ontario-Ontario Health.

When she looks back on her time at St. Mike’s, living at Loretto College in the 1990s, she says, “it was one of the best times of my life. We had fun, we worked hard, and the social life was great. Toronto is a great city.”

Having been in residence while taking courses on a

campus as large as U of T's, Dr. Wright places value in the range of people she met as dormmates and classmates. One of the great things about being in residence was that it was such an intimate setting within the at-times daunting size of U of T.

"Loretto's small community humanized U of T," she says.

At the same time, she benefitted from the range of people she met. "I was meeting people from all over the province and other parts of the country," she recalls, noting that the exposure to a variety of backgrounds broadened her perspective and continues to serve her

**“I was meeting people from all over the province and other parts of the country.”**

well today in her practice and her teaching.

The vital nature of Dr. Wright's work makes it important to take time to relax. When she does, she likes to work out, and she and her husband, Brian Roche (SMC 9T1), like to socialize with friends, many of them also St. Mike's alums. ♦



**Dr. Albert Yee**

AFTER A HEADMASTER at his school in Vancouver suggested to the teenaged Albert Yee that he consider out-of-province universities, Dr. Yee looked to Toronto and soon found himself living in St. Mike's Elmsley residence from 1986 to 1988. Dr. Yee, who is the Holland Bone and Joint Program Chief and Marvin Tile Chair, head of the Division of Orthopedic Surgery at Sunnybrook describes his years at St. Mike's as "a pivotal time."

With a father who was a pharmacist and a mother who was a scrub nurse, Dr. Yee always knew that a career in medicine was a strong possibility. As well as his Sunnybrook roles, Yee is also a full professor at U of T's Institute of Medical Sciences, with a cross appointment in the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering. He says his days on the St. Mike's campus continue to illuminate his work today, as they underscored the importance — and the value — of listening respectfully and compassionately.

"I hadn't been away from home before but found a community where people were less cliquy and everybody got along," he says. Everyone from the priests living in his residence to his roommates and floormates offered him a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds, an experience that continues to help him

**“I had the ability to relate to people of multiple backgrounds, and I also had people in my life who kept me grounded.”**

shape his approach to dealing with patients.

The array of conversations he had while on campus, from the academic to the social, particularly served him well when he began his Level One Trauma training, as he saw how unfair life can be, and how disruptive.

"I had the ability to relate to people of multiple backgrounds, and I also had people in my life who kept me grounded," says Dr. Yee.

Today, he finds himself working with Drs. Smith and Wright and describes them as "an inspiration." The team, he says, has common goals and he admires their approach to consensus building.

"The ultimate vision is to make things better than when you came." ♦



# SMC Bleeds Blue

*Connecting via St. Mike's sports scene*

*Occasionally we hear from alumni curious about what has changed since they graduated, as well as what has stayed the same. To answer a recent inquiry about sports on campus, we reached out to Yusuf Durmus, Vice President of SMCSU, and Quinn Godfrey, who served as SMCSU's Vice President Athletics. They contributed this informative piece.*

**S**T. MIKE'S STUDENTS HAVE ALWAYS been sports enthusiasts, and that passion hasn't waned over the years. Today, the campus is buzzing with athletic activities, drawing in students with a shared love for sports. The intramurals program offered along with the University of Toronto's competitive leagues organized by the Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education provide students a wide range of sports to participate in, such as soccer, basketball, volleyball, and dodgeball. Divided into different divisions, these competitions are a great way for students to show off their college pride.

This year saw a notable increase in participation, with about 450 students signing up for a variety of sports — a jump from the previous year's 425. Two St. Michael's College teams won their respective championships: Open Division 1 Soccer and Women's Division 1 Field Hockey. It's clear that sports continue to be a big part of campus life at St. Mike's.

Aside from the competitive aspect, the St. Michael's College Student Union (SMCSU) hosted fun events surrounding sports. Students took in a Blue Jays game during Orientation, joined in drop-in soccer sessions, participated in a Nike Run challenge, and organized watch parties for major events like the Super Bowl and Formula 1 races. For indoor sports enthusiasts, St. Mike's now offers games such as billiards, foosball, and a ping-pong

table, complete with readily bookable cue sticks and table tennis rackets for fun and low-key games throughout the year. These events brought students together over shared interests and snacks.

A highlight on campus is Mike's Ice, St. Mike's very own ice rink. At this year's second annual grand opening, students skated with friends and enjoyed hot chocolate. Mike's Ice is a joint effort between the President's Office and SMCSU, providing students with free ice skate rentals throughout the winter.

The sports scene at St. Mike's reflects a strong sense of community, competition, and enjoyment. Alumni visiting the campus will see not just facility upgrades, but also a continued commitment to fostering a culture of fair play and shared experiences. ♦



## CAMPUS NOTES

# News from St. Mike's

*So much to celebrate*



### James Roussain Named Kelly's Chief Librarian

**James Roussain** has been named the Dr. William D. Sharpe Chief Librarian and Director of Special Collections at the John M. Kelly Library effective July 1, 2024. Roussain joined St. Michael's in 2017 as the library's first Outreach and Instruction Archivist, focused on engaging students with the library's archival and rare book holdings. An active volunteer within the Canadian archival community, he says it is "an honour to be entrusted by USMC to move the Kelly forward in its mission of bringing people together in support of their intellectual pursuits." ♦

### Renovated Print Studio has Grand Re-Opening

The official re-launch of **The Print Studio**, located on the second floor of the John M. Kelly Library, was celebrated on March 21 with a lecture by Victoria University Principal **Angela Esterhammer**, a reception, and a demonstration in the studio led by **Kit MacNeil**, who has taught a course in St. Michael's Book & Media Studies program and serves as Master Printer at the University of Toronto's Massey College. The re-launch represents years of planning

for a space where experiential learning can help students understand the power and importance of the printed word. The refreshed studio has double the space, increased seating, and improved ventilation, making it a more comfortable space for students to roll up their sleeves and get to work. Chief Librarian James Roussain offers a special thanks to the Friends of the Kelly Library for their donation of \$18,000 to the project. ♦



### Shining a Light on Celtic Studies

March was a big month for St. Mike's Celtic Studies program. The **Ireland Funds Canada** St. Patrick's Day luncheon returned after a Covid hiatus, with **Eithne Heffernan** leading a volunteer organizing committee and raising roughly \$100,000 to support Celtic Studies.

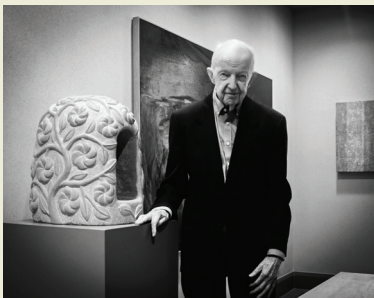
Professor Emerita **Ann Dooley** was named the inaugural recipient of the Ireland Funds Canada's Distinguished Leadership Award at the event. Then Assistant Professor **Pa Sheehan** raised the Irish flag at City Hall on St. Patrick's Day at a ceremony that included **Micheál Martin**, Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister.

May's *Canada, Ireland, and Transatlantic Colonialism Conference* saw scholars from around the world discuss the historic relationship between Ireland and Canada. During the conference, Irish Ambassador **Dr. Eamonn McKee** was named an honorary fellow of the University and two pairs of Bronze Shoes, part of *Ireland's Global Famine Way* art installation, were presented to local committees from Toronto and Hamilton. ♦



### President Receives Dante Award

St. Mike's President **David Sylvester** was keen to share the 2024 **International Dante Alighieri Society Award of Merit** with his colleagues, an award that recognizes St. Mike's distinguished teaching, learning, and community outreach in the promotion of Italian culture and history. On hand were professors and various staff members, as well as alumna **Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni** who, with her husband **Alberto**, have been long-time supporters of St. Michael's, including donating the Dante Collection, comprised of books by and about Dante, to the John M. Kelly Library. ♦



### Fr. Donovan's Contributions to the Art World Honoured

Congratulations to Professor Emeritus **Fr. Daniel Donovan**, who has been awarded the 2024 Founders Achievement Award by the Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts. The honour celebrates a person or group who, over time, has made an exceptional contribution to the visual arts community. Fr. Donovan has assembled a collection of more 400 works of art, almost exclusively by Canadian contemporary artists, that he has donated to the University of St. Michael's College. **The Donovan Collection**, which includes works by Meryl McMaster, Robert Mapplethorpe, Angela Grauerholtz, Barbara Steinman, and Denyse Thomasos, is displayed in various buildings and classrooms on campus, including the John M. Kelly Library. Each issue of the alumni magazine includes a selection from the collection on the inside back cover. ♦

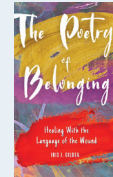
### RSM Offers Moving Send-off for Retiring Profs



*Andrea Di Giovanni offers praise to doctoral supervisor John McLaughlin*

Colleagues, former students, and friends gathered in early May to celebrate Profs. **John McLaughlin**, **Michael Stoeber**, and **Joseph Schner, SJ**, all of whom are retiring from the Regis St. Michael's Faculty of Theology. At a reception in their honour, St. Michael's President David Sylvester and Regis President Gordon Rixon, SJ, were among the many people offering tributes. RSM Dean Jaroslav Skira called the moment bittersweet, saying he was happy to be able to celebrate the professors' many contributions to teaching, the community, and to scholarship, but adding that as valuable and committed colleagues and friends, they would be missed. ♦

### Prof. Iris Gildea Publishes New Volume of Poetry



Congratulations to Associate Professor **Iris J. Gildea** on the launch of her new book, *The Poetry of Belonging: Healing With the Language of the Wound*. The book is part of the "Doing

Radical Trauma Work" series from The Mad and Crip Theology Press. [www.madandcripthologypress.ca](http://www.madandcripthologypress.ca) ♦



### St. Mike's Student Becomes Dean for a Day

St. Mike's student **Camila Justino** won the Dean for a Day contest hosted by the Arts & Science Students' Union and Arts & Science Dean **Melanie Woodin's** office. Camila crossed Queen's Park to offer advice on the student experience while Dean Woodin headed to St. Mike's and dropped in to say hello to Principal **Irene Morra**. ♦

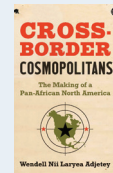


### Annual Student Colloquium a Success

From a sack of potatoes used as a visual aid through to cultural references as disparate as *Plato's Republic* and television's *Desperate Housewives*, the recent **St. Michael's College Research Colloquium** was as entertaining as it was informative. The annual event is designed to encourage collaboration between the student population and St. Mike's faculty and fellows. This year's colloquium saw two student panels that addressed the theme of "Labour, Leisure, and the Good Life". ♦

From a sack of potatoes used as a visual aid through to cultural references as disparate as *Plato's Republic* and television's *Desperate Housewives*, the

### Honours for Alum Prof. Wendell Adjetej



February saw St. Michael's host a launch for **Prof. Wendell Nii Laryea Adjetej's** (SMC OT8) book, *Cross-Border Cosmopolitans: The Making of*

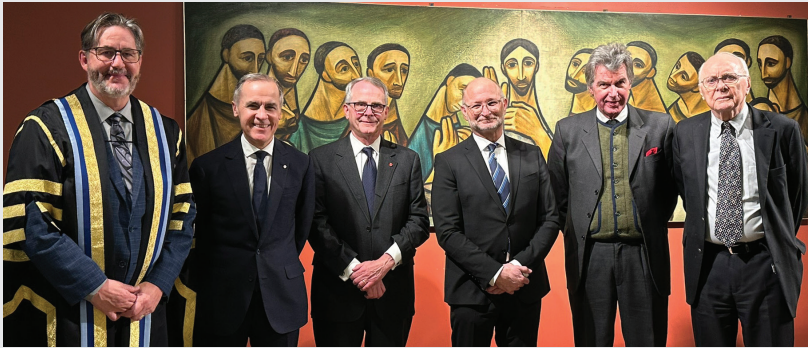
*Pan-African North America*. The St. Mike's alumnus holds the William Dawson Chair and is Assistant Professor and specialist in post-Reconstruction U.S. and African Diaspora Studies at McGill University. He is the recipient of back-to-back commendations, receiving McGill's 2023 Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching and the 2022 H. Noel Fieldhouse Award for Distinguished Teaching. In June 2024, the Canadian Historical Association awarded *Cross-Border Cosmopolitans* with the Best Scholarly Book in Canadian History Prize for a work of history judged to have made the most significant contribution to an understanding of the Canadian past. ♦



### Many Hands Make Light Work on Campus Clean-up Day

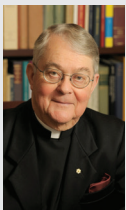
To mark Earth Day, student club **Clean SMC** led a spring clean-up on campus, armed with gloves, trash bags, and a ton of enthusiasm. Volunteers were rewarded with pizza and the gratitude of the community for ensuring our very own Oasis in the City remains one of the the most beautiful locations at U of T. ♦

LIVES LIVED



*Dr. David Sylvester, President and Vice-Chancellor, University of St. Michael's College, Mark Carney, O.C., Damian Leader, David Lametti (SMC 8T5), Giles Baker-Smith, and James Estes.*

**St. Michael's Pays Tribute to Fr. McConica, CSB**



Colleagues, community members, and former students gathered in January for a memorial Mass for **Fr. James K. McConica, CSB**, who served as President of the University of St. Michael's College from 1984-1990.

Fr. McConica, who also served as Praeses of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (PIMS) from 1996 to 2008, died Dec. 20, 2023 at the age of 93.

Among those who offered their remembrances were Mark Carney, former Governor of the Bank of Canada, and David Lametti (SMC 8T5), former federal Minister of Justice and Attorney General. Both men had met Fr. McConica when he was a research fellow at the University of Oxford and they were students there. Each man cited Fr. McConica's wise counsel and fulsome support as a mentor.

"St. Michael's has lost a dear friend whose leadership both at the University and at PIMS was extraordinary," said St. Michael's President David Sylvester. "A gifted administrator and academic, Fr. McConica's research and teaching on Erasmus and Thomas More drew international attention and acclaim."

Fr. McConica was the first Roman Catholic priest since the English Reformation to be named a fellow of All Souls College. He was made an Officer of the Order of Canada, with his citation noting his editing and interpretation on the Collected Works of Erasmus, as well as The History of the University of Oxford. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, he also served as a Member of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy. Possessing a great love for the St. Michael's campus, Fr. McConica was responsible for planting the rows of oak trees that line Elmsley Place today. ♦

**St. Michael's Remembers Fr. William Irwin**



**Fr. William Irwin, CSB**, a longtime member of St. Michael's Faculty of Theology who served as Dean from 1981-1985, died Dec. 6, 2023 at the age of 91. A biblical scholar specializing

in the Book of Isaiah and the Book of Psalms, Fr. Irwin joined the faculty in 1965 and continued teaching well into his 80s. Fr. Irwin also served as President of Assumption University in Windsor, ON.

"Bill combined insightful biblical scholarship with a deep pastoral sensitivity, both inside the classroom and outside," recalls Faculty Professor John L. McLaughlin, who studied under Fr. Irwin before becoming his colleague. "He was one of the best, if not the best, homilists I have ever heard... In his teaching he combined careful detailed scholarly treatment of biblical texts with the relevance of the results for the Church and the world." ♦



**September 19: Save the Date for St. Mike's Golf Classic**

*Save the date for this year's St. Mike's Golf Classic. The 2024 event will be held on Thursday, September 19 at Eagles Nest Golf Club in Maple, Ontario. We look forward to another great day on the course. The tournament raises money for the President's Excellence Fund to support projects that improve the student experience on campus. The foursome price is \$5,000. More details are available at [usmcgolfclassic.com](http://usmcgolfclassic.com) ♦*



## Spring Reunion: Welcome Back!

FROM THURSDAY NIGHT'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING for the Alumni Association Board through to Sunday morning's awards ceremony, Spring Reunion 2024 had something for everyone. Alumni Board President Dr. Maria Gallo led a spirited AGM, updating attendees on the board's activities, an event followed by an elegant gathering in the Dante Garden, where President Sylvester offered formal greetings and guests snacked on delicious treats.

Friday morning shone a spotlight on the Class of 1974, celebrating their 50th anniversary with Mass and then brunch. That evening saw the return of a St. Mike's classic — pub night! Offerings were tailored to the audience, with everything from a Young Alumni trivia night at the Maddy through to the well-known COOP pub — and a Wine and Whisky Smooth Jazz Salon in Charbonnel Lounge.

Saturday morning, it was back to the classroom for the Day of Learning. Prof. Paulo Granata presented on *Learning with/by AI*, Vice President and Principal Irene Morra

presented a lecture entitled *From Shakespeare to Dr. Who: Postwar Britain, Canada, and the Making of a Cultural Identity*; the AI4W (Alumnae Initiative for Women) hosted a panel discussion entitled *Women and the Impact of their Money*, and Eric Alper talked about *The Canadian Contribution to the Rock, Blues, and Folk Musical Canons*. Saturday night's reunion banquet was enjoyed by all.

After Sunday morning Mass at St. Basil's, events wrapped up with brunch and the presentation of the Alumni Awards.

Class of 1975, we look forward to seeing you next spring! ♦





*Above: Nicholas Rita (SMC 1T9) Young Alumni Award winner; Pia O'Leary (SMC 6T2) Victor Dodig Community Impact Award winner; Hannab Cusimano accepted the Richard M. H. Alway Award on behalf of her father, Dr. Robert Cusimano (SMC 8To); Susan Adam Metzler (SMC 7T4) Spirit of St. Mike's Award winner; Michael McCarthy accepted the Prof. Victoria Mueller-Carson Trailblazer Award on behalf of winner Michelle Shephard (SMC 9T4)..*

## *Remembering: Reflections from the Class of 7T4*



*I am very grateful for the great teachers and mentors I had at St. Mike's, such as Fr. Madden, Fr. Belyea, Sr. Janet, Prof. Morra and Prof. Abby Lynch.*

**Sheila Tierney Milway**  
SMC 7T4



*St. Mike's was always a refuge from St. George, a place to discover philosophy and make a best friend.*

**William Krock**  
SMC 7T3



Laughter and learning at this year's reunion.



For us, St. Mike's represents tradition and continuity. From our wedding at St. Basil's in 1979 to the graduation of two of our children (Mark 2004, Alexandra 2011) and Alexandra's wedding in 2017, we have enjoyed many happy times at SMC. And now our grandchildren are coming, too—the third generation?

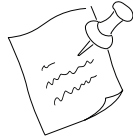
**Maura Blain Brown**  
SMC 7T4

The 50th anniversary of graduation was important to attend in person. It was a significant year which called one to look back, to be present, and to look to the future at St. Michael's. The 50th Reunion gave us a place to gather—absent friends, cherished friends still among the living, and to renew and make new friends going forward.

**Carl O'Byrne**  
SMC 7T4

St. Mike's to me is a quilt of memories after 50 years: reading the Mike, pubbing in the COOP, studying in the Kelly Library, learning from gifted professors, enriching my faith life and making lifelong friends.

**Kathy O'Hagan Richardson**  
SMC 7T4



## BULLETIN BOARD

# Keeping up to Date with our Alumni

*News from Alumni and Friends*

### From one St. Mike's grad to another!



*Left: Bonnie Crombie at a recent Alumni Reunion.  
Right: Carolyn Parrish.*

Consecutive SMC grads lead Mississauga. Former Mississauga mayor and SMC grad, **Bonnie Crombie (SMC 8T2)**, was elected leader of the Ontario Liberal Party in December 2023. After Crombie stepped down as mayor to focus on provincial politics, Mississauga elected another SMC grad, **Carolyn Parrish (SMC 6T9)**, won the municipal election in June 2024 and is Mississauga's new mayor.

**Titus Ambrose Owolabi (Olu Owolabi) (USMC 6T8)** died earlier this year and was buried in Nigeria, where he had been living the past few years. A memorial mass was held in Pickering Ontario, at St. Isaac Jogues Church on May 11th, 2024.

Pope Francis has appointed **James Milway (SMC 7T3)** a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. Milway has been deeply involved in the Catholic community throughout his life. Most notably, he served as Chancellor of Temporal Affairs for the Archdiocese of Toronto for 10 years, which included the challenging period of global pandemic. Jim also serves on the St. Michael's Collegium's Finance & Audit Committee as a special advisor.



**Paul Gilkinson (SMC 7T6)** has recently been inducted into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame in recognition of his incredible career

coaching both men's and women's box and field lacrosse. His roles have also included administration and he has been an integral part of the Canadian lacrosse community for more than 50 years.



St. Mike's Proud. Congratulations to the remarkable **Kathleen A. Mahoney (SMC 7T9)**, recipient of Association of Catholic Colleges and University's prestigious Monica K. Hellwig Award for Outstanding Contribution to Catholic Intellectual Life. Kathleen is an inspiring leader who has opened doors for many and shaped the face of higher education in North America.



Earlier this year, **Silvia Falsaperla's (SMC 8T7)** book launch for *The Garden of Kolymbethra and Other Poems* about Sicily took place at Trinity St. Paul's United Church in Toronto.

**Flavio Volpe (SMC 9T7)**, head of the Canadian Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA), was named to the Order of Canada for his significant impact on Canada's automotive and technology industries at an international level. A leading policy expert in national trade and industry competition, he has played a crucial role in advancing these sectors. Also noted is his work in spearheading Project Arrow, a groundbreaking initiative that resulted in the creation of the first Canadian-made fully electric vehicle, a zero-emissions SUV concept car.



**Maria Gallo (SMC 9T8)** was recently appointed as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Social Innovation at the Trinity Business School. Alongside this role (and her ongoing role as President of the St. Mike's Alumni Association) Maria will be returning to her post as Director of Student Experience and Alumni Transition at the Atlantic Technological University in August. Maria has lived in Ireland for more than 20 years and has two children, Luca and Tara.

**Ian Daffern (SMC 9T9)** is a filmmaker based in Toronto. His award-winning

## BULLETIN BOARD

documentary, *A Bullet Pulling Thread*, about grief and police violence, will premiere on TVO later this year. The film has screened in Abbotsford, Chilliwack, was an opening night screening of the Human Rights Film Festival in Toronto and is coming up for screenings in Winnipeg sponsored by the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, and the Available Light Film Festival. The film has a very strong spiritual component, and it examines the process and journey of grief.



**Natalie Jenner (SMC 9T9)** is the internationally bestselling author of *The Jane Austen Society*, *Bloomsbury Girls* & the forthcoming

*Every Time We Say Goodbye*. The official launch party for the latter took place at TYPE Books in Toronto, Ontario. *Every Time We Say Goodbye* has been named one of BookBub's Best Historical Fiction Books for Spring and one of CBC's Most Anticipated Canadian Novels for Spring. Natalie has a fourth book coming in 2025, *Austen at Sea*.

**Dr. Ji-Sun Kim (USMC 2001)** is a prolific writer and sought-after speaker. Since completing her Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from the University of St. Michael's College in 2001, she has edited more than 20 books on theology, race, and intersectional issues, with her most recent book, *When God Became White*, being an exploration of her own life and experiences in Western Christianity.



**Katie DiTomaso, (SMC 0T0)**, a civil litigator at Stieber Berlach LLP in Toronto, is the proud recipient of the prestigious

Ontario Bar Association Joel Kuchar Award for Professionalism and Civility. Katie is the current Chair of the OBA Insurance Law Section, an Executive

Member of the Canadian Bar Association Insurance Law Section, a part-time law instructor at Lincoln Alexander School of Law teaching and mentoring law students in civil procedure and practice, a lecturer, moot organizer and judge, and a published author writing articles in the respected *Annual Review in Civil Litigation*, *The Advocates' Quarterly*, and four-time author of the annotated *Limitations Act, 2002*, in Civil Procedure and Practice in Ontario all while practising law full-time and raising a beautiful family. Katie credits the University of St. Michael's College and Loretto College for instilling in her many of the values recognized by the Award, but mainly to treat others with dignity and respect while pursuing justice.

**Kunle P. Owolabi (SMC 0T1)**, silver medalist, received a Distinguished Book Award at an international political science conference in Los Angeles.

On November 30, 2023, **Fr. Michael Smolinski (USMC 0T2)** was appointed the sixth Eparchial Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon. He was consecrated as a bishop by Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk and co-consecrators: Archbishop Lawrence Huculak and **Bishop Bryan Bayda (SMC 8T2, USMC 8T7)** in Saints Peter and Paul Church in Saskatoon on January 20, 2024.

**Teresa Anne Martin (SMC 0T5)** is now at the Ministry of the Attorney General Crown Law Office Civil. At the end of May she joined the board of Canadian Defence Lawyers, the only national organization dedicated to representing the interests of civil defence lawyers.



**Edward P. Soye (SMC 0T7)** is currently serving as a pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force and, in early November, 2023, was selected to join the Canadian Forces Snowbirds as Snowbird 10 for the 2024 season.



Ever since her graduation from St. Michael's College, **Jadea Kelly (SMC 0T8)** has been happily living an artistic

existence. Her fourth studio album *Weather Girl* comes out Oct 11, 2024, the day before her 38th birthday! She has been living in Los Angeles for six years and is still incredibly dedicated to a life in the arts. This album was funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and a successful fan-funded Kickstarter campaign.

We'll be seeing more of **RJ Hatanaka (SMC 0T9)** in the role of Tyler Green in the upcoming season of *Criminal Minds: Evolution*. RJ, who frequently appeared as the character last season, has been promoted to series regular for Season 2 of the Paramount+ series, which is now in production. ♦

### LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!



**What's new?**  
We'd love to hear about you!  
Send your updates to:  
[smc.alumni@utoronto.ca](mailto:smc.alumni@utoronto.ca)  
Please send high-res photos.



**Have you moved?**  
Update your information  
through U of T's address  
update form.

## BULLETIN BOARD



A philosopher-turned-comedian-turned-writer/director, **Mitchell LeBlanc (1T3)** was recently selected as one of five filmmakers for the inaugural *2024 Rising Voices Canada* program, a career

accelerator from BIPOC TV & Film, Indeed, Hillman Grad, and TIFF. He is developing *The Landlord*, a horror feature about the evils of housing insecurity, and will pitch the project at this year's Tribeca Film Festival in June. Last year, Mitch completed his residency at the Canadian Film Centre as part of the 2023 Norman Jewison Film Program, and in 2022, he participated in the Warner Brothers Discovery x Canadian Academy Writers Program. He has two other feature projects in development at U.S. studios

and continues to teach screenwriting at George Brown College. Later this year, keep an eye out for his recent film *NOISE* – a short experimental dance/horror about a mime who procrastinates themselves into oblivion.

**Abi Roman (1T3)** lives in Uxbridge, Ontario with her husband, Daniel Coratti. Many will recall that Abi won an iron woman competition while she was at St. Mike's, pointing her in the direction of a career in personal wellness. As founder of Abi Roman Fitness, she has cultivated a thriving online community dedicated to achieving optimal health and well-being. Abi's holistic approach emphasizes the importance of balanced nutrition, strength training workouts, and mental wellness strategies. Follow Abi on her social media channels, including Instagram and TikTok @abiromanfit to see more, and check out her website at [abiromanfitness.com](http://abiromanfitness.com).

**Alessia Baptista (SMC 2T3)** is living in Toronto and has recently taken on the role of Sales Activation Coordinator at Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment.

The Canadian cultural scene has lost two big names who were St. Mike's alumni. Film and television director **Don Shebib (SMC 6T0)**, best known for his Canadian classic *Goin' Down the Road*, died Nov. 5, 2023.

Teacher and children's author **Martha Gombita, née Kambeitz (SMC 5T7)**, known to countless Canadian schoolchildren who learned to read with her Mr. Mugs series, died January 1 of this year.

**Melissa Di Fonzo (SMC 1T3)** is happy to announce that she has opened her own psychotherapy practice in Toronto. Her practice focuses on providing counselling to individuals, couples, and families. ♦

## Rest In Peace

*We acknowledge the passing in recent months of the following alumni, who graduated from St. Michael's in the class years shown here.*

### 1940s

Briglia, Mary SMC 4T5  
FitzGerald, Desmond J. SMC 4T6  
Mohan (née Gilchrist), Ann SMC 4T6  
Mulhall, Maureen T. SMC 4T8

### 1950s

Devlin, Gerald M. SMC 5T5  
Fitzhenry, Gerard D. SMC 5T3  
Gombita (née Kambeitz), Martha SMC 5T7  
Irwin CSB, William H. SMC 5T3  
Landry (née Lonergan), Mary E. SMC 5T3  
Macdonald Heaslip, Nona SMC 5T1  
Mogan, John J. SMC 5T1  
Rossi, Faust F. SMC 5T3  
Smith CSJ, Sister Gwen SMC 5T6  
Steiner, Joseph C. SMC 5T0  
Tamburro, Rocco A. SMC 5T7  
Tawaststjerna (née Leonard), Agatha SMC 5T4  
Watrin CSB, Clarence E. SMC 5T4

### 1960s

Boyd CSB, Rev. J Ian SMC 6T3  
Christensen, Richard SMC 6T8  
Coleman (née Caco) Anna M. T. SMC 6T0  
Crean, Peter Aidan SMC 6T4  
Dignan (née Shea), Anita SMC 6T3  
Finley, John R. SMC 6T0  
Gray, Donald SMC 6T1  
Kosior, Stanley "Stas" SMC 6T1  
Lavigne, Pierre M. J. SMC 6T7  
McConica CSB, James K. USMC 6T8  
Mollica, Antonio "Tony" Salvatore SMC 6T3  
Owolabi, Titus Ambrose SMC 6T8  
Pryma, Robert "Bob" SMC 6T1  
Sheahan, Paul T. J. SMC 6T8  
Shebib, Donald E. SMC 6T0  
Truscello, Don SMC 6T7  
Wait, Leonard "Len" SMC 6T1  
Wiley, Rev. Phillip SMC 6T2

### 1970s

Dugan, Michael K. K. SMC 6T2  
Leo, Gaetano "Tom" SMC 7T7  
Letters, John L. D. SMC 7T0  
Liderbach SJ, Daniel Patrick USMC 7T3  
McBride, John W. SMC 7T1  
Morgan, Tom J. SMC 7T6  
O'Brien Fehr, Kevin Ann SMC 7T0  
Park, Phocian S. SMC 7T3

### 1980s

Kozhuvanal, Anthony USMC 8T3  
O'Driscoll, Michael S. SMC 8T6  
Pasut (née Morson), Laura A. SMC 8T2

### 2010s

Calish, Tricia USMC (Hon.) SMC 1T4 ♦

To share an update please contact 416-926-2331 or [smc.alumniaffairs@utoronto.ca](mailto:smc.alumniaffairs@utoronto.ca)



## FROM ST. MIKE'S ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# Tradition and Trailblazers

*Finding the essence of St. Mike's alumni through family and friendships*



BY MARIA GALLO, PRESIDENT, USMC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**W**HY DID YOU ATTEND ST. MIKE'S? The influences are usually close at hand: a family member, a neighbour, or a friend made the suggestion. At an early age, when I decided I wanted to attend U of T, St. Mike's was the only choice that entered my mind. My entire life the small ovals of St. Michael's Class of '66 adorned our family room wall.

My father, Victor Gallo, an inspiring educator, left me to discover the college choice best for me. It was an honour more than an expectation to follow in his footsteps. The tipping point was the visit of two women to my high school in Newmarket in 1993. Laura Rocca (SMC '96), a student then, and Elizabeth Greco Molinaro (SMC '88), shared their experience and this spoke to me as place I could thrive. (And Laura lived at Loretto — this influenced my residence choice too!).

Thrive I did. I forged lifelong friendships and found my passion. Many of my friends also came from a long line of St. Mike's alumni. This year's Alumni Reunion was extra special, with five of my closest friends returning to Loretto (for one night only!) following the St. Mike's Pub. These moments help to strengthen our 30-yearlong friendships.

Not all have the family legacy of parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins swelling the St. Mike's alumni ranks, however.



My father attended St. Mike's in the 1960s to study Italian, French and English after switching from the Faculty of Architecture. A recent Italian immigrant, as many others of the time, he was first in his family to attend university. He was a trailblazer, with hundreds — even thousands — of other alumni who found themselves on our campus oasis.

These trailblazing students are still at St. Mike's today. Many are the first in their family to attend university or first to attend U of T, international students far from home, scholarship winners, mature students, or trailblazers who juggle work, caring responsibilities, and long commutes. In the past they also included those students coming from the States on a special Western year to have a funnel into SMC.

This is why our alumni community is essential to the broader St. Mike's community. While our students and recent graduates may have supportive inherited networks — close



*Alumni Board President Maria Gallo catches up with friends.*

family, neighbours and community — they need more. They need social capital — I call it alumni capital — to find relatable role models within the student and alumni community. Programs like AMPLify, mentorship that connects students and alumni, or AI4W (Alumni Initiative for Women) building better experiences for all St. Mike’s women. The Alumni Board is thrilled to welcome Lisa Webb as Manager, Alumni Affairs at St. Mike’s to build programming that diffuses alumni engagement across all corners of the St. Mike’s community.

During Alumni Reunion this year, our Alumni Board held a retreat to identify key goals for the coming year. Rekindling and reinforcing alumni connections in the St. Mike’s community remains the foundation of our work. More than half our Alumni Board members have family members — including parents and siblings—who attended St. Mike’s before or after them. Others forged pathways through St. Mike’s as international students, as mature students, or as first-generation university students. Still others are parents of current St. Mike’s students. They recognize the value in staying engaged with and bringing their leadership to the college.

As one Board member remarked to me, it isn’t the campus bricks and mortar that brings them back to re-engaging with St. Mike’s. It is the connection to friends and even to family. It is this shared thread that connects us all. My dad and I shared this special connection and we had the privilege to attend many alumni reunion events together. I miss him and was happy to remember him at the special Mass at the reunion.

Over the coming months we will be reaching out to you to consider ways you may wish to volunteer and actively foster your connection to the St. Mike’s

**“Whether your St. Mike’s connection goes back generations or starts with you, consider how a reconnection can enhance your life and how you can enhance the lives of fellow alumni and students.”**

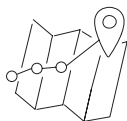
community. The experience also allows you to get so much back too — there is a healthy balance to build your career, social, intellectual, and spiritual life. Whether your St. Mike’s connection goes back generations or starts with you, consider how a reconnection can enhance your life and how you can enhance the lives of fellow alumni and students.

You are now the influencers for the next generation of aspiring and current St. Mike’s students. This is an important role you play across your community — share your St. Mike’s experience; it is a door opener for you and others!

I leave you with this question: How do you want to (re)connect with St. Mike’s? ♦



Please send your responses to Maria Gallo:  
[m.gallo@alumni.utoronto.ca](mailto:m.gallo@alumni.utoronto.ca)



## FROM ALUMNI & ADVANCEMENT

# Welcoming More Than 500 Alumni Back to Campus

*A heartfelt reunion*



BY LISA GLEVA, CFRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADVANCEMENT

**A**S THE VIBRANT HUES OF spring paint our campus with renewed energy and life, we were thrilled to welcome more than 500 alumni back to the university this month. This season of renewal and growth parallels the deep sense of connection and pride that blossoms as our esteemed alumni return to their alma mater.

For our alumni, returning to campus was an opportunity to revisit the cherished memories, experiences, and friendships that shaped their academic and personal journeys. I'm confident in saying that the nesting red-winged blackbirds were a fresh addition to the landscape. Perhaps, in addition to evoking a profound sense of nostalgia and belonging, we learned a thing or two. Larry Cimino, Chair of the Alumni Reunion Committee (SMC 7T4), made good use of a file folder as he moved between the Coop Patio and Charbonnel Lounge — ingenious!

Two years ago, I spoke with the late Nona Macdonald Heaslip (SMC 5T1). Nona and I knew each other from my time working at another Canadian university, through the Heaslip Scholars Program. I had recently joined the team at St. Mike's, and Nona was keen to help me learn about this place. She talked about her time as a student and about residence life at Loretto College, about the strong friendships that developed, and especially about the parties. Nona's advice: "Parties are

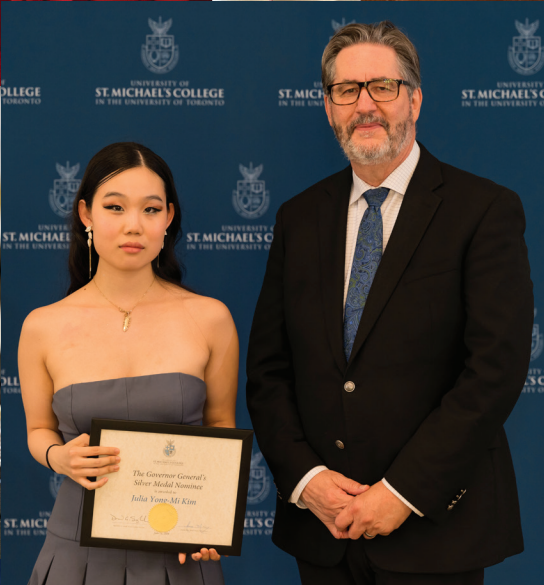
essential. Not only do they allow us to reconnect, they foster a strong sense of community and belonging, reminding everyone about what unites us. The St. Mike's community has a tremendous spirit and alumni cherish that."

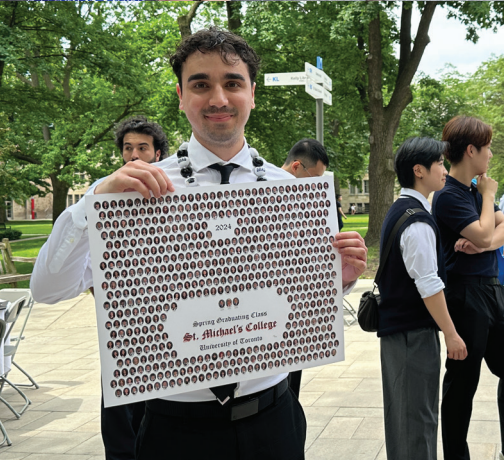
Alumni Reunion 2024 offered a program tailored to the theme "Renewing Friendships, Celebrating Memories, Creating Community." With events ranging from receptions and lectures to panel discussions and parties, it had something for everyone. I noticed that our alumni particularly relish a good party!


As we embrace the warmth and vibrancy of spring, we are reminded of the enduring bond between our university and its alumni. We express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication.

In welcoming more than 500 alumni back to campus, we celebrated the essence of our university's spirit— a community rooted in shared experiences, lifelong learning, and a shared commitment to making a positive difference. ♦

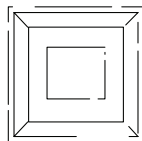






  
*Congratulations,  
St. Mike's  
Class of 2T4*





## THE DONOVAN COLLECTION

# Shard of Light

*Finding new life*



BY FR. DANIEL DONOVAN

**T**HE MYSTERIOUS AND EVEN SPIRITUAL quality of James Nizam's light sculpture entitled "Shard of Light," catches our attention and invites us to engage with it. In this as in many of his works, the artist uses materials that seem to have no further use, including houses and other structures condemned to destruction. By drilling holes and opening apertures of various sizes, the artist is able to mould and intensify the form or shape within the space that it illuminates. The light is so focused that at first glance it seems to be solid but, in fact, it is light that has invaded and transformed the space.

Here as in so many of his works, Nizam uses a house that has been condemned to destruction. In transforming it in the way he does, he gives it a reprieve, a new life. In a first step, he transforms a room in the house into a *camera obscura* producing hauntingly beautiful sculptures. By photographing them he gives them another form of life.

It has no future in the ordinary sense of the word. No one lives there and it will soon be destroyed. The sculptures of light give a now empty and abandoned space a new meaning.

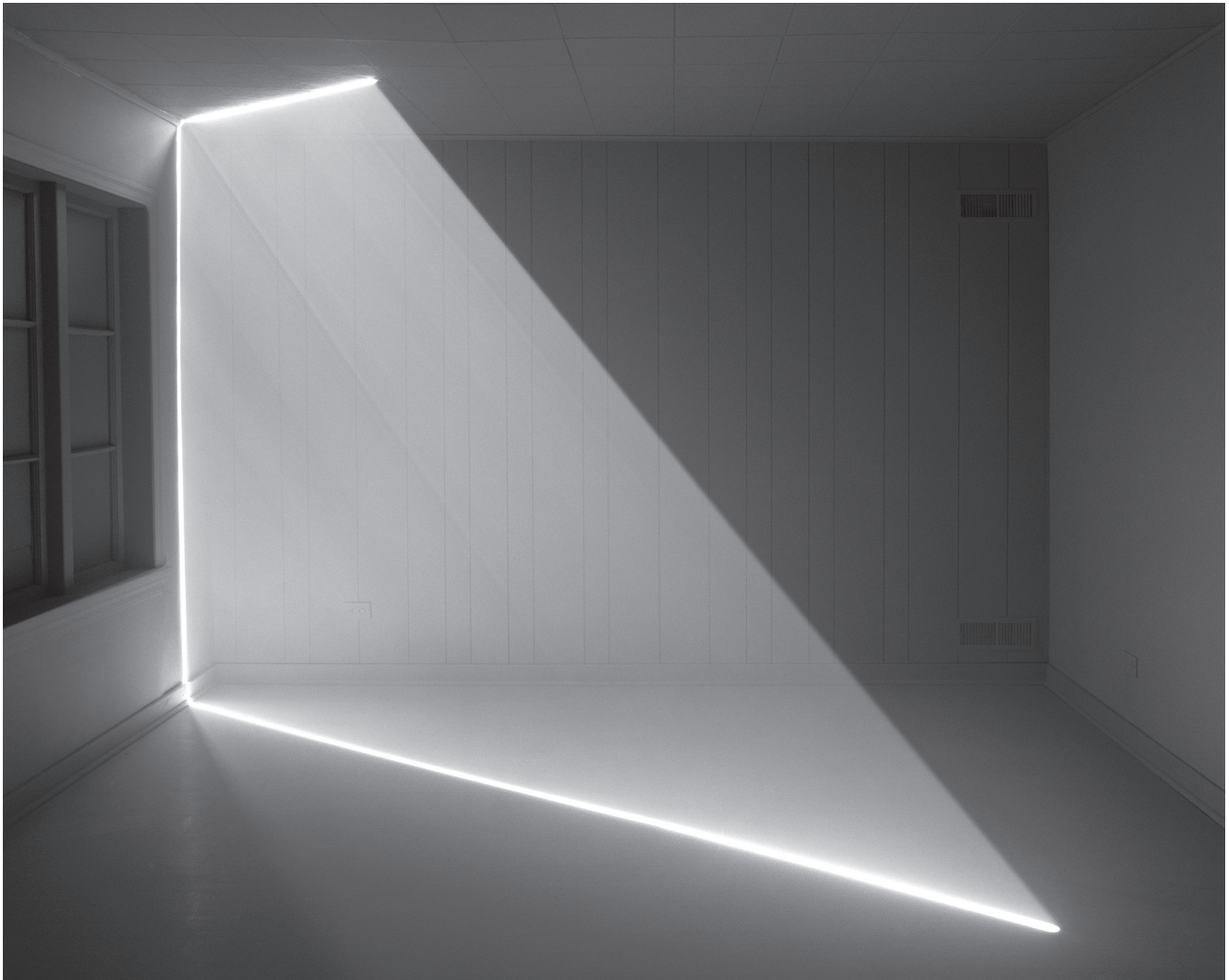
Not long after the work was installed in

the Kelly Library, two people independently said to me that it made them think of the Annunciation. Many traditional paintings of that scene evoke the coming of the Spirit upon Mary through streams of light.

There is something positive and hopeful about "Shard of Light." It is like light breaking into and overcoming the darkness. One might also think of a contrast between good and evil, peace and war, hope and despair. Like so much art, "Shard" invites us to take time and to look at the work and to allow it to speak to us. ♦



**An endowment fund has been established to generate funds that will support the ongoing care and maintenance of The Donovan Collection. To contribute, contact the [Advancement Office](#) at (416) 926-7281.**



*"Shard of Light" by James Nizam.*



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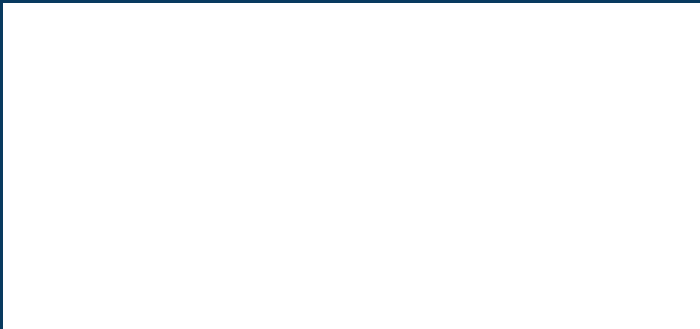
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