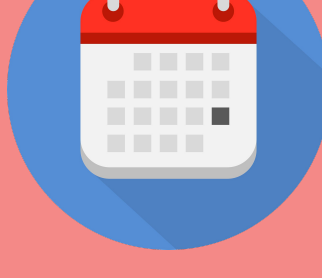




Homecoming was a massive success and the Knights also had an impressive comeback win!

## Mark Your Calendar



- October**
- 6: Red Day
  - 9: Thanksgiving - SCHOOL CLOSED
  - 12: Thanksgiving Mass
  - 17: School Picture Retakes
  - 19: Pro-D Workshop - Early Dismissal
  - 20: Provincial Pro-D - NO CLASSES
  - 26: Late Start
  - 27: Jeans Day
  - 31: Halloween



## Message from the President

My deepest and most sincere *Welcome Back* to our returning students and families... and a massive *Welcome to the STMC Family* to the students and families that are new to us!

I hope that the summer enabled all within our community to reconnect with those people and those things that they love most. It is always a special time for kids of all ages – young and old(er). Longer days and later nights; back yard BBQs and family dinners; new experiences and new friendships; camping trips and

adventures near and far! But when the chill of the evening air returns in late August we all instinctively ready ourselves to a return to the ‘familiar’ and the routines that come with school start-up. And, it too... feels good!

### To New Beginnings

In my 2022-2023 year-end message, I reflected on my pilgrimage to Callan, Ireland, the birthplace of Blessed Edmund Rice, and to the site of his first Christian Brothers at Mount Sion in Waterford. The visit also served as a stark reminder of the commitment I made to the Mother Church, the Brothers, and the entire school community during my Installation Mass last September to uphold the Gospel Values *and* to live out the Charism of Blessed Edmund in all that I say and do. Equally important, it reminded me of how critical the work we do at STMC is and *why*, as a faith and learning community, we do what we do.

For my fellow Edmundian Catholics – now counted in the millions, scattered across the globe in these intervening past two centuries – the mission, vision, and charism of Blessed Edmund speaks directly to the call of the Living Christ and our Holy Father to stand in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and/or injustice. Connecting the head and the heart to the actions one’s hands is the call the STMC Community has always tried to answer.

My heartfelt desire is that each of our young Knights will – during their time with us – be equipped to **Think Differently, Act Boldly, & Inspire Greatly**. In speaking of a vision, I focus heavily on hopes – both present hopes and future hopes.

### From Service to Advocacy

We have always prided ourselves in the service and charitable work that we do at STMC. Each initiative and event we engage in enables us to actively live out our faith. While we have been poised and ready to take our work to the next level of work for some time... we have truly lacked the experience and know-how to do so. That was, however, until our pilgrimage to Ireland last May.

The Westcourt Centre, an Edmund Rice Ministry in the North of Ireland has forged strong links with local community groups and organisations seeking to support the most vulnerable social groups in the city of Belfast. The work that students in the North of Ireland do on the issue of homelessness, in particular, literally challenges them to look no further than out their own windows to see that there is *still* much that needs to be done to create the Kingdom of God within their own community. Though students may think more globally in perspective, they are encouraged to direct their actions towards local social justice issues. While Edmund’s dream – and the call of our Lord to ease the suffering of the ‘Other’ we encounter everyday – has progressively taken positive steps forward, it is still a world that continues to be ravaged by hunger amidst massive abundance – a world still riddled with those forced into a state of abject poverty, distress, and hopelessness. Ours remains a world of have and have-nots.

The three ERCBNA School Presidents from Vancouver and Chicago who were involved in the Belfast Pre-Congress in May were so moved by what we witnessed and experienced, we committed to utilizing the resources at our disposal to bring Cormac McArt and Aiden Donaldson to our schools in late September/early October 2023. With Aiden centring on the *vision* and Cormac the *mission*, we had hoped that through the support and work of our staff/students, to move our respective schools beyond models of service and charity, to ones that foster true advocacy.

Word spread quickly throughout the archdiocese of the work that we undertaking, and before schools had let out for the summer, the first ever inter-Catholic High School social justice training/workshops had been organized. Last week (Sept. 27-29) over 90 staff members & students from St. Thomas More Collegiate, Little Flower Academy, Vancouver College, Holy Cross, St. Patrick’s, & St. John Paul II Academy attended a three-day series of training workshops at the SJPII Centre on the topic of **From Service to Advocacy**.



Day 1 involved Religion and Social Justice teachers, Campus Ministers, Religion Department Heads and Advocacy Coordinators and utilized a Train-the-Trainer model to first introduce the eight **Advocacy & Social Justice Training Modules** to staff members at our respective schools. This format not only increased each individuals own personal understanding and awareness of the key elements of the initiative, but it also provided each participating staff member with the tools and resources to actively teach the content of each module to their students.

Days 2 & 3 focussed on the involvement and voice of identified student leaders within our schools and took them on a similar journey through each of the above modules. This not only enabled our staff to see the teaching of the content, but our students were able to learn first-hand from those that have helped schools/teachers/students make this fundamental and significant shift in our approach to Service Learning.

The last day of the 3-day event involved presentations by local community groups and organisations that support the most vulnerable social groups in the Metro Vancouver region. Students had a chance to hear/learn from a variety of people associated with **Catholic Charities in the RCAV** and the City of Vancouver’s Department of Homeless Services.

The training programme explored social justice and human rights within the context of the **Edmund Rice Ethos & Formation Framework** and **Catholic Social Teachings**. It covered the various mechanisms of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations; current social justice activity within the global Edmund Rice network and practical advice for running advocacy campaigns in schools. The workshops were for both staff and students new to advocacy or those already involved. Participants were also be provided with classroom modules and resources to enact in their schools.

It is my intent you use my President’s Message this school year to update our community on the work that our staff and students are about to undertake.

Much more to follow!

Live Jesus in our Hearts... Forever!  
Stephen J. Garland  
President, STMC

## Message from the Admin Team

Dear St. Thomas More Collegiate Faith and Learning Community, welcome back to a new school year. September is over and it has been an absolute adventure. So much has happened this month; it is difficult to believe that we have only been back to school for one month.

The year that lay ahead is a complete mystery to us. The only thing we do know is that there is much work to be done. It is easy to be caught up in all the things that we *have* to do, sometimes we lose sight of the fact that there are so many things that we *get* to do. Sometimes we get so caught up in the process, we get so mired down in the details, we get so burdened by the weight of responsibility that we do not enjoy the experiences. St. Oscar Romero reminds us to take a step back, to submit completely to God’s providence, and to enjoy both the work that we *get* to do as well as the fruits of our labours.

When I think about the year ahead of us, I do not feel anxious about all the things yet to be done, I do not feel stressed by all the tasks that have not been completed, nor do I feel burdened by all of the promises that must be kept. Instead, I am filled with excitement, because we have the privilege of being part of a hopeful, collaborative, and loving community. I feel joy that we are planting seeds that will one day grow, and watering seeds that hold future promise. I feel deep gratitude that we are the workers who *get* to build God’s Kingdom.

As you prepare for the exciting year ahead, please reflect on the **St. Oscar Romero Prayer**. I ask all of us to remember that we are the workers, we are the prophets, we are the prayerers. We cannot do everything ourselves, but we don’t *have* to, as Jesus reminds us, “With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (Matthew 19:26)

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

Live Jesus in Our Hearts... Forever!

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



### St. Oscar Romero Prayer (We Are Prophets of a Future Not Our Own)

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.  
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.  
We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God’s work.



Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

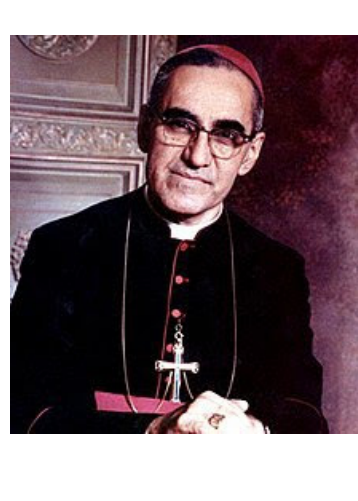
This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

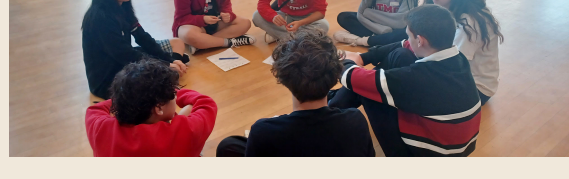
We are prophets of a future not our own.



## FAITH

### GRADE 8 RETREAT

Our Grade 8 students continued orientation with a retreat last week which further introduced them to our Knight's Compass. Students were involved in activities based around the Knight's Compass including Faith and Advocacy. Thank you to our Grade 11 and 12 student leaders who helped to make this day memorable.



### FROM SERVICE TO ADVOCACY

As mentioned in the *Message from the President*, STMC has created a *Service to Advocacy* initiative that included Little Flower Academy, Vancouver College, Holy Cross, St. Patrick's, and Saint John Paul II Academy. Staff and students from these schools took part in a series of workshops over the course of three days designed to take students and staff from a model of service and charity to one towards true advocacy.

This initiative was led by individuals from the Westcourt Centre in Belfast, the North of Ireland. The Westcourt Centre is a Blessed Edmund Rice ministry managed and directed by Cormac McArt. Cormac and key members of his team, Dr. Aiden Donaldson and Brother Denis Gleeson, work with the 111 Christian Brother Schools in the North and South of Ireland, as well as England, to develop staff & student faith formation and domestic immersion experiences based around Catholic Social Teachings and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

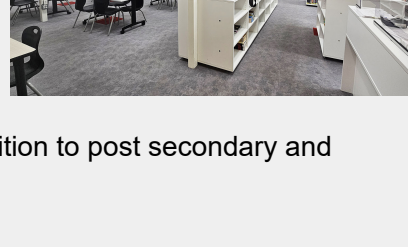


We believe that all of those involved would benefit significantly from learning what the region is currently doing around homelessness, as well as the myriad of intersectional issues that are inextricably connected to the underlying causes/effects. The final day included presentations by local community groups and organizations that support the most vulnerable social groups within each of our respective cities. Students had a chance to hear/learn from a variety of people associated with Catholic Charities in the RCAF as well as other organizations in the city that will share their work in order to inspire/engage our student participants, in particular on the topic of homelessness and its intersectional issues.

## ACADEMICS

### LEARNING COMMONS

This month has been a very busy one in the Learning Commons. 26 different classes have attended sessions on Research Skills and how to best use the resources available through the Learning Commons. Over the past three years, there has been a significant increase in student's familiarity and skill level with Research Skills. This will continue to prepare STMC Knights for a successful transition to post secondary and lifelong learning.



### AFTER SCHOOL ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Want to get support to excel in class (or) Want to be a peer tutor to support others?

There are opportunities at the back of the Library on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 2:45 to 3:45 pm. If you are motivated to be part of the learning and would like to sign up, please use **Classroom Code: EPYHPUW**

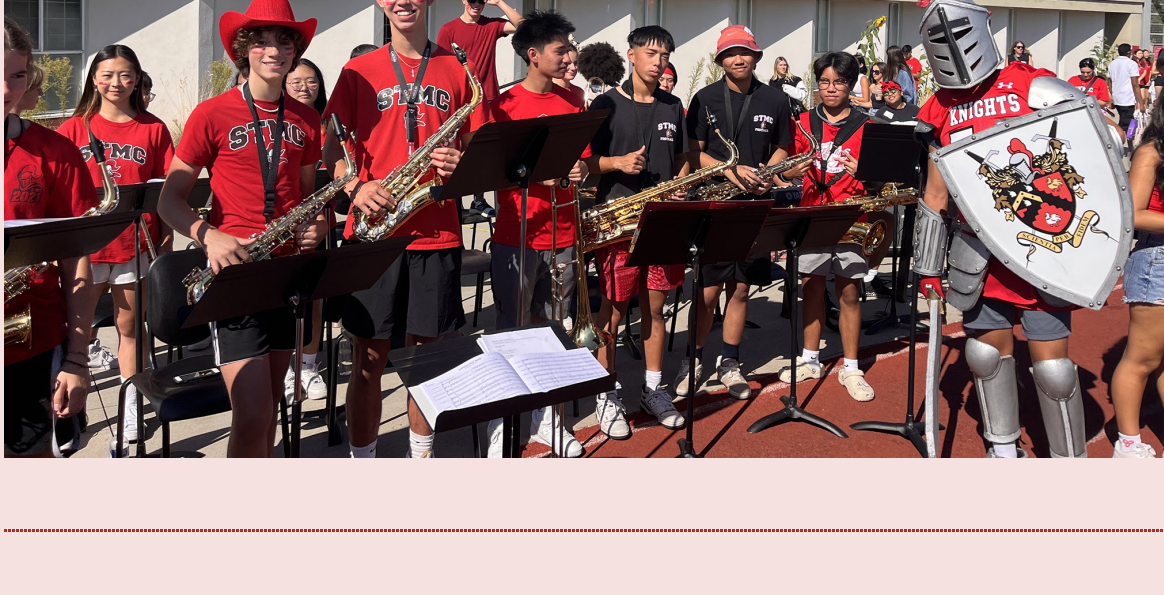


## FINE ARTS

### BAND & CHOIR

Congrats to our choir and band students selected to perform in the BCMEA Honour Ensembles: Sheldon Endriga, Daniel Sawyer, Briseis Jamela, Kayla Fortuna, Mara Nica, Taylor Bailey, Victoria Del Rosario, Raelynne Boreta, Elise Harmer, Eilidh Lister, Aidan Madamba, Steven Ge, Ryan Lee. These students represent STMC as top music students from across the province. Rehearsals have begun and we look forward to their performances at the end of October at the Chan Centre.

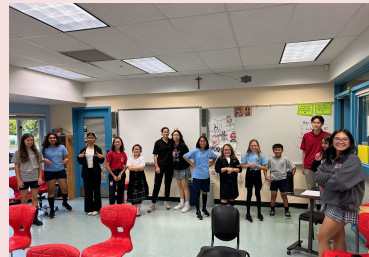
Introducing the new STMC Pep Band! Our students enjoyed performing at Homecoming and will be supporting our school and athletics programs.



Our Grade 8 Band and Elementary Band students participated in First Note Night on September 25. We welcomed guest teachers from the Vancouver Symphony and UBC to get students started on their new instruments!



Elementary Choir is up and running! Students have enjoyed getting to know one another and our STMC Choir coaches during our first few rehearsals.



### DRAMA

Have you ever thought about treading the boards of the stage? Ever watched a movie and thought 'Hey! I could do that!'

Well, now is your chance! STMC Drama are putting together a production of Polly Teale's *Mermaid* to be presented to the community at The Anvil Centre in April 2023. Mr. Walker and his team are looking forward to working with male and female students from Gr.8-12 on this exciting and very different piece of theatre that will engage your heart and your head in a dynamic style of performance.

This is a call out for anyone interested in experiencing a fun, character led but movement based piece of theatre. If you are interested, please watch [this video](#) for more information and/or ask Mr. Walker for more details.

## ATHLETICS

### VOLLEYBALL

Congratulations to our Junior Volleyball team for winning the 24-team Trinity Western University tournament that took place on Sept 22-23. After placing first in their pool, they were able to win games against St. Lawrence Christian, Holy Cross, Elgin Park, and GW Graham on the way to their gold medal placing. Shout outs go out to Chelsey Gerdis '27 and Valentina Figliola '27 who were named all-stars and Brienne Lu '27 who was named the tournament MVP. The season continues into October with league play, the BC Catholics, and Handsworth tournaments. Go knights!



### CROSS COUNTRY

We had a great first Cross Country meet of the season at Central Park. The sun came out and the athletes ran well. Unfortunately, some athletes had scheduling conflicts and weren't able to join in Meet #1. Well done to all those who ran!! The next event will be at the Invitational Meet at Mundy Park in Coquitlam on October 4.





# EXTRACURRICULARS

## STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council has been busy at work since late August preparing for a jam-packed September! On September 5th, they welcomed our new Grade 8 students for their first day of school. Grade 8's were taken around to different stations where they were encouraged to socialize with one another, ask questions of the older students and work together at mini competitions. Then, on Friday, we had our traditional knighting ceremony where our entire school community gathered to officially welcome our new students and staff members. Each new member of our community were welcomed into the gym by our pep squad and then knighted by our Grade 12 Student Council members.

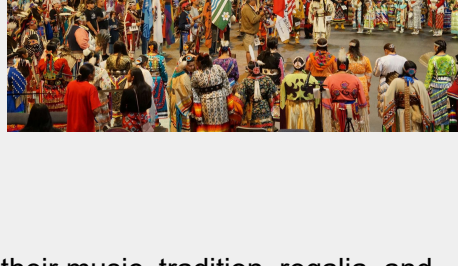
The second week of school was all Homecoming! Student Council hosted a homecoming pep rally where the varsity football team was split up into team red and team white and competed in an "Iron Man" obstacle course! Team white took the win as the energy from the bleachers cheered them on.

The last event of the month was the Grade 8 and 12 mixer, a dance just for Grade 8's and 12's. This dance has always been a fun way for our Grade 12's to get to know the Grade 8's better and to help the Grade 8's become more comfortable with the student leaders of the school and, of course, other members of their grade level. At the end of the month, it's a way to decompress, socialize, and have fun. A big shout out to Aidan Madamba '27 who did a great job DJ'ing our dance.

The first month of the year has flown by and we hope that everyone has enjoyed what has been an exciting start to the school year!

## Stalēw POW-WOW

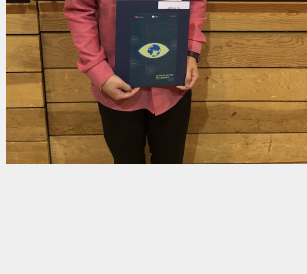
On September 16 and 17, the Grade 11's had the opportunity to attend the Stalēw Pow-Wow at the Langley Events Center. Students were able to experience firsthand the captivating dancing, music, handmade jewelry, clothing, and more. Many students found this experience to be empowering and impactful on their own personal paths of Truth and Reconciliation, which they will be continuing throughout the year in their English First Peoples 11 course.



It is important to recognize Indigenous celebrations of their music, tradition, regalia, and art. It is a major catalyst in moving forward as Canadians on unceded territories and growing with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. Within the STMC community, we will continue to learn to develop our understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture and traditions. We thank the Stalēw nation for this eye opening experience, and we look forward to attending in years to come.

## CLIMATE ACTION FELLOWSHIP 2023

Earlier this year, SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, the City of Burnaby, and Vancity co-sponsored their inaugural Climate Action Fellowship. STMC's Jeffrey To (grad of 2023) was selected to join the cohort. The Fellowship was a 12-week program of Burnaby residents, agencies, and climate-leading organizations who collectively catalyzed climate action, including creating greater cohesion and collaboration across organizations, institutions, and groups most impacted by climate change.

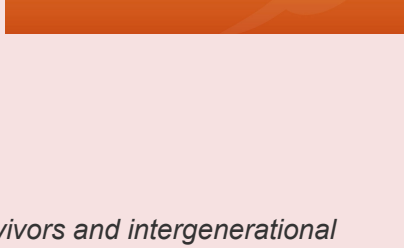


The Fellowship culminated with a Final Showcase to the public at the Nikkei Cultural Centre and Jeffrey represented our school and our community incredibly well. We want to congratulate Jeffrey on his work with the Climate Action Fellowship and we wish him well with his post-secondary education at UBC.

- STMC Green Team

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION



September 30, 2023 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day was established as a federal statutory holiday for all Canadians to commemorate the lasting effects that the residential school system has had on Canada's Indigenous Peoples. STMC will be closed on Monday October 2 in recognition of the stat holiday.

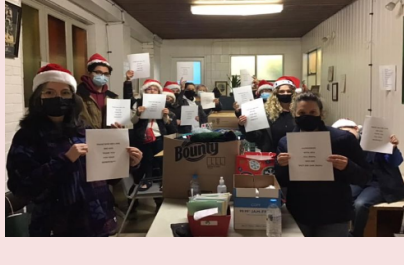
**From the Government of British Columbia website:**

*It's a day to honour the resilience, dignity and strength of survivors and intergenerational survivors, and remember the children who never came home. It's a chance to engage and educate people about B.C.'s colonial history and how it has and continues to impact Indigenous communities.*

On Monday, September 25, STMC held a Truth & Reconciliation assembly. As the student body entered the gymnasium, they were greeted with images of the STMC community attending a variety of events connected to their own truth and reconciliation learning journeys. Staff and students shared reflections, and music played by Mr. Lui and Ms. MacLellan was accompanied by Indigenous poetry readings. Symbols were brought forth by students in connection with our Knights' Cross to demonstrate STMC's commitment and devotion to continuing to learn and acknowledge Canada's history and the work required to continue towards reconciliation.

## GOOD SHEPHERD WALK

I hear the sirens in the background, I see the police cars and ambulances racing down the street. People in need of shelter, food and love. The smell is unbearable, garbage is littered on the streets. However, I also see people smiling and thankful that we are there. I hear "God bless you", "you are the best", and "you are doing God's work". I speak to people, and hear their stories of how they came to the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. They ask us to pray for their children, friends, and family that they have lost due to the circumstances that overtook their lives. My heart is overwhelmed with sadness, empathy and love.



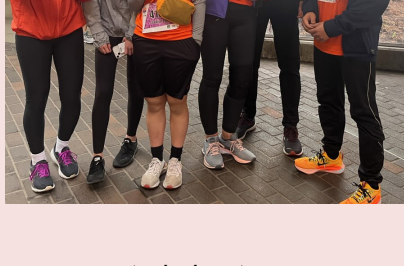
The Good Shepherd Walk is a street ministry, based out of St. Paul's Church, in the heart of the Downtown Eastside. STMC has been a part of this ministry since 2015, and with Agape Street, before that. I became involved when I started at STMC 6 years ago, by taking a group of students to walk amongst the poorest of men and women who reside on the Downtown East side of Vancouver. We give out candy bags as a way to reach out, to talk, laugh with, pray with or just say hello to these residents. Our presence seeks to fill a spiritual connection to many who need it. We are looking for students to walk with us this year, to open their hearts and share their love. For more information, please visit the [Good Shepherd website](#).

~ Carrie Sprovierio, Staff Moderator

## STMC SUN RUN TEAM

**Race Day – Sunday, April 21, 2024**

We are excited to announce that St. Thomas More will have a Sun Run team again this year. Come out and participate with your friends and family. There is a 2.5km or the 10km course. If you **register before Oct. 31, you qualify for the cheapest price category**. (\$22 for youth; \$35 for adults)



Before registering, please note the following:

1. STMC is NOT responsible for student supervision or transportation during the Sun Run
2. STMC may offer some training resources, such as a suggested plan to prepare for running 10km and may offer some scheduled practice runs. However, please note that runners are responsible for their own training.
3. **If we have less than 14 members on our team, the team will be disbanded and the members will be automatically moved into the Individual categories and you will be responsible for paying the upgrade fees**
4. Youth team technical shirts will have STMC Knights printed on the back; however, the Cotton shirts will NOT have a team name on the back due to a limited area of print size
5. Parents and siblings are welcome to register as part of the Sun Run team, however, the **number of youths must be greater than the number of adults** on the team.

To register, please go to <https://www.vancouversunrun.com/> **team member registration** and select **STMC Knights (Registration opens Oct. 3)**

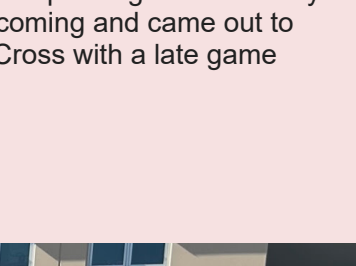
*\*Be sure you are on the **Oasis Youth Team Challenge** (before adding your name and details)*

**Team Name: STMC Knights**

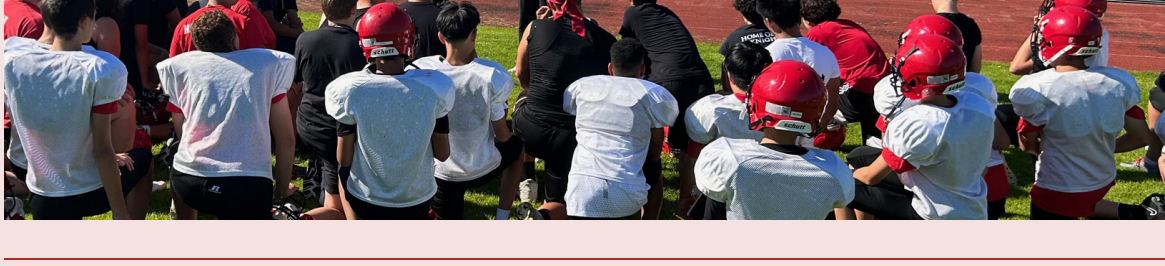
**After completing the registration, please complete Mrs. DeWith's quick Google Form:** <https://forms.gle/1ytcCcc5mohsw89k6>

## HOMEcoming 2023

We were blessed to be able to host our Annual Homecoming Event on September 16th. The day was a success thanks to the efforts and generosity of our sponsors, Alumni Association, Parents Association, maintenance crew, student council, and numerous other volunteers. The beautiful weather also helped.



This year we also had the opportunity to bring back 2021 STMC Hall of Fame inductee, CFL first ballot Hall of Famer, and current Chancellor at the University of Calgary Jon Cornish '02. Jon was able to connect with our staff and students and be our special guest on Friday and Saturday. We are grateful to everyone who supported Homecoming and came out to support our Varsity Knights as they were victorious against Holy Cross with a late game touchdown. Go Knights!



## STAFF RETREAT: TAKAYA TOURS

At the beginning of the school year, the STMC staff took part in an Indigenous Cultural Excursion with Takaya Tours at Cates Park in North Vancouver. The ancestral name for this land is Whey-Ah-Whichen which means 'faces the wind'. Cates Park has great importance to



the Tsleil-Waututh people. It was used as a small village during the spring and summer months to hunt and gather the natural resources such as wild game, berries, and flora & fauna.

Today the Tsleil-Waututh people use the park for cultural events, ceremonies, and to run one part of the Takaya Tours kayak operations. During this day staff experienced interpretive paddles in ocean-going canoes, similar to those used by the TWN historically. Staff also learned about ancient knowledge from local guides about flora, fauna, ancient village sites, and coast nations songs.



## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

### EMA ULINDER

This summer Grade 11 student Ema Ulinder, together with twenty-one of the best female box lacrosse player's in BC, flew to Regina, Saskatchewan to compete in the Box Lacrosse National Championships. Their U17 team played 9 games in 6 days and went undefeated until the Championship game.

This was Ema's first year playing for Team BC Box Lacrosse. She dominated as a defensive specialist leading the penalty kill and served as a leader both on and off the floor. Although it was a heart breaking loss in the gold medal game, the experience was unforgettable and she looks forward to 2024.



### TRISTAN LINO

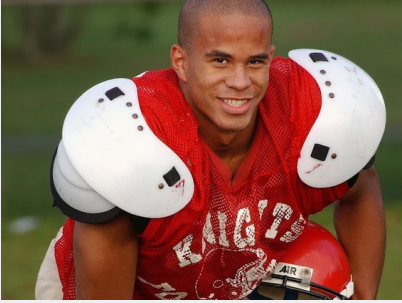
Grade 10 Knight, Tristan Lino helped his soccer team the South Burnaby Metro Soccer Club Division 1, U15 (now U16) Thunderbirds take home Gold on the recently concluded Provincial Cup that took place in Willoughby Community Park Stadium in Langley back in July. More recently, they were recognized and congratulated by Burnaby Mayor, Mike Hurley and the Burnaby Councils. Reaching this level takes a lot of effort, dedication, and perseverance. The STMC community is proud of Tristan and other students who continue to achieve high levels of success both in the school and outside.



## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

### JON CORNISH

Coinciding with Homecoming, Jon Cornish - Class of '02, was formally inducted into the BC Football Hall of Fame. This is on top of his already impressive resumé that includes the Canadian Hall of Fame, CFL's Most Outstanding Player in 2013, Lou Marsh Award for Canada's male Athlete of the Year, and of course, STMC's own Hall of Fame.



He shares the honour alongside legendary local sportswriter Howard Tsumura, fellow CFL standout Bryan Chiu, amateur athletes Will Loftus and Mark McDonald, and several others who have laid the foundations of football here in BC. Read more about Jon's induction in this [article from The Province](#).



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



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St. Thomas More Collegiate

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