



SPOTLIGHT ON MARYMOUNT
A World of Possibilities
November Edition - 2013

Imagine taking students, students whose lives center around iPhones, computers and ipods, to see a movie about other students who look at the world a little differently. The movie was *Shekinah: The Intimate Life of Hasidic Women*. It is the story of young girls from around the world brought to a sanctuary in Ste. Agathe to learn the ways of Hasidic women. There were a few gasps when the theatre full of students heard that these teens were not permitted any technical devices!

Accompanied to the movie by Vice-Principal, Ms. Dina Vourdousis, they learned more about the sanctuary and the girls, the way of life and what is expected of them, than if they had read it in a book.



“There’s wisdom in tradition but much of that world is gone now” -

The Marymount students were deeply affected by ‘that world’ they saw on the screen - a world of long skirts, wigs, weddings that segregate the women from the men and ‘match makers’. It clearly left them thinking and, more importantly, asking questions:

“Interesting lifestyles, my mother is very strict and this is similar but different in that it’s a faith and for my mom it’s what she believes in and I don’t necessarily agree but my mom knows what is best for me. The film was really really something...it hit me in the heart. (Alexandra)

Another saw it differently, “I think their freedom is limited and they don’t have much choice and they are still kids”. (Denisha)

During a question period at the end of the movie, “Besides sharing your traditions with Gentiles what other message were you trying to send?” (Alexandra) The director, Abbey Jack Neidik, replied, “ First, to show that in dividing us from them it’s easy to put others down, even to the point of extermination. I hope this film shows that humans have to ask questions and even question authority, otherwise division makes it easy to destroy other humans for being different and I hope this film shows that we share human values and to always question ...even God.”

One of the Marymount girls put it quite succinctly - “It was trying to tell you, do what you want to do, not what others tell you to do. Also, I thought it was inspiring that it is not your body that makes you beautiful, it’s the type of person that you are”. (Sequoia)

What better lesson can anyone walk away with after seeing a film?

Bravo Marymount for leading the way in opening up the minds of young people and encouraging them to ask questions!

Then there were questions about War.

On November 6, Mr. Alan Canavan, a veteran of WW1, came to Marymount to speak to the student body.



The students at Marymount joined in assembly and heard first hand what it was like to be sent away from home, from your

family, from everything you knew, straight into the ravages of war. It was somewhat hard for some of them to even consider the hardships he and others went through - unimaginable.

At the age of 92, Canavan faced the students and told them of the horrors of being in a foreign country, eating rationed food - a small pat of margarine "straight into the mouth" because he had nothing to spread it on. Watching his friends fall beside him, but having to move on, leaving them behind.

The room was so quiet, you could hear a pin drop. Canavan brought the realities of war to the students, dispelling any thought of grandeur and heroism. When he came home to Canada..."there was no special welcome, no parades", he went right back to work.

On November 11, the students held their own Remembrance Day Ceremony thinking of those who fought during the wars, some the same age as they are now. While some of the students paid homage in the school, others were taken on a school history trip to Ottawa for the Remembrance ceremonies there.



On another travel

note, the International

students became a bit more international as they headed off to Quebec city for some sightseeing there. - Learning that the best way to study other cultures, places and people, is by visiting.

On Monday, November 25, members of the IB Council and Student Council students packed in to Theatre St. Denis for We Day - a high energy, inspiring day of empowerment. The students listened to words of encouragement urging them to make a difference, to be that change wherever they are in the world. They learned that each and every one of them CAN make a difference. - Especially if they join together in doing so. Indeed, the theme of the day was "working together".

Craig and Marc Kielburger co founders of 'Free The Children' got the day off to a rousing start.

Guest speakers included Martin Luther King Jr III, The Kenyan Boy's Choir, Molly Burke (visually impaired out of this world speaker), Spoken Word Guest, Christian Tse, Spencer West and Denisha Prendergast, granddaughter of Bob Marley.



Coming up in December - a very busy month as we head into the holidays. On December 10, a group of students will go shopping for toys with money collected in the school to give to Sun Youth. On December 11, the caring continues with the Marymount Toy/Food Drive in collaboration with Sun Youth and Tours de Jeux. This is the second year we have done this and it has proven itself to be a great way of getting into the spirit of giving. The students and teachers will bring in tinned food and new toys for Sun

Youth to distribute to the needy. Last year we filled four large drums with toys! Let's see if we can beat that this year! You know we can!

