



**DECEMBER 2022**



Not only do STMC Knights partake in Christmas Music Knight, but also elementary students from Our Lady of Mercy!

### Mark Your Calendar

**January**  
 3: School Reopens  
 10: Open House  
 13: Red Day  
 20: Jeans Day  
 26-28: Alumni Basketball Tournament  
 28: Grad Pub Night

## Message from the President



My final message for 2022 is one of complete gratitude. Gratitude for the love of my family, my close friends, and for countless blessings in my life. Undoubtedly, as is the case with many of you, I freely acknowledge that I am a blessed man, living a blessed life. In many ways, I am living the life that Blessed Edmund Rice had hoped for the descendants of the youth of Waterford, Ireland in 1804 would one day live. Indeed, **most** of us in the STMC community are the products of similar foundations and teachings laid down by our school's founder and other congregations or groups like the Christian Brothers, centuries ago. I often catch myself saying "I am living the dream". However, in reality, we are all living Blessed Edmund's "dream" – a dream that has gone from vision to reality (*ex visu ad verum*) for so many of us, our own families, and for many others around the world.

This gratitude and appreciation is extended to those I encounter – at almost every turn – both inside the doors of STMC, and outside. Our staff, students and families, growing alumni base, and community partners are a constant source of inspiration. Their generosity of time, talents, and treasures ARE the reason that the Charism of Blessed Edmund and the message of the Core Gospel Values lives on in all that we do.

Equally important are the *seemingly* random acts of kindness and generosity of complete strangers – those who have little or no previous connection to our school. Chiefly among these "strangers" are those you may have encountered or whom may know something about. The next time you drive into our main parking lot, look up. You will see their names displayed high up in big letters on the west wall of the building!

The stories of our school's biggest donors – Stan & Jeanette Hrescak and Nancy Yeadon – are the stuff of legend. These seven-figure major donors encountered our school and were so moved by our mission, vision, and values that they made **multiple** transformational gifts that literally changed the trajectory of our school's history. Moreover, their generosity **continues** to shape the teaching and educational experience of every single student and staff member currently in our school.

Our current Knights Annual Fund Campaign, launched in November, is full of phenomenal stories of kindness and generosity. On behalf of our entire school community, I want to extend my personal gratitude and appreciation to every single individual who has made a gift to help us in our mission. Your gifts will support many students on their education journeys and will help to transform our STMC community for the better. Our students believe in giving back to the community and many of them are only able to undertake this life changing work because of supporters like you.

All but one of the 60+ gifts that has been received to date has come from a current student, a staff member, a family, or an alumnus. It is the story of the "exception" that I would like to share with you - a gift that was made to our Financial Assistance Program at the start of the campaign. Brent Christensen, our Director of Development & Community Relations reached out to the donor to thank them for their generous gift and we discovered that it was from someone residing in Ontario. This person seemingly has no previous connection to our school. We may never know what or if there was indeed a connection, but it is highly possible that he may have been the recipient of one of our many outreach and servant leadership initiatives our students undertake week-in and week-out.

Here is an excerpt from their email response to Brent' inquiry:

*I lived in Burnaby few years back and I do random donations to organizations where I lived in when I was new immigrant. I currently live in Ontario. Many students need help and I do see that we can support every unfortunate teenager or student in Canada as we have more than what we need. I am also of Muslim faith and believe that I must help anyone regardless of their personal beliefs. I am proud Canadian and have been helped by people from different faiths, colours and backgrounds since I moved to Canada 15 years ago.*

*All the best in your work.*

*God bless  
Rami*

The story behind this individual's gift to our school and to the education of our students at STMC is truly awe-inspiring. Wherever it is that you feel you have been called to share your gifts of time, talents, and treasures this Advent season, we only ask that you continue to generously do so as you are able. Sadly, there is no shortage of need. But, as Rami's story clearly shows, while we might never know the extent to which our giving provides others, an attitude of gratitude is infectious and continues to ripple out well beyond any single act of kindness.

Wishing all of you a joy-filled and blessed Christmas.

May the Peace of God be with you this Christmas.  
 May the Love of God surround you and all you love this Christmas.  
 And, may we live the Joy of the Christ Child in our hearts... FOREVER!

Stephen J. Garland  
 President, STMC

## Message from the Admin Team

The season of Advent is a sacred time, and the Advent candles are reminders for the Catholic Faithful. The **purple** "Prophecy candle" reminds us that Advent is a time to be grateful for the arrival of the Messiah, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. The **white** "Christ candle" reminds us that this is time to celebrate the purifying "new life" that we receive when we accept Jesus Christ as our saviour. The **pink** "Shepherd's candle" reminds us of the joy of the faithful, the celebration of Jesus' anticipated return to us one day. Advent is a time of **Gratitude**, a time of **Renewal**, and a time of **Hope**.

**Gratitude.** On behalf of the Admin Team, we wish to express the deep sense of gratitude that we feel. Our students, our parents, and our Faculty and Staff worked together and have persevered through the challenges presented by COVID-19 in 2021-2022. The entire STMC family demonstrated the sense of community that defines us. The members of the STMC family truly lived out Servant-Leadership by putting the needs of others first, by helping others grow, by inspiring others to lead, and by helping the materially poor and the marginalized. We are grateful to have the privilege to lead this community.

**Renewal.** The new year provides us with an sense of renewal; a new year means new learning and new opportunities. The new year provides us with opportunities to blaze trails, opportunities to achieve the way for our Knights families. For some members of our community, we need to be a light in the darkness, for some members of our community, we hope to be the light of discovery and ingenuity, and for other members of our community, we will be the light that illuminates accomplishments and achievements.

**Hope.** A new year also brings hope. We are hopeful that we can embrace the true spirit of Truth & Reconciliation in the new year. We are hopeful that we can be committed to environmental sustainability and stewardship. We are hopeful that we will care for each other's physical and mental health. We are hopeful that we can realize the STMC vision, "For every Knight to optimize their potential, to serve others, and to create a just and caring world."

As we put the year 2022 behind us, we feel a deep sense of gratitude, an energizing sense of renewal, and an inspiring sense of hope. Like the candles of the Advent wreath, we endeavor to light the way for our Knights families. For some members of our community, we need to be a light in the darkness, for some members of our community, we hope to be the light of discovery and ingenuity, and for other members of our community, we will be the light that illuminates accomplishments and achievements.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Live Jesus in our Hearts, Forever!

Take care, be well, stay safe, and God bless you all.

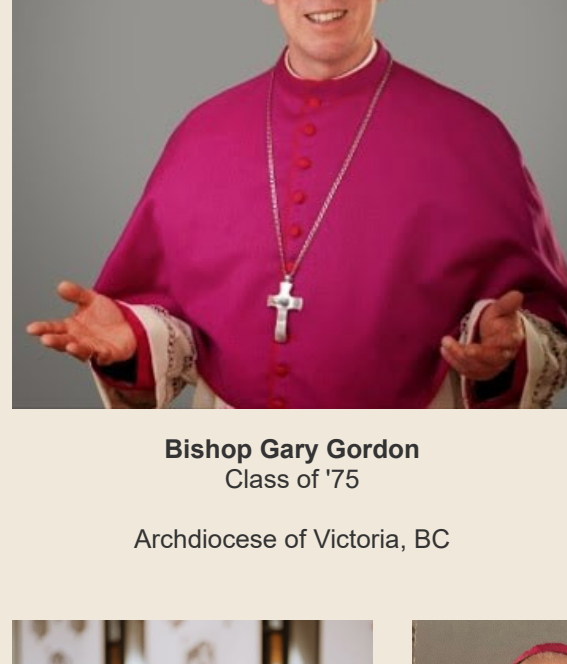
The Admin Team,  
 Joe Adams, Principal | Cassie Lauang, Vice-Principal | Ethan Shoemaker, Vice-Principal

# FAITH

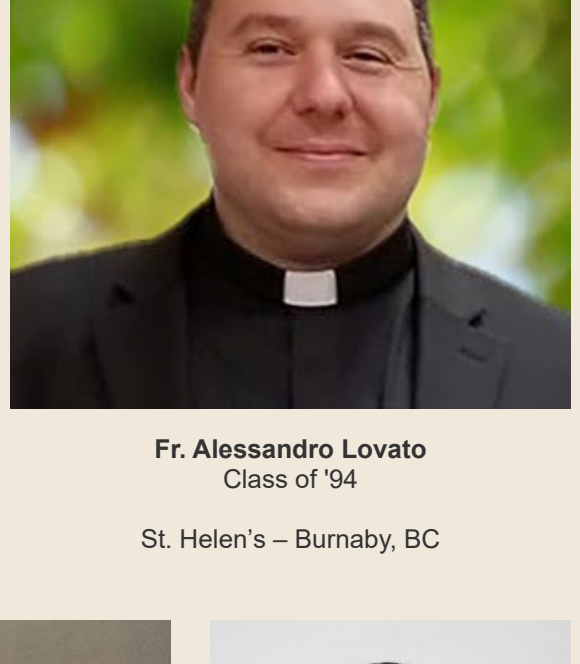
STMC has a rich and storied history of over 60 years, which means that many, many of the students who walked through the doors of St. Thomas More Collegiate, while the look and feel of the school has evolved over the years, one thing that has remained consistent is it's Catholic foundation and identity.

The school has always nurtured the spiritual growth of its Knights. In doing so, there were some students who heard God's call into priesthood. Such a vocation is by no means a small decision, it is a lifelong mission to spread the Word of God.

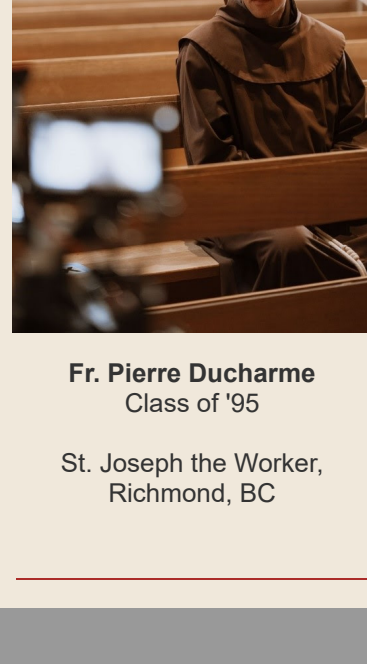
Below are 5 alumni of STMC who are currently performing their faithful duties in the clergy.



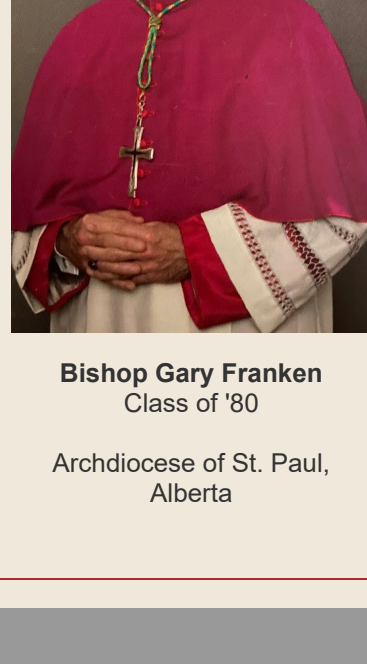
**Bishop Gary Gordon**  
 Class of '75  
 Archdiocese of Victoria, BC



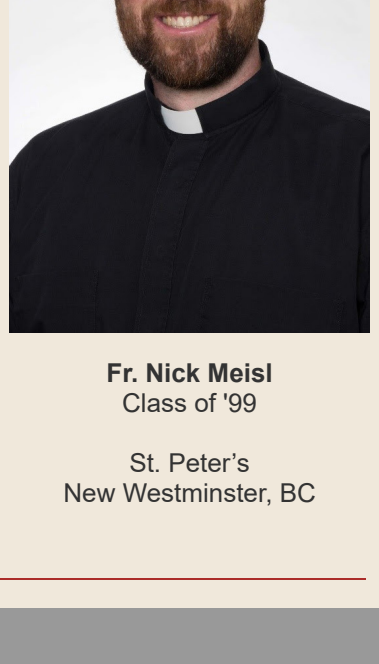
**Fr. Alessandro Lovato**  
 Class of '94  
 St. Helen's – Burnaby, BC



**Fr. Pierre Ducharme**  
 Class of '95  
 St. Joseph the Worker,  
 Richmond, BC



**Bishop Gary Franken**  
 Class of '80  
 Archdiocese of St. Paul,  
 Alberta



**Fr. Nick Meisl**  
 Class of '99  
 St. Peter's  
 New Westminster, BC

# ACADEMICS

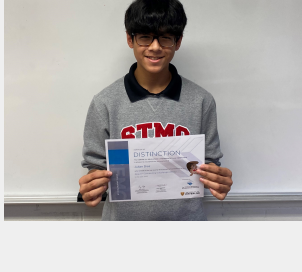
## MATERIALS ENGINEERING

This work is done by Grade 9 student Charyz Acosta. She has followed the design process in designing and developing a bluetooth speaker based on the design movement Art Nouveau. Charyz found a user, analyzed a user environment, and researched different types of design movements and their impact on the world at that time.



## MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics department congratulates the 147 students who participated in this year's Beaver Computing Challenge (BCC) in mid-November. All grade 8 students participated, as did the Math 9 Enriched class. The BCC introduces computer science to students; it is designed to get students with little or no previous experience excited about computing. Twenty-three students received certificates of distinction for earning scores over 86%. We would especially like to congratulate Grade 8 student Julian Diaz who earned a perfect score in the contest.



## TECHNOLOGY EXPLORATIONS

### To GPT, or not to GPT, that is the question...

Even if you aren't on the cutting edge of AI technology, there is a good chance that you may have heard of OpenAI's incredibly powerful new tool known as ChatGPT - one of the most accessible and comprehensive text-generating AI tools that has ever been [pre]released to the general public.

Are you feeling stuck trying to craft the perfect email response to a client? Ask ChatGPT for some inspiration! Need some help with writing your next Valentine's love letter? ChatGPT to the rescue!

Can it write your next 500-word research paper in the voice of a Grade 10 student? Well, yes...

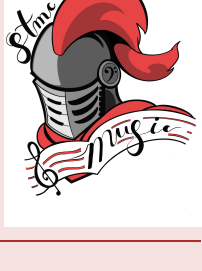
The Grade 9 IT class has already begun tackling some of the vast ethical questions that accompany this advancement while exploring opportunities that take advantage of its inherent convenience. Tools based on generative AI will undoubtedly become growing factors in education and industry over the next few years; students (and teachers) at STM are already busy preparing for this shift, guided by our core Catholic values and a dedication to building the next generation of principled leaders in society.

# FINE ARTS

## BAND & CHOIR

We celebrated a fantastic Christmas Music Knight on Dec. 2. Congratulations to our talented student musicians on a wonderful performance!

STMC Music has a new logo! Thanks to choir student Sophie Lee for the incredible design. Notice the lines of the staff incorporated behind the word "music," the piano keys on the knight's mask, and the bass clef on the ear.



## BAND

On Dec. 12, Jazz A headed out on a Christmas carolling tour around town. We visited Royal Columbian Hospital, 2 care homes (George Derby Centre, Royal Oak Manor), and St. Mary's Elementary.

We are looking ahead to the new year and beginning new repertoire for our spring concerts, festivals, and Disney trip.



## CHOIR

Chamber Choir concluded a busy performance month with a standing ovation performance at the Amabilis Concert on Saturday December 10th. Later on, Equinox and Chamber Choir had their respective Christmas parties to celebrate the season.

The concert choirs are now working on their talent show videos.



# ATHLETICS

## BASKETBALL

There are still some spots left in our STMC Holiday Basketball Camp. We are hosting a 2-day Basketball Camp designed to introduce players to the fundamentals of basketball in a fun atmosphere. It is open to boys and girls currently in grades 3-7. Dates are Friday, December 30th and Saturday, December 31st, 2022 from 9am until noon.

Contact [d.zimmermann@stmc.bc.ca](mailto:d.zimmermann@stmc.bc.ca) if you have any questions or would like to register.

Download: [Registration Form](#)



Our 24th Annual STMC Alumni Basketball Tournament is back. Come and have fun at this Alumni Association event. Register your team by contacting [d.zimmermann@stmc.bc.ca](mailto:d.zimmermann@stmc.bc.ca)

Deadline to register is January 16th.



# SPECIAL EVENTS

## SPRING BREAK 2024 - CROATIA, ITALY, & SLOVENIA

We are very excited to offer our students the opportunity to take part in a cultural experience in Croatia, Ljubljana and Venice, in March of 2024.

Beginning in Italy, we will explore the historic city of Venice, visiting St. Mark's Square, St. Mark's Basilica, the Doge's Palace, and more. From there we will head north, stopping to explore the city of Trieste and the Skojcan caves enroute to experiencing Ljubljana, the cultural centre and capital city of Slovenia.

We then head to Croatia, starting in the capital city of Zagreb. After seeing its Upper and Lower Towns, we head towards the coast, stopping along the way to see the lakes and waterfalls of Plitvice National Park, a place so incredible it was named a UNESCO World Heritage site.

We then travel south along the Dalmatian coastline seeing stunning examples of Roman, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque architecture. From the massive stone organ that's "played" by the lapping waves of the Adriatic Sea in Zadar, to Diocletian's Sparkling Split, to taking in the winding walls and picturesque vistas of terracotta roof tops and parking blue waters of the ancient city of Dubrovnik, we will get to see why this is one of the most beautiful places and coastlines in the world.

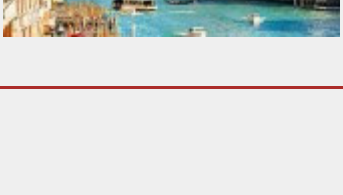
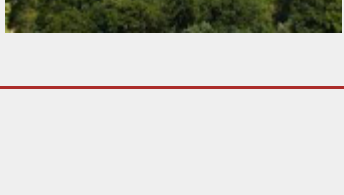
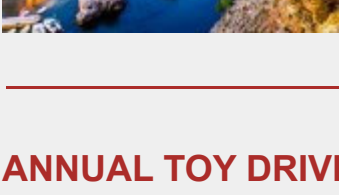
In addition, on the way from Split to Dubrovnik, we will detour into Bosnia to visit the Catholic pilgrimage site of Medugorje, and see the beautiful city of Mostar.

If your son or daughter is interested in attending this trip, and you would like some more information, please complete this form ([2024 Spring Break - Croatia, Ljubljana & Venice](#)). This tour is open for students in grades 9-12 and will be an incredible experience for any who are able to attend. If you have any questions, please email me at [james.borthistle@stmc.bc.ca](mailto:james.borthistle@stmc.bc.ca).

Sincerely,

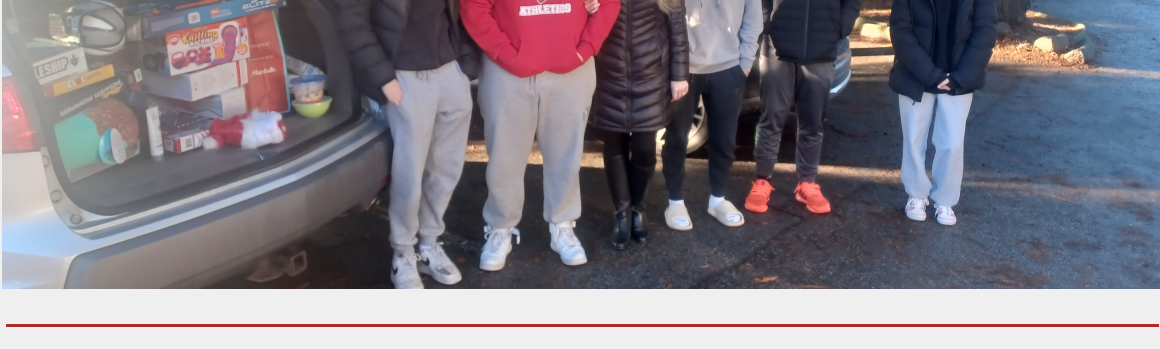
Mr. Borthistle

More info: [PAMPHLET - Croatia, Ljubljana, and Venice](#)



## ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

A special thank you to our STMC community for supporting our Annual Toy Drive. We had an enormous amount of toys donated that went to support children in need in our community which were a majority of new immigrant families. Also special thank you's to our STMC parents for preparing a delicious breakfast. Following the toy drive STMC students and parents dropped off toys to local families in need. Gift cards were also donated to the Centennial High School program that supports their students in need.



## ALPHA YOUTH

The Alpha Youth Series Refresh is designed to engage students in conversations about life, faith and Jesus. Discussion time is refreshed throughout the short talks to make it simpler for them to share their thoughts and questions.

The refresh includes Updated Couch Conversation breaks with Gen Z, Updated Student-Led Alpha Kit, New Promotional Resources to help promote Alpha, New Social Graphics and Videos, New Prayer Cards and Invitation Cards.

Who? Grades 10 to 12  
What's included? FAITH FELLOWSHIP FOOD  
Where? Holy Cross Parish - 1450 Delta Ave, Burnaby  
When? at 6:30pm from Jan 13 (Fri) to Mar 10 (Fri) – 9 Fridays

Your

questions

draw you

# CLOSER

to God

than answers

ever will

Explore the big questions of life at Alpha Youth.



SCAN ME

Register here!



## ONLINE PARENTING COURSE

Parenting - The Archdiocese of Vancouver is hosting a 10-week online parenting course, [Making Sense of Adolescence: A Video Course and Discussion](#). Please see the link for more information.

# EXTRACURRICULARS

## TEXTILES CLUB

The Textiles Club has been very busy this year! Students have been developing their skills in loom knitting and sewing. Our sewers have completed projects including tote bags, bookmarks, gift bags, as well as Christmas ornaments.

Our club students are very generous with their time, as often many of the projects they complete are donated to those in need. This Christmas, loom knitters are donating toques of various sizes to the Good Shepherd Ministry and neonatal units. We are so grateful for the collaborative effort made by all involved!

If you wish to assist in our efforts, we are always in need of donations including yarn, (gauges 4, 5, or 6), thread, fabric, and any other sewing notions. We thank you for any contributions and wish you a very Merry Christmas!



We'd love to hear about all the wonderful and exciting things in which our Knights are engaged! If you have something you would like to share on our social media feeds or in the monthly newsletter send an email to [communications@stmc.bc.ca](mailto:communications@stmc.bc.ca)

## STAY CONNECTED



[Unsubscribe](#)

St. Thomas More Collegiate

7450 12th Avenue Burnaby, BC V3N 2K1