



Michael W. Higgins is President of St. Jerome's University.

Photo: Ron Hewson

An Easter community

by Michael W. Higgins

The end of each academic year is a time to say farewell, whether to a class of freshly-minted graduands or, as is most pointedly the case this year, to colleagues and friends who have served St. Jerome's long, truly, and well.

This year, Professor Eric McCormack—that internationally recognized novelist, raconteur, bon vivant and Scourge of the Scots—retires after several decades of exemplary teaching at St. Jerome's. And Alice Carroll, Administrative Assistant to the Dean, whose patience, humour, and commitment have made her a treasured part of our administrative team, also bids us adieu.

These leave-takings are the richly deserved outcomes of careers fulfilled and now rewarded with leisure.

Sometimes, leisure comes before a career reaches fulfillment. Such is the case with Linda Kenyon, long the editor of *SJU Update* and part of the St. Jerome's extended family, who is embarking upon a two-year sailing adventure and giving over her editorial role to become our roving travel correspondent.

But we have also had occasion this past year to bid sad farewells to three of our

reminded, now as always, that St. Jerome's is an Easter community.


The past year has also seen many new initiatives undertaken, many honours conferred, many new books published, research projects funded, and undergraduate and specialist programs launched.

St. Jerome's remains an effervescent, engaging, and enthusiastic environment. The new faculty and staff members who are joining our ranks are fully committed to perpetuating the tradition established by those who have left.

Like the larger Catholic world of which it is a microcosm, St. Jerome's is continually rediscovering itself, sometimes struggling, sometimes searching, but always imagining and implementing new ways of expressing itself. Whether it is in finding new points of connection with our "day" or "off-campus" students, en fleshing our deepest convictions in social justice initiatives, or developing academic programs designed to respond to a changing—sometimes maniacally so—world, it is always the case that the mind, heart, and spirit of the St. Jerome's community remain fully engaged.

Inside this issue of *Update*, therefore, you will encounter stories of the pioneering changes and past accomplishments of our present St. Jerome's community along with the

flesh-and-blood achievements—vibrant and never banal—that define the lives of our friends and graduates.

As I say, we are an Easter community. It is spring. We have lived within the shadow of sadness for several months, but we best render homage to those whom we bid farewell when we take on, with grace and hope, the challenges that face us on the threshold of the Now. 

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professors, each of whom died before he reached his retirement age: Dr. Floyd Centore (1938-2003); Dr. Gerald Stortz (1947-2003); and Dr. Gerard Campbell (1942-2004). All three shared a commitment to the craft of teaching; all three were passionate, in their several and distinct ways, about St. Jerome's University and its ethos; all three are sorely missed.

So many farewells in so short a time may give rise to gloominess. But I am