



Catholic Women in Leadership Program

Facilitated by St. Mary's University in collaboration with the Catholic Women's Leadership Foundation.

Delivery: Hybrid (online and in-person)

Duration: 9 weeks, plus a 2-day retreat

Dates:

- Tuesday, March 3, 2026
- Wednesday, March 11, 2026** (please note that all other sessions occur on Tuesday evenings)
- Tuesday, March 17, 2026
- Tuesday, March 24, 2026
- Tuesday, March 31, 2026
- Tuesday, April 7, 2026
- Tuesday, April 14, 2026
- Tuesday, April 21, 2026
- Tuesday, April 28, 2026
- TBA (2-day retreat)

Time and method of delivery:

- Weeknight sessions: Online via Teams, 6:30 to 8:30PM (MST)
- 2-day retreat: TBA, in-person at St. Mary's University, in Calgary, AB

Course fee: \$400.00 per person. Does not include travel to and from Calgary for the 2-day in-person retreat.

Course overview

What does it mean to be a woman in leadership in Catholic communities? How do you best lead with empathy, inclusion, and purpose in an increasingly divided world? And how might faith and interdisciplinarity help us innovate in our communities and institutions?

The **Catholic Women in Leadership Program** is designed to support Catholic women leaders in making effective and long-lasting change in their communities and institutions. With talks from experts across fields—from servant leadership to Indigenous ways of leading to finding your voice—this course leverages academic excellence, discussion, community, and real-world expertise to help you become a more effective and more empathetic leader to all of your community members.

Micro-credential

This course is part of St. Mary's University Continuing Education program. Participants will receive a Certificate of Completion to commemorate their effort.



Sessions

This course includes nine (9) 2-hour online sessions, beginning in March 2026, and concludes with a 2-day retreat.

Session 0: Virtual Meet and Greet

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 6:30PM to 8:00PM MST (Teams)

A virtual meet and greet for participants, instructors, and leaders to get to know one another before the program officially begins. With an opening prayer and blessing led by Father Troy Nguyen.

Session 1: Anchored in Faith: Catholic Women Leading with Purpose, with Dr. Scott Morrison, Dr. Andrea Holowka, Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico, and Jennifer Woo

*Wednesday**, March 11, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)*

Dr. Scott Morrison, Interim President of St. Mary's University, will moderate a conversation with three distinguished women whose careers embody courageous, faith-informed leadership. Dr. Andrea Holowka, Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico, and Jennifer Woo will share reflections on how their faith has shaped their professional journeys and supported their development into senior leadership roles.

Session 2: Spiritual Leadership and Social Justice, with Nikayla Reize

Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

One of the cornerstones of the Church, social justice promotes the common good and egalitarianism for all individuals. In this session, led by Bible scholar Nikayla Reize, learn how spiritual leadership and social justice exist hand-in-hand, as well as how both can be implemented to support and empower all members of your communities and organizations.

Session 3: Indigenous Ways of Leading and the Catholic Relationship, with Dr. Teresa Miles

Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

Indigenous communities have much to offer across disciplines. In leadership, Indigenous ways of knowing offers participants strategies for leading with empathy, purpose, and collaboration. This talk, led by Dr. Teresa Miles, will explore how Indigenous ways of leading complement and challenge Catholic ways of leading, as well as the complex—and centuries-long—relationship between Indigenous communities and the Catholic Church.

Session 4: Connected Leadership: Finding Your Voice Through Service and Steady Influence, with Linda Olsen

Tuesday, March 31, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

Join Linda Olsen, award-winning journalist and community leader, for an interactive session on leadership that lasts. Discover how community engagement through service, storytelling, and authentic connection builds real influence. Learn why quiet, consistent leadership often creates the most powerful impact, and how to find your unique voice as a leader. Through discussion and



breakout reflection, explore your strengths and define your leadership style. For emerging women leaders ready to lead with purpose and presence.

Session 5: Living as Missionary Disciples, with Bishop William T. McGrattan and Dr. Peter Baltutis

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

In his 2013 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), Pope Francis called upon all the baptized to be "missionary disciples." In this interactive presentation, Bishop William T. McGrattan of Calgary and Dr. Peter Baltutis, Catholic Women's League Chair for Catholic Studies at St. Mary's University, will unpack Pope Francis' vision for the Catholic Church in the 21st century and provide practical suggestions on how to transform ourselves from passive observers into active witnesses rooted in mission.

Session 6: Inclusion as a Sacred Responsibility: From Welcome to Belonging in Faithful Leadership Practice, with Trisa Soroski

Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

This session invites Catholic women in leadership to reflect deeply on how inclusion is lived—not only proclaimed—within our communities. Grounded in Scripture and Catholic social teaching, this interactive session explores the difference between welcome as intention and belonging as experience. Through reflection, dialogue, and real-world case studies we will consider how faithful leadership calls us to move beyond words toward concrete actions that embody the Gospel in practice.

Session 7: Leading through Feminine Genius: Discernment and Mission, with Keelin Kennedy, and Michelle Diment

Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

Led by St. Mary's University's Campus Ministry Coordinator Keelin Kennedy & Spiritual Director Michelle Diment, this session will explore how Christian discernment shapes faithful leaders. Through the witness of St. Ignatius of Loyola, participants will learn how discernment differs from ordinary decision-making, engaging in practical tools. Reflecting on St. John Paul II's teaching on the role of women and the gift of the feminine genius, this lecture will offer concrete discernment tools: the Examen prayer and the Rules for Discernment of Spirits, which can be applied in a way that is not only practical, but life-changing in both personal & professional life. Father Troy Nguyen will begin with a blessing and short introduction on how to engage the world through St. Justin Martyr.

Session 8: Resiliency and Stress Management, with Kathryn Strilchuk

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30PM MST (Teams)

Women in leadership often face unique and compounding stressors that can impact well-being and effectiveness. This presentation explores resiliency as a vital leadership skill, highlighting common challenges while offering practical, evidence-based coping strategies. Participants will gain actionable tools to manage stress, strengthen resilience, and move forward with increased insight, confidence and sustainability.

2-day Retreat and Celebration

TBD (in-person in Calgary, AB)

This 2-day retreat is a chance for all participants to connect in a peaceful, in-person environment and will include guided leadership and reflection activities, as well as a presentation of the Certificate of Completion.

Method of Teaching

This course is hybrid and will be delivered via Teams (weeknight sessions) and in-person (2-day retreat, TBD in 2026), and will include interactive group discussions, sessions led by experts, assigned readings, and reflection assignments. All participants will be required to complete the assigned reading and reflections, and participate in group discussions. Students will receive access to St. Mary's University Learning Management System (D2L) to access course content, suggested and required readings, and discussion threads. Attendance is required.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Implement and prioritize Catholic servant leadership, no matter the faith context of your organization
2. Compare methods and strategies of leadership, and implement various methods depending on the situation, including Indigenous ways of leading
3. Support and advocate for all members of your community, including diverse voices and youth
4. Promote and actualize accommodations and accessibility
5. Apply inclusive leadership principles in real-world situations
6. Manage and resolve conflicts as a leader, and navigate challenging conversations with people of different backgrounds and contexts
7. Support and advocate for yourself and your team members to prioritize stress management and resiliency
8. Understand how Faith can help you to prioritize service, compassion, and social justice in your community, organization, and day-to-day life

Program Support

Questions regarding the curriculum or the program can be directed to Maddie Beaulieu, Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Arts & Sciences (madeleine.beaulieu@stmu.ca) or to Jennifer Nate, Executive Assistant to the Vice President Academic (jennifer.nate@stmu.ca).

About the Instructors

Dr. Scott Morrison is the Interim President of St. Mary's University in Calgary. Prior to this, Dr. Morrison was the Superintendent of Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools. He has also served as both the President of the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the Executive Director of the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA). Prior to becoming a superintendent, Scott served as a teacher and principal at both the elementary and secondary

levels. Throughout much of us career, Scott has served as a sessional lecturer at both St. Mary's University and the University of Calgary and has presented across the province on topics such as leadership, organizational storytelling, safe and caring schools, and academic excellence.

Dr. Andrea Holowka is the Superintendent for Christ The Redeemer (CTR) Catholic Schools, serving approximately 10,500 students in Okotoks, High River, Brooks, Strathmore, Canmore, Drumheller, and Oyen. Since 1995, she has held teacher, principal, and superintendent roles, previously with the Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic School District. She holds a doctorate in education, with a dissertation focus on systemic approaches to mental health interventions in school divisions. She has served as President of the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) and President of the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS). Her leadership emphasizes collaborative and system-level change, through service and within the lens of a Catholic worldview. Andrea has led professional development and has been featured as a conference presenter on the topics of organizational change, academic achievement, data-informed practices, governance, student mental health supports, Catholic education, faith formation, rural education, and educational leadership.

Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico is a retired Catholic educator with experience as a teacher, principal, and associate superintendent in Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools who brings her perspective from her home in Brooks. In 2017 she became the founding executive director for GrACE (Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education), a provincial advocacy movement for Catholic education created in partnership with the Bishops of Alberta, Alberta Catholic School Trustees and the Council for Catholic Superintendents. Bonnie holds a PhD in Catholic School leadership from the University of Calgary and has served in various leadership roles including president of Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) and vice-chair of NET Canada. She has been a sessional instructor at St Mary's University, is currently chair of the Diocese of Calgary's Renewal Leadership Team and serves as the Bishop's Delegate on the Board of Governors for St Mary's University. Bonnie is active within her home parish of St Mary's in Brooks. As a wife, mother and grandmother, family remains central in her life. Bonnie lives by the maxim that leadership requires our "yes" and is embedded in faithful ways of knowing our call, our charisms and our hearts.

Jennifer Woo is the Interim Dean of Education at St. Mary's University, Calgary, Alberta, has extensive leadership experience and a distinguished record of service in Alberta's educational community. She held senior administrative positions at the Calgary Catholic School District, including Director and Supervisor of Religious Education and Family Life, and served as principal, and vice-principal in K-9 schools. Her work consistently advanced student achievement, teacher development, and the integration of faith and learning. She also led provincial initiatives, including Catholic education program reviews and the development of a Catholic School Identity Assessment Tool. In addition to her administrative accomplishments, Mrs. Woo continues to serve as a sessional instructor at St. Mary's University, teaching courses on the spirituality and philosophy of Catholic education. She holds a Master of Education from the University of Toronto, a Graduate Diploma in Canon Law, and superintendent and leadership certifications.

Nikayla Reize (PhD Candidate, M.A., B.Th.) is a Canadian biblical scholar who was born and raised on Treaty 7 land. With a deep passion for embodied and collective liberation, she brings both heart and scholarship to her work. After 17 years of pastoring in Calgary, Nikayla has shared her love of

learning and critical faith engagement by teaching in universities and churches across Canada. She now serves as an adjunct Professor of Religious Studies at St. Mary's University and her specialty is Sabbath, Jubilee, and social-justice in Luke-Acts.

Teresa Miles (PhD, M.Ed, B.A.): With roots in both Cree and Ukrainian heritage, I am a proud member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation in Manitoba, which is part of Treaty 5 territory. My academic journey has led me to earn a B.A. (Hons) in Criminal Justice, a Master of Education, and a Doctor of Education. My research has focused on “The emotional experiences of Non-Indigenous educators teaching Indigenous curricula: exploring reconciliation through narrative inquiry”. This work is deeply personal and meaningful, reflecting my commitment to fostering understanding and collaboration between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous communities. Currently I am teaching Indigenous Education to pre-service teachers at St. Mary's University. My role involves creating learning opportunities that are inclusive, engaging, and culturally relevant, drawing on my own experiences and research to support future educators. I believe education is a powerful tool for reconciliation and personal growth, and I am passionate about making a positive impact in this field.

Linda Olsen is an award-winning journalist and proud Calgarian who has spent more than three decades amplifying the stories that shape the city. After a 36-year career in the newsroom, where her experience and perspective guided coverage, and supported the team at Global News Calgary, she continues to champion community leadership through storytelling, mentorship, and connection. A longtime emcee and keynote speaker, Linda led the acclaimed Global Calgary Woman of Vision series for 15 years, celebrating extraordinary women and uniting the community at a sold-out luncheon on International Women's Day. Her commitment to the community includes roles with the Calgary Children's Foundation, Parks Foundation Calgary, Believe in the Gold, and as Co-Chair of United Way of Calgary and Area's 2025 campaign. Today, Linda hosts and produces The Spotlight Hour with Linda Olsen, a radio and podcast series where she continues her mission of elevating inspiring Calgarians and championing leadership in all its forms.

Dr. Peter E. Baltutis is associate professor of history and religious studies at St. Mary's University, where he also holds the Catholic Women's League (CWL) endowed Chair for Catholic Studies and serves as the Chair of Humanities. He earned a B.A. (honors) in history from the University of Richmond and a M.A. in history from the University of Toronto. He also earned a M.A. in theology and Ph.D. in theology from the University of St. Michael's College, the Catholic Graduate Faculty of Theology in the University of Toronto. Specializing in the history of Christianity/church history, his research focuses on the historical and theological development of the Catholic social tradition in Canada.

Bishop William T. McGrattan serves as the 8th bishop of the Diocese of Calgary. A native of London, Ontario, he received his undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of Western Ontario, followed by a Master of Divinity from St. Peter's Seminary in London. Following his ordination in 1987, Bishop McGrattan continued his studies in theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, where he received a Licentiate in Fundamental Moral Theology in 1992. He served on the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary in London as an associate professor, vice-rector and dean of theology, and was appointed as rector of the seminary in 1997. In 2010, he was ordained as Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto and Titular Bishop of Furnos Minor. In 2014, he was



appointed bishop of the Diocese of Peterborough, Ontario. In 2017, he was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Calgary.

Trisa Soroski is the inaugural Executive Director of the Woitas Centre for Inclusive Education at St. Mary's University in Calgary, where she leads innovative and practical work supporting both pre-service and in-service teachers in advancing inclusive practice across Calgary and Alberta. With more than thirty years of experience as a teacher, consultant, administrator, and supervisor with the Calgary Catholic School District, Trisa brings a deeply rooted understanding of faith-based education, leadership, and community building. Her work is shaped by a conviction that inclusion is not simply a stated value, but a lived responsibility grounded in Gospel witness and Catholic social teaching.

Keelin Kennedy is the Campus Ministry Coordinator at St. Mary's University in Calgary. She has eight years of experience in youth and young adult ministry. A graduate of Encounter School of Ministries, Keelin is deeply committed to the New Evangelization and to accompanying young adults in their faith formation. She has a heart for helping young adults discover their true identity as beloved sons and daughters of God.

Michelle Diment is a wife of 33 years, mother of five and grandmother to two, but most of all she is a beloved daughter of the King and missionary disciple of Jesus Christ. Michelle is passionate about serving in her parish and community through evangelization ministry, teaching discernment, and spiritual direction. Michelle obtained a Certificate of Spiritual Formation from the Avila Institute, and is a certified spiritual director through the Lanteri Center for Ignatian Spirituality in Denver.

Kathryn Strilchuk is a lifelong learner with more than 35 years of experience in education, spanning K–12 classrooms, school leadership, and post-secondary student success. Before joining St. Mary's University as Director of Student Success, she served as a teacher and administrator in Alberta and British Columbia, where she developed a deep commitment to equity, growth, and learner-centered leadership. A values-based leader, Kathryn is passionate about creating meaningful opportunities and supportive pathways for the students and communities she serves. Grounded and reflective, she brings curiosity, compassion, and intentionality to her work. Outside of her professional life, Kathryn finds balance through reading, yoga, and time outdoors, and whenever possible, recharging on the beaches of Maui with her son, the light of her life.