

2016

Annual Report



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE **4**

A GRAND FEAST FIT FOR A GRAND OPENING **6**

STUDENTS AT CENTRE OF ACADEMIC PLANNING **10**

READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETIC:
ENGLISH FOR MATH INITIATIVE A SUCCESS **12**

NURTURING THE WHOLE PERSON **14**

FACULTY PROFILE: HOW FLAPPERS AND FREAK SHOWS
REVEAL HOW WE FEEL ABOUT THE HUMAN FORM **16**

ANNUAL MASS TAKES ON SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE **18**

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION:
PAVING THE WAY IN WATERLOO **21**

STAFF PROFILE: HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COME TO CAMPUS
FOR LECTURES, TOURS... AND COOKIES **22**

DONOR PROFILE: REMEMBERING A DAUGHTER GIVES
STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN **24**

FINANCIALS **26**



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St. Jerome's University may be a relatively small institution attached to a very large, research-intensive university, but we're now becoming a topic of conversation in ways I never could have imagined.

Anyone familiar with how this campus used to look — and feel — will know that we've come a long way the last five years. We've been on the move, expanding and renewing, and I believe we have much to celebrate.

This past October, the grand opening of the biggest capital project in our history revealed some quite remarkable changes: a new residence complex, academic centre, wellness centre, administrative and student spaces, and a place of priority for our chapel.

As our federated partner, the University of Waterloo, moves Beyond Innovation, we like to think we kept up: we needed to find innovative ways to build a bridge to the next 150 years, and we did. We embraced an innovative build methodology known as Integrated Project Delivery and used it to create an ecosystem of forward momentum for our students, building infrastructure to support our commitment to open academic inquiry, transformational research, inspired teaching, and engage service. Our new smart classrooms, interactive labs, and renovated learning spaces transform the student experience by encouraging and supporting intellectual discovery.

Yes, we've moved Beyond Innovation, but we've hit other targets as well: we've gone Beyond Integrated, with our new food service provider, who has made it easier to nurture the whole student with their selection of local, made-from-scratch dishes; we're Beyond Interdisciplinary as we take part in the English for Math initiative, where students are taught at the nexus of the disciplines; we've moved Beyond Instruction, as many of our faculty are not simply nurturing young minds, but also sharing their research with the world; and, we are Beyond Identity, bringing the Bible to a modern world with A Year with the Saint John's Bible, and challenging what it means to be Canadian with our Truth and Reconciliation commitments.

As to what our future holds, there are no limits on imagination or ideas. We now have the kind of student-centred, modern infrastructure necessary to support new possibilities and the next generation of leaders. We will continue to grow and contribute to the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit that defines this University and the social fabric of our region. We made the dream a reality, and I'm so proud to be a part of it.



Dr. Katherine Bergman
President and Vice Chancellor
January 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



A GRAND FEAST FIT FOR A GRAND OPENING





“The Grand Opening was our way of celebrating the next 150 years, and celebrating that this project came in on time, on budget and ahead of schedule.”

— Viola Poletes Montgomery,
Director of Advancement

The Feast of St. Jerome in honour of our patron saint is the biggest annual fundraiser at St. Jerome’s University.

This year, the Grand Opening and Feast of St. Jerome, Liturgy and Dinner, took on special significance as it coincided with reunion weekend on October 1, giving us the opportunity to show off to our generous donors an extraordinarily successful \$47-million campus renewal project.

Almost 300 donors and distinguished guests gathered in the atrium of the Academic Centre to enjoy a fine feast courtesy of Dana Hospitality (the University’s new food-services partner) and generous sponsor TD Wealth.

The renewal project — with its new residence complex, academic centre, wellness centre, and administrative and student spaces — is an enormous source of pride for the University.

According to Director of Advancement, Viola Poletes Montgomery, it was all hands on deck during what was just one of the major events held on campus within the first three weeks of September.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony included all five University partners: St. Jerome’s University President and Vice Chancellor Dr. Katherine Bergman; University of Waterloo President and Vice Chancellor Dr. Feridun Hamdullahpur; His Excellency Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, D.D.; Sister Marie Taylor, SSND; and Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Resurrection Father Murray McDermott.

Other distinguished guests included the Honourable Bardish Chagger, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism; Kitchener-Waterloo MPP Catherine Fife; University of Waterloo Dean of Arts Dr. Douglas Peers; Arthur Winslow of Graham Construction; and Diamond Schmitt Architects Associate Ana Maria Llanos, our partners in the innovative construction method known as Integrated Project Delivery (IPD).

“The Grand Opening was our way of celebrating the next 150 years, and celebrating that this project came in on time, on budget and ahead of schedule,” Poletes Montgomery says.

“I was really happy that we could have this great celebration in front of a lot of people. It’s a tremendous achievement on so many levels. You don’t often hear about construction projects coming in ahead of time and on budget. It all speaks to the fact that we’re in support of the University of Waterloo’s mandate of being innovative.”

Poletes Montgomery also noted that St. Jerome’s University is the first academic institution in Canada to have fully embraced the IPD method, and the second institution of any kind in this country to do so — Moose Jaw Hospital being the first.

Now, we are recognized as a thought leader lending our expertise to other organizations that are keen to deliver large, complicated builds on time and on budget.

Bergman says that after such a long time in the planning stages, it was enormously rewarding to see the project come to fruition.

“Everything we did was very intentional around building community,” Bergman says. “For me it’s about the community and people — that’s what I was most proud of. When we pull together as a team, we can punch way above our weight. It’s about people. It’s about community. And it’s a testament to what the community can do when it works together.”

Bergman was thrilled to see so many alumni, students, parents, donors, and partners of the University taking campus tours during the event.

“We ran tours all day and had a lot of positive feedback,” she says. “As the owner we had a lot of say in the design of the buildings, so when we took people on tours we could speak to why they were designed in a certain way and how they supported our mission. We opened a lot of square footage on September 1st. And of course there were challenges — not being able to park on campus for two years, for example — but they were relatively minimal.”

Bergman says that new smart classrooms, interactive labs, and renovated learning spaces are already helping transform the student experience by encouraging and supporting intellectual discovery — all while providing the nurturing, inclusive environment that is the hallmark of the University’s Catholic identity.

“We’ve got the ability to grow those programs now and do a lot more outreach because we’ve got the space to do it to,” Bergman says. “The fact that there’s plenty of space means we can be realistic in our discussions about new possibilities. And now that people are free to dream, our job will be to manage the dreams and expectations.”

“When we pull together as a team, we can punch way above our weight. It’s about people. It’s about community. And it’s a testament to what the community can do when it works together.”

— Dr. Katherine Bergman,
President and Vice Chancellor





MEET THIS YEAR'S SWEENEY AWARD WINNER

St. Jerome's University has awarded Dr. Jack Sehl, beloved local physician, with this year's Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Catholic Leadership.

Sehl was a natural choice for the award given his multiple humanitarian and philanthropic endeavors and strong Catholic leadership.

With a community presence that embodies the vision of the late John Sweeney, Sehl mirrors the University's efforts to steward the unique talents of our students as they journey through the Catholic education system — nurturing their ability to think critically and inspiring them to become life-long learners who seek knowledge and truth, act with compassion, and advocate for human dignity for all.



STUDENTS AT CENTRE OF ACADEMIC PLANNING

“We’re looking to revitalize our current programming while also exploring the possibility of a number of new programs. And one of the key declarations in the plan is that our students come first.”

— Dr. Scott Kline, Vice President Academic and Dean



The intentionally student-centred Academic Plan 2015-2020 represents a real turning point in the history of the University, according to Vice President Academic and Dean, Dr. Scott Kline.

“For the first time in our university’s history, the academic community came together to draft a comprehensive academic plan that builds on a vision of St. Jerome’s University as a vibrant, Catholic liberal arts university,” Kline says.

“We’re looking to revitalize our current programming while also exploring the possibility of a number of new programs. And one of the key declarations in the plan is that our students come first. This means that we must always consider what our current and future students desire in a university education. Knowing this will help us develop new academic programming, work to enhance the student experience, facilitate transformational research, and engage partners to help us animate our social justice programming.”

“The Academic Plan allows us to ensure any changes we make are rooted in our mission and values. It allows us to establish a vision in ways we haven’t been able to do.”

Kline describes academic planning as “a vision exercise” that looks at what the University already has, where it can go, and how revitalized academic programming can take it further.

“Because we are federated with the University of Waterloo, our academic planning looks for ways to complement Waterloo’s many strengths, all while differentiating ourselves as a unique university in the Catholic intellectual tradition,” he explains.

“For us, by leveraging our service learning, social justice, and strong liberal arts tradition, it’s a real opportunity to make a significant difference on the broader University of Waterloo campus.” He adds, “and because St. Jerome’s University recruits and co-registers students, we are uniquely positioned to attract students seeking a more traditional cohort university experience to the University of Waterloo.”

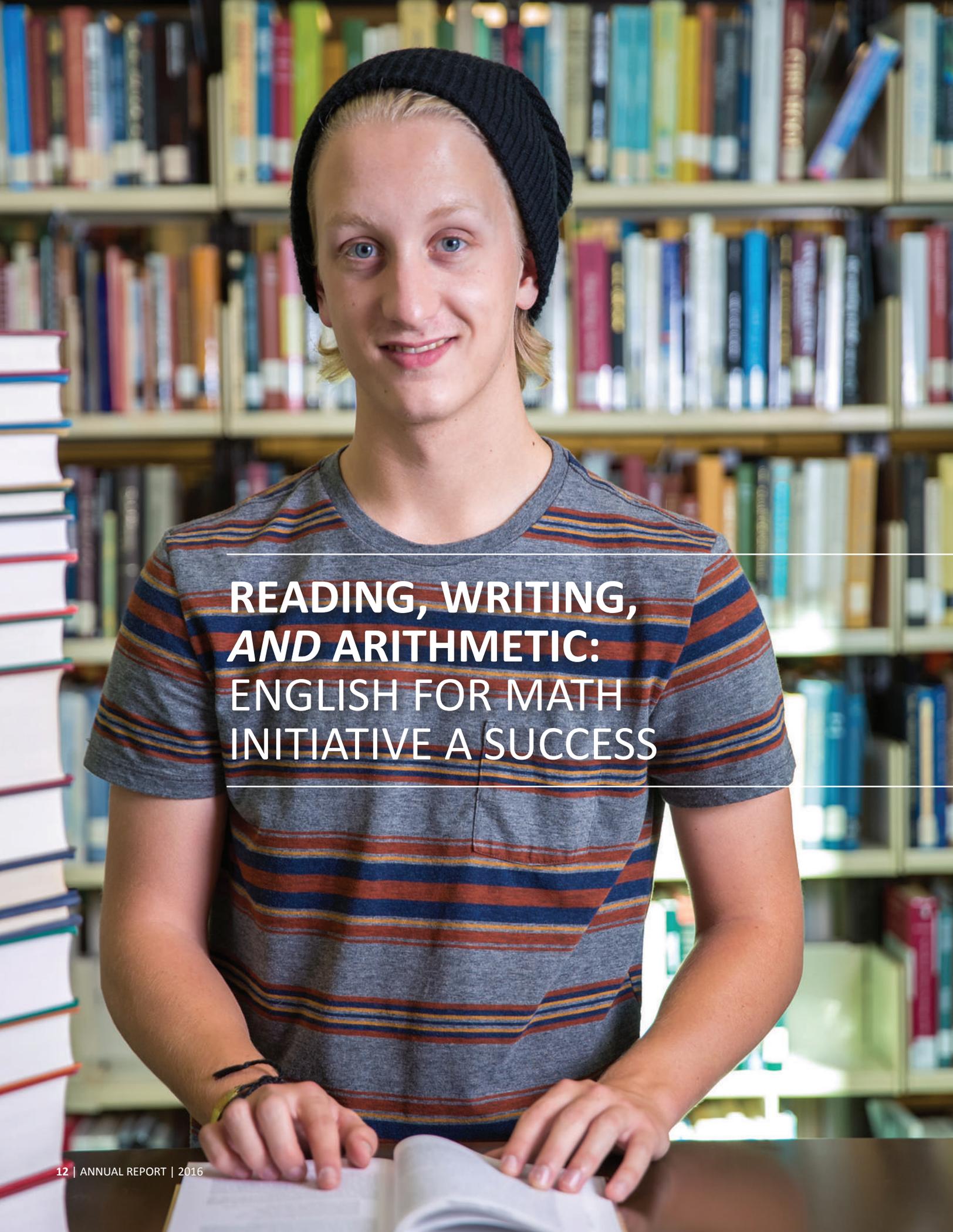
Kline says the plan is based on the premise that St. Jerome’s University faculty are scholars who take their research directly into the classroom. And because of that, students have access to high-quality research published by our own faculty, while also being able to engage those same faculty in ongoing discussions.



OUR ACADEMIC PRIORITIES

The Academic Plan 2015-2020 seeks to distinguish St. Jerome’s University in several ways:

- To distinguish St. Jerome’s University as a leading liberal arts university that promotes critical thinking, fosters social engagement, and inspires reflection and action in the pursuit of a more just and peaceable world
- To distinguish St. Jerome’s University as a “go-to” place on the University of Waterloo campus for students seeking a vibrant academic community, highly personalized academic support services, and formative co-curricular opportunities
- To distinguish St. Jerome’s University as an academic community engaged in transformational research and creative activity
- To strengthen and establish mutually beneficial relationships with local, national, and international partners
- To ensure that academic governance at St. Jerome’s University is collegial and sustainable



**READING, WRITING,
AND ARITHMETIC:
ENGLISH FOR MATH
INITIATIVE A SUCCESS**

What does today's math graduate need to launch a career? Surely an analytical mind helps.

But recently, mathematicians seem to require something else to sweeten the pot for employers: the ability to communicate well.

To help them, St. Jerome's University is entering the fourth year of its five-year English For Math Initiative with the University of Waterloo and Renison University College that gives math students the reading, writing, and presentation skills they need to impress potential employers someday. Students must now take two communications courses ranging from Public Speaking to Communications in Mathematics and Computer Science.

Although the initiative was originally launched to give math students an edge when competing for co-op jobs, Dr. Scott Kline, Vice President Academic and Dean of St. Jerome's University, says it addresses the larger needs of the modern working environment. With North American businesses continuing to build open workspaces and encouraging teamwork, people with science, math, and engineering backgrounds often find themselves working on projects with marketing, design, and communication colleagues.

"They're discovering that they have to work in collaboration with non-specialists in their fields and that a large part of their success will depend on their ability to communicate with diverse groups of people," he explains.

Dr. Tristanne Connolly, English Chair at St. Jerome's University, says that the English for Math Initiative also reflects the mission of any liberal arts college: to develop well-rounded human beings, something that many consider the most valuable gift of a university education.

"In this age of specialization and direction towards qualification, we lose sight of that," she says. "But that's something that I think is very close to our hearts and to our purpose at St. Jerome's."

Connolly says she was happily surprised by how smoothly the initiative's creation and maintenance have gone over the years. The G4 – the group of four units

that include UWaterloo's and St. Jerome's University's English departments, the Speech Communication program, and Renison's English for Multilingual Speakers courses – share information and work together.

"The initiative was pulled together amazingly quickly and efficiently. That really testifies to the kind of genial collaboration that exists between institutions," says Connolly.

"To make an impact, it is essential that our students learn to articulate mathematical understanding in a way that can inform and shape decision making in both corporate and civic life. This engagement in discourse for the greater good has long been understood in the humanities and Catholic tradition, and we are hugely appreciative of the collegial efforts of our partners in the Faculty of Arts to support the communication courses taken by our students."

— Steven Furino, Associate Dean – Undergraduate Studies; Faculty of Mathematics, University of Waterloo

The students are on board too. Although Kline admits he was initially worried there would be student resistance, it never happened.

"Three-plus years into the project and we're getting no pushback at all," he says. "University of Waterloo mathematics students want communication. They want to learn how to write and how to speak better. In some cases, students even seek out a third communication course because they see the value."

And now they'll have access to smart rooms at St. Jerome's University, which will make collaboration and presenting even easier. As part of the University's ongoing renovations, one smart room has currently been built, equipped with built-in screens for each table that connect wirelessly to laptops, a main class screen for teaching to the whole group, and enhanced video and speaker capacity."

"When you walk in the room, there's this feeling," says Kline. "The classrooms are extremely dynamic. They're loud and they're student-centered."

The perfect algorithm for cultivating creativity.



NURTURING THE WHOLE PERSON

New Food Services Provider Aligns with University's Vision

The University's commitment to nurturing the whole person doesn't stop at a modern classroom or a better experience in residence.

As students become more savvy about what they're putting in their bodies and where their food comes from, they're seeing that local, fresh food not only has health benefits, it's also great for the environment and the economy.

With an aligned vision of excellence – from teaching to food, learning to the dinner plate - when the time came to revitalize food services as part of the University's campus renewal project, Dana Hospitality was the selected partner.

“There was so much alignment between Dana’s vision and our own,” says Glen Lombard, Director, Office of Student Experience. “We see the world in many similar ways. Their focus on sustainable practices, supporting local supply chains, and building partnerships is akin to the work we’re doing with our local and international partners.

“Instead of seeing food service as simply three square meals a day, Dana sees nutrition and the dining experience as part of educating the whole student. We’re starting to use food as a vehicle for learning — and as our student life staff evolve a comprehensive strategy for wellness programs, food services is now part of the conversation.”

Dana’s philosophy is all about fresh, local and made from scratch, and having built relationships with local farmers and suppliers, the majority of the food they prepare comes from nearby. So if cucumbers from Grimsby or tomatoes grown in Leamington are being served, that’ll be written right on the glass on the stations and salad bar.

“They can tell the story of where the products came from, which is an important narrative for our students to connect with,” Lombard says. “The results are clear: students are telling us that the food is amazing and tastes ‘real.’ ”

Fresh and local goes beyond distance or proximity; it’s really about high quality service. Partners are chosen for a reason: local Canadian producers, greenhouse growers, and dedicated farmers must meet the high standards both the University and Dana set. Furthermore, it’s about supporting the community — supporting local economies and local agriculture — for their quality ingredients and fair and just practices. This, combined with menus customized daily based on the needs of students, ensures not just the best possible taste experience, but a true soul experience as well; one that is based on equality, sustainability, and values.

“Our philosophy of service is different, adds Dana Hospitality Food Service Director Kevin McKay. “We focus on made from scratch. Our commitment is to deliver fresh baked goods, homemade dressings, homemade soups, meats that are cooked and sliced in-house, and we’re making all of our own jams, preserves, and pickled items.”

“I find it very exciting to be able to feed students this way. There are so many more students who are aware of their allergies to certain foods - dairy, gluten, lactose - I think when you focus on providing all fresh food; it eliminates the preservatives that cause many of those reactions. This helps us to provide more options to a wider variety of students and to be able to trust what we serve.”

Take Grain Harvest Bakery, located right in the heart of Waterloo. Not only do they provide wheat free, gluten free, sugar free, and dairy free products – all prepared in a separate facility where no cross-contamination can occur - but the minimal travel time between the supplier and the kitchen ensures there is no freshness lost.

Or Hayter’s Farm, who provides turkey to the chefs. For Hayter’s the treatment of their animals is paramount, so much so that they check in on the birds every few hours, giving them extra pampering, and consistent fresh bedding and water, providing a superior product for Dana to work with. Pixtar Chicken is much the same, and is gluten and nitrate free as well as Halal certified. Both are within an hour and a half of campus.

The commitments these suppliers make to Dana trickle down to St. Jerome’s University students, many of whom have made similar commitments in their own lives, and are heavily involved in social justice initiatives at the University.

“They love the food. It’s fantastic — that’s the word. And, the University has been so supportive so it’s made the transition that much easier,” McKay adds.

“It is wonderful to have a food service provider that understands our mission, aligns with our vision and is able to appreciate that food is more than just nourishment,” says Vice President Administration Darren Becks, who was instrumental in bringing Dana to campus. “We speak the same language and it’s one of community and connection.”

Dana doesn’t just create delicious and nutritious food, but moments. They create a better culinary world.

Dr. Jane Nicholas, a professor in the Department of Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies and the Department of History, is the first to admit she has gotten some flack for her research over the years.

Take her work delving into the world of the modern girl in the 1920s – also known as a “flapper”. When Nicholas set out to write about the flapper’s body type ideal – thin and elongated – some questioned her choice and called it frivolous. But Nicholas didn’t think so. On the contrary.

Nicholas has been a professor at the University for just over two years, coming back to the area where she’d completed her PhD degree at University of Waterloo. She says pursuing the values of truth and justice in her own research informs how she teaches the students who take her popular first-year Introduction to Relationships and Families class or her smaller seminars.

“Instead of getting students to think a particular way about a topic, your job is to pull it back and give them a broader, more critical lens to approach that topic,” she says. “These are job-ready skills, if you want to talk about it that way, but they’re also life skills.”

HOW FLAPPERS AND FREAK SHOWS REVEAL HOW WE FEEL ABOUT THE HUMAN FORM

“No, this gets to the root of so many questions we have today around consumerism, women’s bodies, and our values as a society,” she says now.

Nicholas’s research into the history of the human body – and any political ramifications – is far reaching. For instance, most recently she has been working on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funded book about freak shows in 20th Century Canada and beyond. She has been visiting cities across North America to unearth old stories about the visiting shows. So far, every city has a story.

“The freak show really tells us a lot about the place of disability, race, gender and what it means to have a so-called “normal” body. By travelling to all these different cities, the freak show was spreading important messages about what it means to have a body that is perfect or desirable,” she explains.

If 2016, rife with fake news and high emotion, has taught her anything, it’s that those critical thinking skills are more important than ever. Nicholas calls her classes a safe space where students can step away from online bullying when people disagree. Instead, they’re given tools to evaluate evidence together in the same room where they can see each other and engage in meaningful conversation.

It’s that merging of human contact and challenging ideas that appeals to Nicholas, particularly at St. Jerome’s University, which she considers a perfect backdrop for that type of learning.

“I love that we are in this big institution, but have this small, tight-knit community at St. Jerome’s University. I love that I know my students’ names,” she says.



ANNUAL MASS TAKES ON SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

St. Jerome's University Prepares for "A Year with the Saint John's Bible"



*"For if, as Paul says, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and if the [one] who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."*¹

— St. Jerome, the patron saint of Bible scholars

Given that the patron saint of the University was a biblical scholar who translated the bible into Latin, the theme of this year's annual Catholic mass — *To the Ends of the Earth* — is a fitting reminder that the Word of God is a gift for the world.

For the first time ever, the Annual Diocesan Celebration of Catholic Education was held at St. Jerome's University, with more than 250 guests including representatives from all seven Catholic school boards in the Diocese of Hamilton, as well as His Excellency Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, D.D., and Most Reverend Auxiliary Bishop Daniel Miehm, D.D.

The September 22 celebration was one of the major on-campus events at the start of the new academic year.

At the heart of the mass and informal reception, held each year in partnership with every Catholic school board in the diocese, is a desire to celebrate Catholic education.

"It was a beautiful event and a wonderful opportunity to showcase the University and in particular our new spaces to our partners in Catholic education," Associate Dean and Professor of Religious Studies Dr. Cristina Vanin says. "People were very positive."

"The mass is an important event for the University as a whole — for

staff, faculty and students — because it's an opportunity to bring us all together to celebrate with our Catholic education partners. Even though we're at the post-secondary level, we really think of Catholic education from the minute you're born through all of life.

The September mass was particularly poignant because St. Jerome's University is preparing to host a special new program known as *A Year with the Saint John's Bible*.

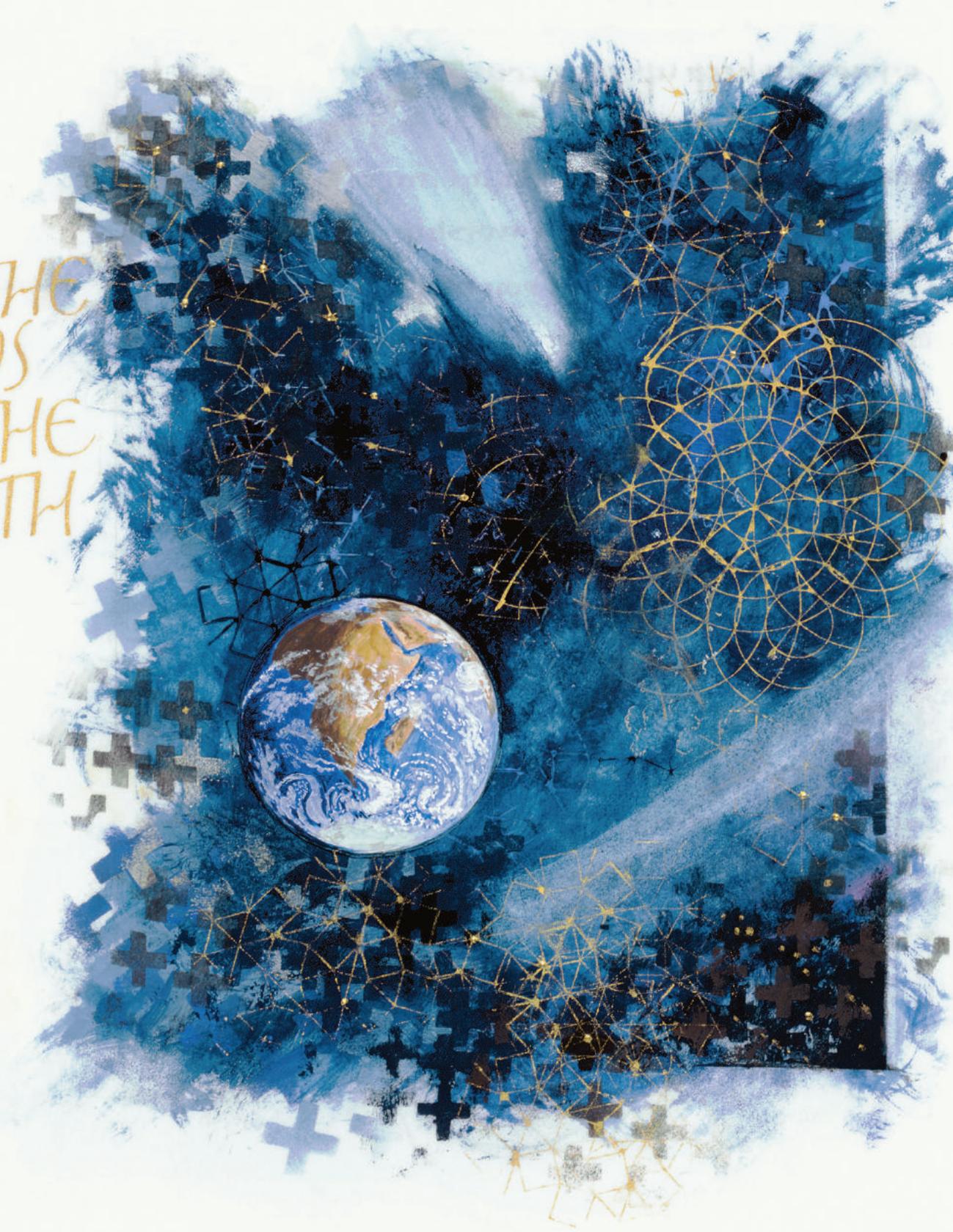
In 1998, Saint John's Abbey and University in Minnesota commissioned a completely hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible — the first since the invention of the printing press 500 years ago — as a way to illuminate the Word of God for a new millennium.

It was created by Donald Jackson, Senior Scribe to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Crown Office, along with an international team of calligraphers and artists. With its 160 major illuminations, the *Saint John's Bible* reflects three particular Benedictine values: hospitality, conversion to life, and justice for God's people.

(image, right) To the Ends of the Earth, Donald Jackson with contributions from Andrew Jamieson and Sally Mae Joseph, Copyright 2002, The Saint John's Bible, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

This illumination, used to promote the 9th Annual Diocesan Celebration of Catholic Education hosted this year by St. Jerome's University, depicts the first vision of earth as seen from space.

TO THE
ENDS
OF THE
EARTH



“If you have a Heritage Bible, you have an original piece of art. It’s about beauty, it’s about awakening the imagination, it’s about creativity. It’s making the Bible alive in the 21st century because all the illuminations reflect the world we know. It’s really a Bible of our time ...”

— Dr. Cristina Vanin, St. Jerome’s University Associate Dean and Professor of Religious Studies

To give more people access to the artistic and spiritual beauty of the *Saint John’s Bible*, 299 Heritage Editions were created, one of which has been purchased by the Diocese of Hamilton. These are true to the scale, beauty, and artistic intent of the original manuscript.

St. Jerome’s University will have two Heritage volumes — *Pentateuch* and *Gospels and Acts* — and 10 framed illuminations holding pride of place for 2017. Other events will be taking place throughout the year.

According to Vanin, who is also the Director of the Master of Catholic Thought program, the program is a significant opportunity both for the University community and other local organizations.

“For us as a Catholic university and one named after St. Jerome — a biblical scholar who was important in the history of Christianity — it’s wonderful,” Vanin says. “If you have a Heritage Edition, you have an original piece of art. It’s about beauty, it’s

about awakening the imagination, it’s about creativity. It’s making the Bible alive in the 21st century because all the illuminations reflect the world we know. You will see images from the Hubble telescope, strands of DNA, mandalas, patterns from Middle Eastern and South Asian textiles, images from aboriginal rock paintings, butterflies, dragonflies, bees, and much more. It’s really a bible of our time and reflective of many of the world’s religious and spiritual traditions.”

“We want to share it as widely as we can not only in our local community but across the diocese to really awaken people’s imagination to the bible that still has meaning in our own time.”

“This is a work of art, a great work of art ... a work for eternity.²”

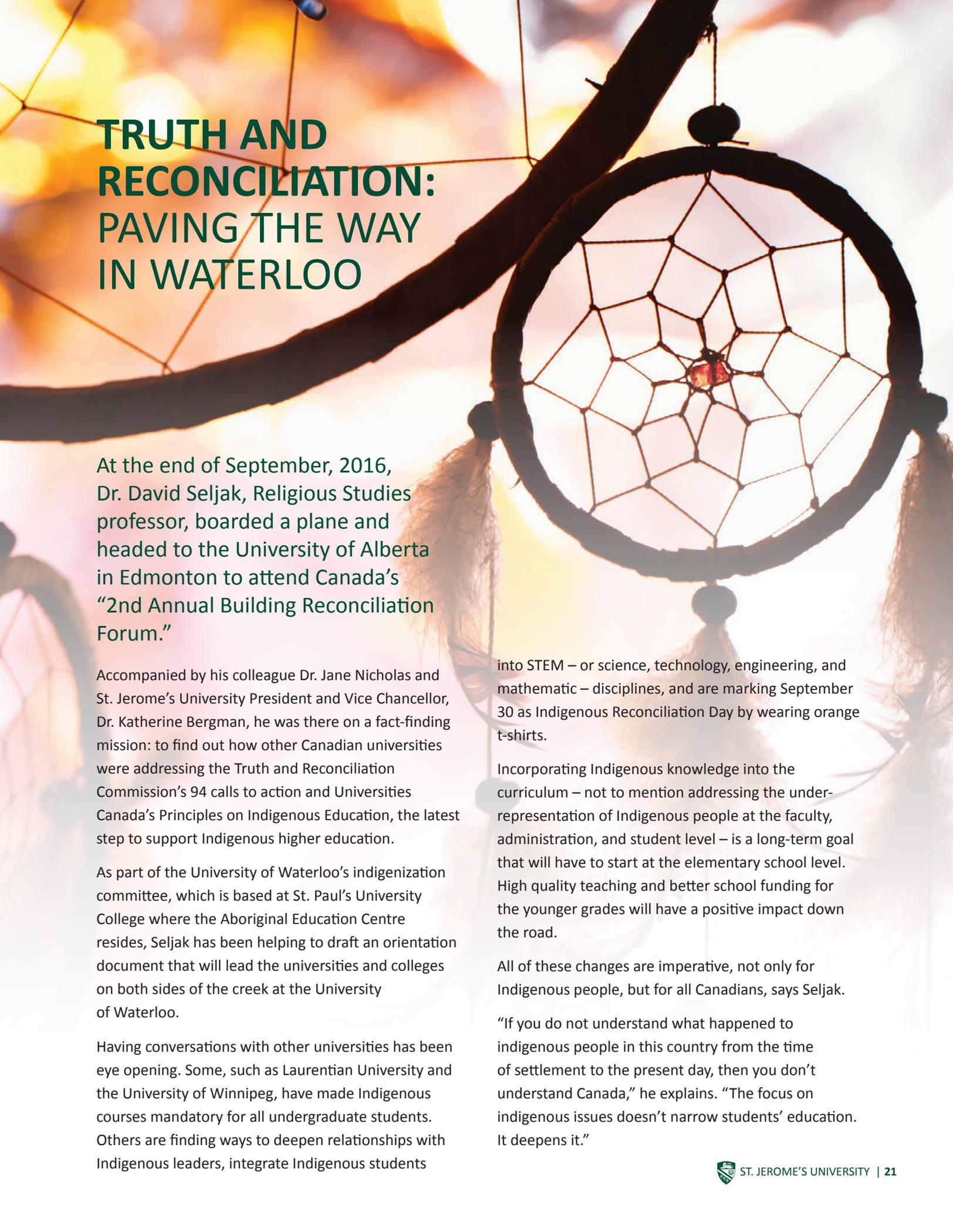
— His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, on the heritage edition of the *Saint John’s Bible*



(image) Creation, Donald Jackson, Copyright 2003, The Saint John’s Bible, Saint John’s University, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

¹ <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/church-fathers/biographies-of-church-fathers/st-jerome/>

² <https://www.saintjohnsbible.org/promotions/heritage/>



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION: PAVING THE WAY IN WATERLOO

At the end of September, 2016, Dr. David Seljak, Religious Studies professor, boarded a plane and headed to the University of Alberta in Edmonton to attend Canada's "2nd Annual Building Reconciliation Forum."

Accompanied by his colleague Dr. Jane Nicholas and St. Jerome's University President and Vice Chancellor, Dr. Katherine Bergman, he was there on a fact-finding mission: to find out how other Canadian universities were addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action and Universities Canada's Principles on Indigenous Education, the latest step to support Indigenous higher education.

As part of the University of Waterloo's indigenization committee, which is based at St. Paul's University College where the Aboriginal Education Centre resides, Seljak has been helping to draft an orientation document that will lead the universities and colleges on both sides of the creek at the University of Waterloo.

Having conversations with other universities has been eye opening. Some, such as Laurentian University and the University of Winnipeg, have made Indigenous courses mandatory for all undergraduate students. Others are finding ways to deepen relationships with Indigenous leaders, integrate Indigenous students

into STEM – or science, technology, engineering, and mathematic – disciplines, and are marking September 30 as Indigenous Reconciliation Day by wearing orange t-shirts.

Incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum – not to mention addressing the under-representation of Indigenous people at the faculty, administration, and student level – is a long-term goal that will have to start at the elementary school level. High quality teaching and better school funding for the younger grades will have a positive impact down the road.

All of these changes are imperative, not only for Indigenous people, but for all Canadians, says Seljak.

"If you do not understand what happened to indigenous people in this country from the time of settlement to the present day, then you don't understand Canada," he explains. "The focus on indigenous issues doesn't narrow students' education. It deepens it."



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COME
TO CAMPUS FOR LECTURES,
TOURS... AND COOKIES

A couple of years ago, Jay Smith, Manager, Recruitment and Admissions, wandered down to the post office to drop off some offer packages. It was the Columbia Street location, just a few short blocks away from campus.

But while chatting with the postal employee behind the counter, she revealed something that shocked him: she had no idea where St. Jerome's University was.

"In my mind I'm thinking, OK, this is where we need to do better – our own backyard," says Smith now.

Today he's making good on that promise. Although his job is primarily about recruiting prospective St. Jerome's University students and working with new ones in their first year, more recently Smith has been at the forefront of a new strategy for the University that centres on outreach and building awareness within the community and local high school students in younger grades by building a stronger connection with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board.

The approach is gaining momentum. For example, back in the fall of 2016, three high school classes from Waterloo and Cambridge visited the campus in one week alone. Students toured the campus, attended a short, 30-minute mock lecture delivered by a St. Jerome's University professor, and yes, nibbled cookies and hot chocolate.

One of the lectures, delivered by Dr. Denise Whitehead, a professor in the Department of Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies, touched on co-habitation. Not only did it reflect what she teaches in her classes, but the material also connected with their curriculum. At the end of the class she delivered a short Q&A session meant to open students' eyes to what university life is really like.

Their biggest surprise? Professors don't take attendance.

"We want to get them feeling comfortable in a university setting," says Smith. "A lot of people think that university is harder and we always try and say, 'It's not necessarily harder, it's just different than high school.'"

It's about learning growth, not comparison; the experiences are different, and we find ways to guide our students through that change.

To give prospective students a realistic sense of what to expect in any university, he also takes data from a survey that asks first-year students to describe their biggest challenges. He then reveals the results with the visiting high school students. If they eventually come to university and feel stressed over the amount of schoolwork, he wants them to remember that "time management" was number one on the list.

"We want to set expectations and make them comfortable, but we also want them to know what we can do to help them out," he says.

Inviting classes to the campus makes sense. Smith has found over the past few years that the best predictor of whether or not students choose the University is if they've actually walked the halls, climbed the steps, or sat in the courtyard outside. That is, after all, how he himself decided on St. Jerome's as an undergrad student once he'd visited other universities. Merely thumbing through a brochure or attending a presentation doesn't do the school justice.

"St. Jerome's is more of a feeling," says Smith. "When we get students here, we take them on a tour and you can just see it in some of their faces. They've found where they want to be."



Back in 2014, St. Jerome's University received a substantial monetary gift out of the blue.

The donor, Shannon Harrigan, had recently stumbled across information online about the University's Suzanne Forth Entrance Bursary, awarded each year to graduates of Catholic secondary schools who demonstrate financial need. It continues to be made possible by donations from Forth's family and friends.

Forth had been Harrigan's swim teacher back in high school, and Harrigan often thought about her after Forth passed away in her mid-30s from Hodgkin's lymphoma over two decades ago.

"Mrs. Suzanne Forth impacted me and the way I live my life more than any other person outside of my family," Harrigan wrote later. "She showed me, and so many other young people, what it means to live a life filled with strength, integrity and kindness. Mrs. Forth was a bright light in the world."

Viola Poletes Montgomery, Director of Advancement, contacted Mary Kuntz, Forth's mother and creator of the award. Kuntz, a St. Jerome's University supporter, donor, and friend, immediately asked if she could thank Harrigan. The women eventually spoke on the phone.

"It's those little things that make you realize how important this award is to Mary," says Poletes Montgomery. "Suzanne touched so many people and when they come forward, it really makes Mary feel she has done the right thing in honouring her."

Sandy Beingessner, Kuntz's sister-in-law, explains that the bursary is a natural fit for the family, which believes strongly in pursuing a post-secondary education. Nearly all of the two women's combined 11 children have undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, have gone to law school or hold MBAs. Beingessner's husband, Jim Beingessner, is the Chancellor of St. Jerome's University.

Meanwhile, the family's business, Kuntz Electroplating, is one of the largest and most advanced metal finishing manufacturers in North America.

"The scholarship comes naturally. It was payback for the good fortune and being successful," Beingessner says. "Mary wanted to pass on the opportunity for an education to others."

Although the Kuntz family is known for its philanthropy, Poletes Montgomery understands why they typically remain quiet about giving to others: it's important to focus on what truly matters.

"Mary knows how expensive universities are and wants to help," she says, "and at the same time, she's keeping the spirit of Suzanne alive."



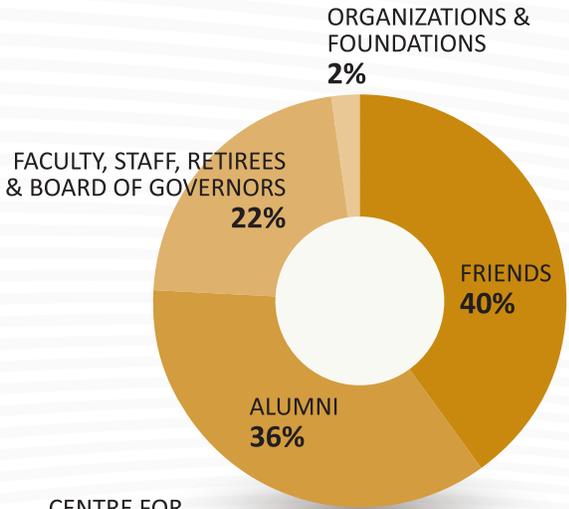
REMEMBERING A DAUGHTER GIVES STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN



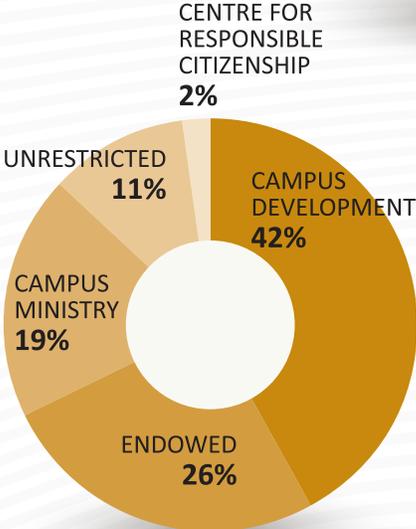
*Mary Kuntz, mother of Suzanne Forth,
and creator of the Forth Entrance Bursary*



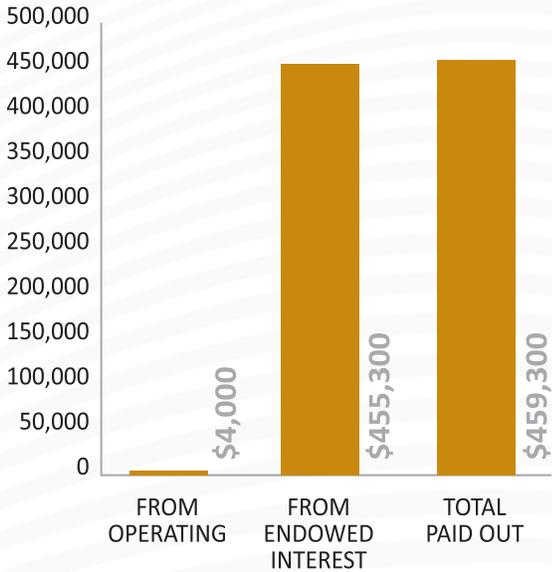
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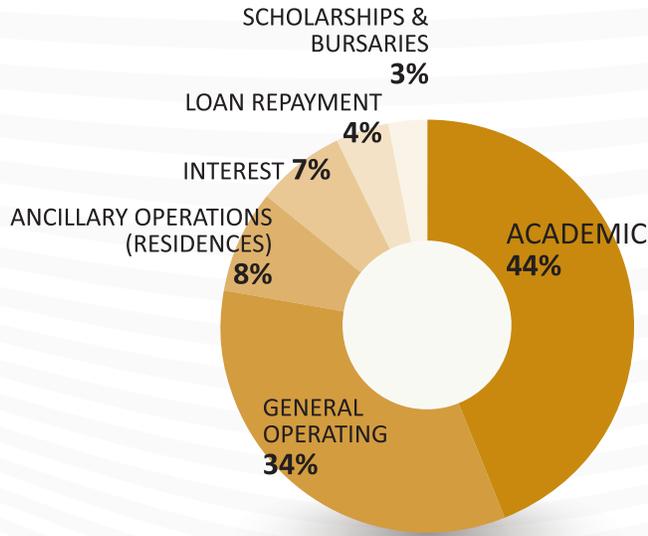


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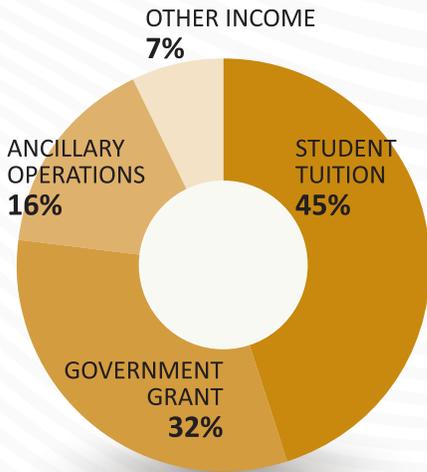


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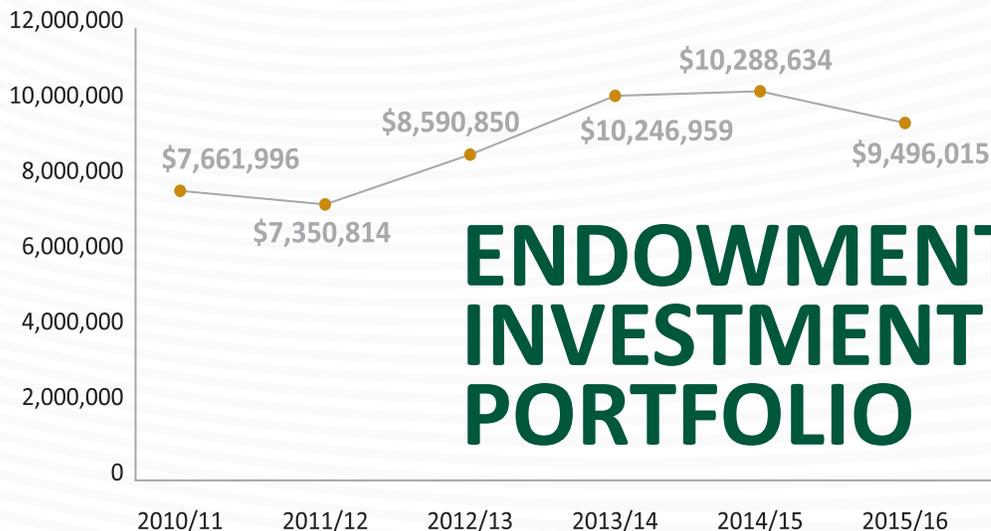




TOTAL EXPENSES
\$16,522,865



TOTAL REVENUE
\$16,652,664



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