

FALL 2023 EDITION

SAINT JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION

BUILDING THE LEGACY

A message from the Archdiocese of Vancouver

Michael Miller

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Saint John Paul II Academy:

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, let us prepare our hearts to receive the greatest of all gifts: the birth of Jesus. God's nature is to give; He has given us his Son. This wondrous Gift is offered for us to receive. When we receive this divine Gift with gratitude, we enter into a relationship with God himself.

So it is with us. Whenever we freely give any gift, we receive much more in return. Love multiplies love.

In God's plan, Saint John Paul II Academy is a gift to the community of South Surrey. Just a dream six years ago, a magnificent school building is now well on the way to becoming a reality.

Already a great Catholic school with Christ as its Centre and faith as its foundation, the Academy is a providential work for which we give thanks to the Lord in this season of joy. Such an extraordinary vision deserves your enthusiasm and support.

I am most appreciative of the commitment of the families who share in the vision and realization of the Saint John Paul II Academy. It is a gift of God to all of us.

With my prayerful and cordial greetings for a blessed Christmas and joyful New Year,

J. Michael Miller,
Archbishop of Vancouver



Troy Van Vliet

Chair, Foundation Board

Dear members of the community,

I am writing to introduce myself as Troy Van Vliet, the chair of the foundation board at Saint John Paul II Academy. My wife, Lisa, and I are parents of two daughters attending SJP2 as well. I am thrilled to share the exciting progress we have made on our new campus, located at 24th and 180th in Surrey.

The construction of the building is progressing at an impressive pace, and we are on track to open in the fall of 2025. We are currently accepting enrollments for new students, and I encourage you to consider early registration for your child even if they are still in their first few years of elementary school.

Our new campus will offer a wide range of opportunities for students, including outstanding athletics programs, arts programs, and woodwork, among others.

We are also delighted to announce that we provide scholarships to exceptional students who demonstrate talent and dedication in specific fields.



I invite you to learn more about Saint John Paul II Academy by visiting our website. If you have any questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our team will be more than happy to assist you.

Be sure to follow St. John Paul II Academy on Facebook for weekly updates regarding our construction progress.

Thank you for your support and interest in our school. We look forward to welcoming new students and families to our vibrant community.

Best regards,

Troy Van Vliet

Chair, Foundation Board

Saint John Paul II Academy

Principal's Message

“Living, Celebrating and Proclaiming our Faith” is the theme for our school this year. Saint John Paul II Academy is a welcoming and vibrant Catholic School Community centered in Christ, where His Gospel message permeates all aspects of school life.

We strive to provide a Catholic learning environment that nourishes the development of the whole person spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. A well-balanced education engages the spirit, inspires growth and creativity, and cultivates the qualities essential for servant leadership, academic pursuit, and responsible citizenship.

We collaborate together with priests, board members, staff, families and students to make our school community a home away from home, where every student experiences an enriching Catholic atmosphere, where they feel safe, welcomed, respected and valued, with the opportunities to grow and develop the God-given characteristics and talents they have been gifted with.

By continuing to collaborate, with the grace of God guiding us, we will be able to emulate the faith, courage, and passion for our youth that our school’s Patron, Saint John Paul II, had. “The more ready you are to give yourself to God and to others, the more you discover the authentic meaning of life.”

(John Paul II)

SJPII Academy extends a very special welcome to our new class of grade 8 students, who are just beginning their high school journey and to this year’s grade 12 graduating class as they enter their final year of high school.



Ms. Lorraine Paruzzolo, Principal

We also offer a warm welcome to all of the new students joining our school while we keep those students who have left (especially our graduates from the Legacy Class) in our thoughts and prayers as they journey forward.

I offer my most sincere congratulations and appreciation to all of you who have supported us throughout the years, especially our exceptional students who inspire me every day.

It is so meaningful that our school logo includes Saint John Paul II’s Latin motto, “Totus Tuus,” meaning “Totally Yours,” which reflects his devotion to the Mother of God. My hope and prayer for all of us this year is to live out our dedication to God as servant leaders, generously sharing our time, talents and treasures to the best of our abilities to help and support each other and those in our extended school community. May God Bless you!

With Joy and Prayers,
Ms. Lorraine Paruzzolo
Principal

A message from Donor Dr. David Wilkie

The world shifts below my feet, like walking on ice flows in a slowly-moving river.

My wife Liz and I were both raised on farms near small Manitoba towns. Our families regularly attended Catholic Mass, my dad, mom and 6 other siblings wedged into a small car for the weekly trek to church. We were respectful of church but understood little of the proceedings, our formal faith education being limited to catechism by correspondence, plus one week of catechism each summer.

We spent the first years of elementary school – grades 1 to 4 in my case – in a one-room country school. 15 or so children in grades 1 to 8 dutifully stood to sing Oh Canada and recite the Lord’s Prayer to kick off each school day. The teacher began to teach, scrolling through the ascending grades, and we finished the day with God Save the Queen. We learned to respect our history and our tradition. We all worked to learn our lessons because exams awaited and no one wanted to fail their grade. Some did. At recess, we grew and played together, big with small. Each child was accepted and appreciated for their particular contribution; the grade 8 dribbling a soccer ball down field, but limited by the grade 2 wrapped like a python around his leg.

Then my world changed. Our school closed and I found myself riding the school bus to “town school.” This was at the height of the baby boom and classes were very large, typically 4 or 5 classes per grade of about 30 children per room. I felt invisible amid the mayhem of numbers. Clothes and hair styles seemed to matter now. My old high-top running shoes suddenly appeared ridiculous in a world of the faster, newly introduced Adidas runners.



Dr. David Wilkie and Mrs. Elizabeth Wilkie

The whole world was faster and more complicated. I felt somehow -- alone! – in those big classrooms. I rarely saw any of my siblings around, even though they attended the same school.

I eventually completed my university education, satisfied in my progress toward the world’s promised land of wealth, power and prestige. I was determined not to get caught with “high-tops” again while the world raced past me.

It was only after I met my wife that I began to recognize my slow drift away from the church. She was, and is, more grounded in her faith than I am, and was an anchor through the formative years of our three children. Liz was determined to have our children educated in Catholic elementary and high schools.

We are deeply appreciative of the values that were strengthened there, complementing our own efforts at home. This was most notable through their adolescent years when they were often faced with life-defining choices regarding matters of faith, charity, sexuality and their role in society. Now grown, the values our children taught then have persisted into adulthood and their own parenthood. Those of our 8 grandchildren that are of age all attend Catholic elementary schools.

But the world has again shifted, strikingly in the past few years. Societal changes leave us feeling anxious for the futures of our grandchildren. Our moral foundations feel unstable and uncertain, like standing in a canoe. Issues arise and slip away unexamined, like trying to catch a fish with your bare hands. Gender identity, work ethic, sexuality, accountability and faith, to name but a few of the hot topics, are often left unaddressed.

Children are being encouraged to evaluate complex issues in an overwhelming and bewildering world, often in the absence of real adult leadership.

When we first heard of St John Paul II Academy, we were energized by their vision of leadership in helping children to thrive in a healthy and uplifting environment. As grandparents, we have an interest in our family's well-being. More broadly, we hope to make a difference in our own small way to the well being of the world. In this vein, we have contributed financially to the school, as well as encouraging our grown children to consider enrolling their children in the Academy as they come of age.

The school is the "full meal deal." At this early stage, small class sizes translate to advantageous student-to-teacher ratios and facilitate helpful mixing of various age groups, each child to their own strength, like I experienced in my early grades.

It is easier for parents to meet and to help each other. "It takes a community to raise a child," but ideally the right sort of community.

A child may be less likely to feel "lost" in the crush of fellow classmates prevalent in very large schools, as I did in my school years. In St John Paul II Academy, your child may take the chance to shine in their own chosen school activity, less likely to be passed over for drama roles, team sports or student leadership positions. We feel excited watching our SJPII teams accumulating banners for Regional and Provincial sports championships, ten so far. The school is thriving!

Above all, the school has committed itself to providing integrity-driven leadership in its choices of teachers and administration. They value history and tradition. They strive for excellence and promote accountability. The school is pursuing Christian values, not those of the wayward and ambivalent society we witness around us.

Looking back on the big commute each of our children had to take each morning to go to their respective high schools in North Surrey and Vancouver, we feel excited to see such a fine facility arising in our own backyard. We feel encouraged by its evolution and proud to be a participant.

The ground beneath my feet feels a lot more stable, knowing that St John Paul II Academy is an option available to our family, our church and our community.

Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Dr. David Wilkie

SJPII Academy Parent Association

Gabriela Nieto

My name is Gabriela Nieto, and I am honoured to serve as the President of the Parent Association for the 2023-2024 academic year. As a mother of two children, Sebastian, who graduated from SJPII Academy last June and is now attending BCIT, and Anna, who is currently in grade 10, I am deeply invested in the success and well-being of our school community.

First and foremost, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all families who are new to our school community. We are thrilled to have you join us on this exciting journey of education and personal growth.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you about some of our current and upcoming events:

1. SJP2 Parent Association Spirit Wear Fundraiser: We are offering SJP2 caps for purchase at the school. Each cap is priced at \$20, or you can enjoy a discounted rate of \$15 if you purchase more than one. The proceeds from this fundraiser will directly support our students' extracurricular activities. Please visit the school's office to get your hands on these stylish caps.

2. Christmas Family Potluck Dinner and Cookie Exchange: Mark your calendars for Thursday, November 30th, from 6:30 pm to 9 pm. We invite all families to join us for a delightful evening of togetherness and celebration. Bring your favorite dish to share, and let's indulge in the joy of good food and warm company. We look forward to seeing you all there.



These events are just a glimpse of the vibrant and engaging activities that await us throughout the year. We encourage you to actively participate and contribute to the success of our school community. Your involvement and support are invaluable in creating a nurturing and enriching environment for our children.

If you have any questions or suggestions or would like to get involved in the Parent Association, please do not hesitate to reach out. Together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of our students.

Thank you for your attention, and I wish you all a wonderful and fulfilling academic year.

Gabriela Nieto

President, PA

Saint John Paul II Academy

SJPII Academy Student Council

Oliver Watt

My name is Ollie Watt, and as student council president for the 2023/2024 school year, supported by a wonderful executive, I am honoured to have been elected to lead the student body through a year bringing unity, spirit and healthy competition to the halls and classrooms of Saint John Paul II Academy. Being president brings challenges but immense satisfaction when our council introduces a new idea and can achieve full student participation. Our goal as a council is to foster an inclusive and vibrant school community where every voice is heard, and every student feels valued.

This year's council consists of our Vice-President, Bella Kassam; Treasurer, Kelvin Dokaj; Communications Coordinator, Issa Cole; Secretary, Elyse Kargl; and five grade-level representatives as well as Mme Boyle as our teacher-sponsor; and myself as President.

September started with a bang, and our first new initiative was introducing a "house" system. As a team, we devised the idea to encourage and create a sense of belonging. So, how does this house system function? All the students are divided evenly into four different 'houses' that each has a distinct colour and name. The house names are Caritas (charity), Dignitas (dignity), Unitas (unity), and Veritas (truth), which are all virtues that our school embodies. Throughout the year, houses compete in fundraising activities or competitive games to score points. The house earning the highest points by the end of the year wins a trophy. We feel that competition is healthy and gives students an opportunity to work together.



In addition to our usual start of school activities, September marked the introduction of our first-ever Terry Fox Run and fundraiser, where we raised almost \$1,000 through online donations, the sale of commemorative t-shirts and student contributions. We also organized a meaningful Truth and Reconciliation Assembly for our school with the intent of educating and creating even more awareness of working towards reconciliation and what we, as youth, can do to contribute to this goal.

October included our annual Spirit Week, culminating in a Friday social on October 27. Pumpkins were carved, pizza was served, and students participated in games in the gym.

As a council, we are dedicated to making memories and encouraging each student to participate and contribute to the school community actively.

Sincerely,
Oliver Watt, SJPII Academy Student Council
President

Saint John Paul II Academy Golf Tournament

Save the date: May 16, 2024

Someone once stated, "Alone, we can achieve so little; together, we can achieve so much."

Welcome to the first update of our inaugural Saint John Paul II Academy Golf Tournament. This fundraising event is scheduled to take place in May at the esteemed Tsawwassen Springs Golf course, and we are thrilled to host this day in support of SJPII, its students, alumni, and the Foundation. The day will feature a delightful brunch, complimentary access to the driving range, a fantastic gift bag, 18 holes of golf, and culminate with a buffet banquet and auction.

My name is Dave Fanning, and I am delighted to be collaborating with eleven other individuals to ensure the success of this event. The team comprises representatives from the School, the Foundation, and its supporters, each bringing a wealth of community experience to the table. We officially launched the kickoff on August 24th and have been diligently planning the event. We will continue to provide updates on event announcements and milestones throughout the fall and winter.

For those interested in volunteering on event day, we will include instructions and an email address in our next newsletter update. We welcome and



If you are interested in supporting the event through a monetary or in-kind sponsorship, or would like to donate a product or service for our auction table, please reach out to Jose Vargas (Sponsorship Coordinator) via email at sponsorships@sjp2academy.com.

Thank you, and stay tuned for more updates on this thrilling SJPII community event.



Dave Fanning



Inaugural Celebration Event

St John Paull II Academy's Inaugural Annual Ball

“Step back in time and help build our children’s future!”

Step back 100 years to the elegance of 1924 at The Royals Ball, set for the night of October 19th, 2024

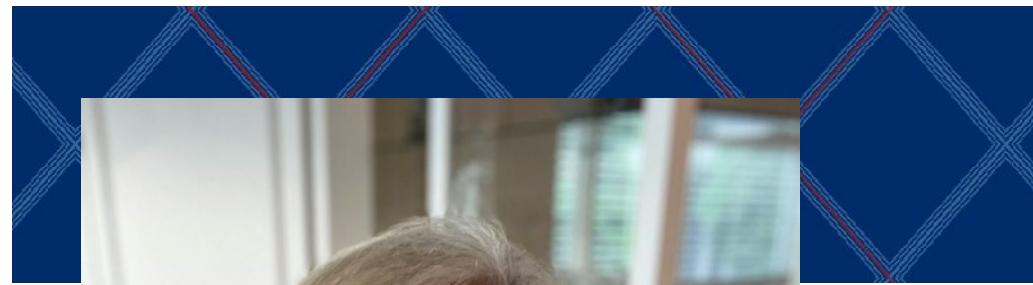
This unforgettable evening will be held at the prestigious Northview Golf Course, setting the stage for an enchanting night of laughter, fine food, live music and dancing.

Under the guidance of our chairs, Linda Prout and Daniel Cole, The Royals Ball Committee is hard at work ensuring this event surpasses expectations. Inspired by the year 1924, we invite you to immerse yourself in the elegance of a bygone age. Get ready to don your finest attire as we recreate the magic of the roaring twenties.

There will be an array of live and silent auctions, offering you the chance to win incredible prizes. From exquisite jewelry to luxurious trips, there will be something for everyone.

So, mark your calendars and get ready for a night of sophistication and unforgettable memories.

Tickets will be available next year, but if you wish to register an interest or to learn more about The Royals’ Principal and Legacy sponsorships and donations for this event, we’d be delighted to hear from you.



Linda Prout



Daniel Cole

Contact: Linda Prout and Daniel Cole
gala@sjp2gala.com





Pulpit Talks

Last Sunday was a momentous day for us at SJP2. We conducted pulpit talks at various supporting parishes, with parents and students taking turns to speak about their personal experiences and perspectives. It was truly heartwarming to witness the genuine enthusiasm and passion with which our speakers delivered their messages, leaving a lasting impact on the audience.



We are deeply grateful to all the pastors who allowed us to speak and helped us to make this event a tremendous success. Their unwavering support means a lot to us and motivates us to continue our mission of providing a quality education to our students. We look forward to continued collaboration with them and strengthening our relationship further.

Go Royals!

The recent weekend marked a significant achievement for our school as our Cross Country team made history by representing us in the BC Provincials.

We proudly clinched our first BC PROVINCIAL BANNER, and this feat would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of Mr. Wilkie and our exceptional athletes. We congratulate them on their outstanding performance and making our school proud.



For a joyful Christmas season

Dear Saint John Paul II Supporters,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for your incredible support, your inquiries about our new campus, and your unwavering participation in our annual appeal and capital campaign. It is truly because of our remarkable community that Saint John Paul II Academy continues to thrive and will thrive for generations to come.



As we approach the joyous season of Christmas, filled with reflection and gratitude, I would like to extend a special invitation to you. I humbly request that you consider making a meaningful gift to our school, whether it is directed towards our bursary program, the annual appeal, or any other area that personally resonates with you. Your generous contribution will undoubtedly contribute to the creation of a brighter future for our students.

For those of you who are already actively participating, I wish to extend a warm invitation to explore the opportunity of increasing your monthly giving or making a significant contribution that will leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

In addition to expressing my gratitude, I also wanted to share some exciting news with you. We will be hosting our very first inaugural golf tournament in May 2024. It promises to be a truly exceptional event, and we would be absolutely thrilled to have you join us. Furthermore, if you happen to know of any companies that may be interested in participating in our sponsorship program for the tournament, we would be delighted to have their support.

Lastly, I am thrilled to announce that we will be hosting our inaugural Royals Ball next October. We cordially invite you and your families to join us for this special celebration. The proceeds from the Ball will directly benefit our existing school, ensuring that we can continue to provide top-notch education and resources to our students.

On behalf of Saint John Paul II Academy, I want to sincerely thank you for all that you have done and continue to do for our school. Your unwavering support truly makes an incredible difference in the lives of our students, and we are immensely grateful for your generosity.

With warmest wishes for a joyous Christmas season,

Silveria Roselli,
Foundation Board Member
Director of Advancement

Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace

Lord, make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

And where there's doubt, Faith.

Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek.

So much to be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there's despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there's sadness, joy.

Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

It is in giving that we receive;

And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Amen



SAINT JOHN PAUL II
ACADEMY