

# MacEachen accepts Sweeney Award

Speaking at the third annual St. Jerome's Feast on September 26, the Hon. Allan J. MacEachen, the recipient of the Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Leadership in Catholic Education, drew a parallel between St. Jerome's and his own university, St. Francis Xavier in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Both are long-established Catholic universities that were originally led by German-speaking priests. Strangely, after St. FX's first rector, Fr. John Schulte, "mysteriously disappeared from his post," MacEachen said, he resurfaced as an Anglican priest—in Berlin, Ontario.

The St. Jerome's Feast is an annual dinner held to recognize leadership in Catholic post-secondary education and to raise funds for St. Jerome's graduate program in Roman Catholic Life and Thought. MacEachen, a cabinet minister under Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau, spoke of the Scottish-Catholic tradition "proudly transplanted in Cape Breton" that gave rise to St. FX. "It is my strong conviction that it is important to maintain that tradition that goes back so far, and that means so much to the people I come from," he said.

"Dr. MacEachen is an outstanding example of the extraordinary leadership provided by alumni in the cause of Catholic post-secondary education," says Michael W. Higgins, St. Jerome's president. "Throughout a distinguished political career, Dr. MacEachen has never flagged in his commitment to St. FX and, in honouring him, we honour all those who, through their voluntary efforts, further the historic role of Catholic universities."

After graduating from St. FX in 1944, MacEachen was a professor there until he was

elected to Parliament in the Cape Breton riding of Inverness-Richmond (later Cape Breton Highland-Canso) in 1953. Over the next 26 years he held many cabinet-level posts, including the ministries of Labour, National Health and Welfare, Manpower and Immigration, and Finance, and he was

Government House Leader, President of the Privy Council, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Deputy Prime Minister. He also served in the Senate from 1984 to 1996.

At St. Francis Xavier, MacEachen served on the board of governors for six years and was instrumental in creating the Sister Veronica Chair in Gaelic Studies. He was also the driving force behind the establishment of the Chair in Social Justice. "If the Christian Church is ever to find common ground with youth," he said, "that common ground must be on the matter of social justice for the world." 🇮🇪



*Current Chancellor Richard Gwyn, right, with the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, recipient of the Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Leadership in Catholic Education.*

Photo: Mike Christie

## SJU News

The Legal Studies and Criminology Option, directed by **Fred Desroches**, Sociology, is now based at St. Jerome's. New interdisciplinary courses include Introduction to Legal Studies, offered this fall, and Convict Literature—writing by prisoners and about prisons—planned for 2004. This interdisciplinary program complements St. Jerome's activities in Sexuality, Marriage and the Family, Medieval Studies, Italian Studies, and a nascent Irish Studies program. ♦ *The Dutch Wife* (Penguin, 2002), the latest novel by **Eric McCormack**, English, was a finalist for the 2003 Toronto Book Award. ♦ Again this year, in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts, St. Jerome's is hosting a series of

public readings by Canadian poets, novelists, playwrights, and essayists. The series, coordinated by English professor **Gary Draper**, includes Stan Dragland, Neil Bissoondath, Gail Bowen, Joan Crate, Barry Dempster, Donna Morrissey, and Karen Solie, and may include John Brooke. ♦ **B.J. Rye**, Psychology, is collaborating with a former St. Jerome's student, Sarena Weil, on a Canadian Mental Health Association project. Weil won a Trillium grant to set up and evaluate an intervention program for high school students who suffer from social anxiety and depression. Rye also helped organize a conference in Toronto for an Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome Women's Support Group, won a \$5000 grant from the Hospital for Sick Children for the event, and spoke at the conference, which took place August 15-17, just after the widespread power outage.