

Interfaith Insider

Welcome to the SAIT Interfaith Centre monthly newsletter. Subscribe at interfaith@sait.ca to meet our team and stay up to date on all that's happening!



CHAT WITH A CHAPLAIN

Fr. Cristino Bouvette,
Catholic Chaplain
p.2



Learner
Services

Interfaith
Centre

Shanah Tovah!

This year, Sep 7, 2021 marks the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah (celebrated from the eve of the 6th to the eve of the 8th) and it's very fitting that it also marks the beginning of the first day of classes as we return to campus. Rosh Hashanah Jewish New Years (year 5782 on the Jewish calendar). A time full of traditions and celebrations with family and friends starting with the blowing of a Shofar (Ram's Horn) marking the end of a year and the ushering in of a new one. Blessing each other by dipping apple slices in honey denoting, "May your year be sweet like this."

The usual greeting is, "Shanah Tovah" which means "May it be a good year", however, the extended or more formal greeting is, "L'shanah tovah tikatevu v'teichateimu," "A good year, and may you be inscribed and sealed for blessing in the Book of Life." Jewish theology states that God has a Book of Life where the names of the righteous are written while the wicked are condemned to death. Observant Jews would therefore take the time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for prayer, reflecting on the past years mistakes to make amends and other good deeds. A time to make new and right all that may have gone wrong in the previous year and start anew.

May you all have a good and sweet year as we return to campus and may you find your names written in the Book of Life as you consider others with goodness and blessing.



The Interfaith Centre will be hosting International Peace Day on September 20 in MacDonald Hall as a Drop-in event from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm with the Labrynth and conversation tables

Interfaith Centre LEADS Student Akshita Sharma

The Interfaith Centre welcomes another wonderful Student Leader, Akshita Sharma. She's a wonderfully welcoming person that's always ready for engaging conversation with a warm-hearted smile.



Hello everyone, my name is Akshita Sharma, and I am an international student from India. I'm pursuing Business Administration diploma (Financial Services) from SAIT in my last semester.

I absolutely enjoy eating out, trying new restaurants, and swimming. I was brought up in a Hindu household and only had knowledge about my religion and traditions, through being an Interfaith student leader.

I wish to learn and understand different cultures and beliefs and hopefully embark my understandings to other SAIT students with the help of the chaplains.



Chat with a Chaplain

Fr. Cristino Bouvette,
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Reconciliation: This is Personal

I grew up well aware of my paternal grandmother's twelve years in residential school. Born on the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve near Edmonton, she was taken from her family to a school in Edmonton when she was only six years old. During that time her mother and one of her brothers passed away and she was not able to say goodbye. It would be impossible to catalogue all of the traumas she suffered.

As a testament to her faith, however, she remained unshaken in the convictions of her Christian upbringing which began at home long before she went to school. Her great-grandfather was one of



the first ordained Indigenous men in Christian ministry in a still unconfederated Canada. He was responsible for much of the Christian missionary work (often called 'evangelization') that took place among mostly the Cree and Dene people of Alberta. Despite mistreatment at the hands of sometimes abusive teachers and misguided efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples into a homogeneously tolerated way of life, my grandmother- Kokum, as her grandchildren called her- managed to preserve both her treasured Christian faith and her Indigenous heritage.

When I shared with her my intentions to enter the seminary to train for ordained ministry in the Catholic Church, she had nothing but love and support for me. I am ashamed to admit that, at that time, I was still largely ignorant of the extent to which my Church alongside other Christian and secular organizations participated in the inexcusable campaign to effectively eradicate our Indigenous culture. As I grew more aware of that shameful history I feared that she may be hurt by my aspirations. But she wasn't. Instead, she modelled for me the potential and the power of reconciliation between faith groups and Indigenous Canadians. In her honour, it remains my conviction that reconciliation, which has long been underway, can and will continue. Elders like my Kokum wanted it because they knew it was possible. We cannot let them down!

Interfaith Interface every Thursday

Interfaith Interface is a safe, inclusive and inspiring activity where students from different spiritual backgrounds and diverse cultures come together to engage in thought-provoking dialogue.

[Click Here](#) to join us for an online dialogue on MS Teams from 12:30 pm to 1:20 pm on Thursdays.