

# The Pandemic Review

October 2020 - Mia Abate

Student life, both physical and virtual



## A Time to Give Thanks and Reflect

With October upon us, the days get cooler and the leaves begin to fall. This month is a time for joy and almsgiving as we celebrate Thanksgiving, thanking God for another bountiful harvest and all of our many blessings. The month of October is also a time for solemn reflection as we observe *Orange Shirt Day*, a day dedicated to 150, 000

First Nation, Métis and Inuit children taken from their homes and forced into residential schools.

### Orange Shirt Day

September 30th, 2020, Orange Shirt Day, is a day for Canadians to educate themselves about the atrocities faced by First Nation, Métis and Inuit children at the hands of the residential school system. Orange Shirt Day was created by Phyllis Webstad, a woman who was forced into a residential school as a child. It began when Phyllis shared her experience of arriving at the residential school where the orange shirt she wore (given to her by her grandmother) was taken from her. Phyllis' orange shirt and her message that "every child matters" is one that has been spread throughout Canada. The students at St. Patrick's and online participated

in a variety of activities to learn more about residential schools and their lasting impact. In Ms. Magliaro's grade 11/12 virtual drama class, students produced a video sharing facts, statistics and stories of survivors. The video, read as a choral arrangement, was written and performed by the students. At St. Patrick's, Orange Shirt Day consisted of a



schoolwide presentation on the lasting impact of residential schools. Staff and students of both the physical and virtual school were encouraged to wear an orange shirt to demonstrate solidarity and support for everyone affected by residential schools.



## Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving: a time for family, food and most importantly, thanking God for his many gifts. In a normal year, St. Patrick's would hold a mass to celebrate but though it wasn't possible this year to gather together in the school gym to worship, the Fighting Irish didn't let that stop them from practicing their faith.

Staff and students took part in a virtual Thanksgiving Prayer Service. The virtual service included St. Patrick's chaplin, Mrs. Clarke, sharing about how Thanksgiving ties into the school's religious focus this year which is "Choose Joy". The service also features scripture passages read by students as well as "on the street interviews" with staff and students. In these interviews, taken when classes are outside on break, staff and students are asked a variety of questions including what they are thankful for. The answers to this question varied greatly from person to person but some of the recurring answers included: family, friends, health and being back at St. Patrick's. The virtual service also includes a beautiful performance of the song "Oceans" performed by a few grade 11 students at St. Patrick's.

## What's New At St. Pat's?

This month, St. Patrick's has seen the amazing addition of a virtual library. Librarians Ms. Scott and Mrs. Cole have put together an interactive virtual library that will run from now on. What is featured in the library will change every month to keep things new and exciting! For the month of October the library features Halloween and Thanksgiving themed activities including an escape



room. When you enter the virtual library, you can click on just about anything in the room to bring you to an exciting article or activity; for example, when you click on the *Hocus Pocus* poster you are brought to a list of the best halloween movies and when you click on the man holding the turkey, you are brought to a virtual exhibit put on by Quebec's Museum of Civilization. [Click here to visit the St. Patrick's Virtual Library.](#)



## What's New With E-Learning?

With e-learning being new this year, the administrative staff are fully committed to ensuring that the experience is a positive one for everyone involved. Mr. Cicchelli

(the principal of virtual school) and Mr. Giroux (the vice-principal of virtual school) have been visiting virtual classrooms to see firsthand what the experience is like for students. They have found that students are adjusting very well to the virtual platform. They continue to gather feedback from staff, students and parents in order to be responsive to the needs of the school community. In an effort to improve communications to home, the virtual schools are sharing a weekly update to parents and guardians, [click here to view the newsletter.](#) Additionally, secondary students who are participating in e-learning will have their mid term grades for quadmester 1 shared with them on October 19th.

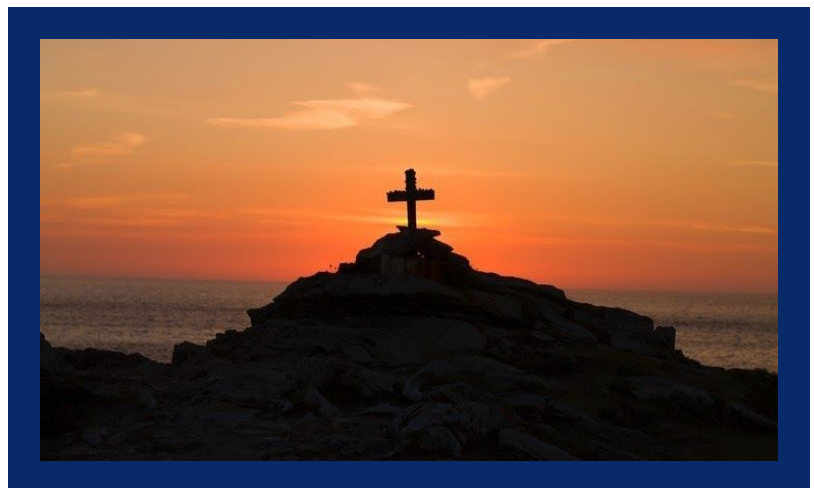
## Closing Thoughts

During dark times, it can be easy to become blind to the many gifts God has given us.

Thanksgiving reminds us that we should always be giving thanks to God for all he has given us, especially during hard times. We can't choose to be happy all of

the time, but we can always choose to be joyful and one of the things we can find joy in is giving thanks and glory to God. Psalm 95:1-3 does a great job of reminding us this:

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let



us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods.