

Dear SJC Community,

I write this Spring/Easter letter with an exciting announcement about the future of St. Joseph's College.

In the fall of 2023, I was proud to petition the province to update our historic 1926 Act of Legislation, the legal and historic document that allows us to offer our community at the U of A. As a result of that successful process, I am pleased to announce that SJC now has the legislative authority to become a fully accredited degree granting institution, while remaining fully affiliated with the University of Alberta. In the future, we can offer bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in addition to honorary doctorates, diplomas, and certificates. SJC, as the legislation states, can "operate in the province as a Catholic College to provide instruction in the liberal arts and fine arts, the humanities, theology, the physical, natural and social sciences, and professional studies". This is now secured under the Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta, and it does not change any aspect of the affiliate and historic relationship with the U of A.

On December 7th, the *St. Joseph's College Amendment Act 2023* received royal assent!

What does this mean? As an affiliated College at the U of A, SJC provides housing, dining, campus ministry, courses, two chapels, chaplaincy, masses, and student life for the benefit of our students. Currently, over 3000 students benefit from SJC in these varying ways. Specifically, our courses are Arts options for students while they earn their degrees from the University of Alberta. We excel at doing this and will continue to do so. But we should seek out ways to become better known for what we give to Alberta and Western Canada, to better connect students to our gifts, and to create more pathways for students to come to SJC and thrive during their University journeys. *This is a legacy moment for SJC.* More broadly, this update also adds to the landscape of Catholic higher education in Alberta and Canada and is another strong piece of legislation for Catholic education.

St. Joseph's College gathered significant support for this legislative update. We secured letters from seven presidents of Alberta Universities and Colleges. Then, during the Standing Committee on Private Bills Hearing where I presented our case, UCP and NDP MLAs unanimously supported our legislation. The Bill was graciously sponsored by the Hon. Lori Sigurdson, MLA for Edmonton-Riverview in which the College resides.

We plan to begin with a two-year diploma in the Liberal Arts, infused with our Catholic tradition, where we help students discern their future pathways, and provide them with all of the supports needed to start their University journeys in a strong, successful way. This diploma also contributes, modestly, to the University's growth goals. We plan to do all of this while centring the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and emphasizing discernment as a tool that students can use to navigate life. The initial program will be supported by robust transfer options into the U of A (and possibly other post-secondaries) so students can choose the path that is right for them.

For nearly 100 years, students and our larger Catholic community have been transformed by St. Joseph's College in a number of ways. Thus, I want to report out on a few more significant moments for SJC, and where our current needs reside. When I arrived at SJC as the Academic Dean in 2017, SJC was relying on its reserves for operations. Then with the challenges of COVID, increasing insurance costs, and maintenance/infrastructure costs, continuing to provide this Catholic home for students was increasingly challenging.

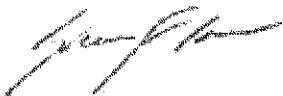
Things have changed dramatically thanks to the amazing leadership of faculty, staff, senior administrators, and the board, who have placed this College on much surer footing. This year we have achieved a record enrollment of 2964 and our residence community is now completely sold out for Fall 2024 in both buildings – earlier than it has ever been. We make strategic use of our residence buildings and dining services through group summer bookings, and our worshipping community has grown by over 20% this year. Thus, we now operate a balanced budget and are building back funds that the College relied on in previous years, all while covering costs without relying on reserves. This has infused a sense of optimism in our community.

As you see, we are strengthening our foundations and securing growth for the future. However, we need your help to address many challenges that remain. In particular, students need a safe and secure home in which to live, worship, and study – and we must ensure that our facilities are prepared to meet this challenge. As part of our responsibility to this community, we have conducted the first major engineering assessment of our buildings, one of which is nearly 100 years old. We now have a planned schedule of targeted needs in the coming years that we have already begun focusing on. Please reach out if you would like a list of costs and projects.

It is time for the next generation to step up. If you have *benefited from* or *believe in* the mission of St. Joseph's College, we do need a concerted increase of regular giving. If you are not giving monthly, would you consider supporting SJC through a monthly automatic withdrawal? If you already give in that way, might you consider increasing your gift?

This year, we ask that you join us in the exciting SJC story that we are writing, and to join us in this mission for all that St. Joseph's College provides to Alberta, Western Canada, and beyond.

Sincerely,



Dr. Shawn W. Flynn
President
St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta

Mission: St. Joseph's College is a University community of Catholic higher education rooted in the Gospel, dedicated to helping all people discern truth and build the common good.