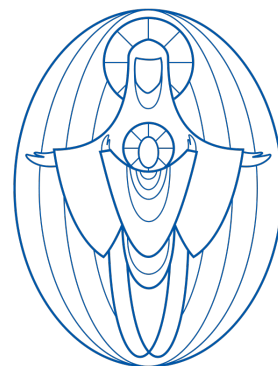




# From the Heart



ST. NICHOLAS SCHOOL, IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY ACADEMY,  
AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SCHOOL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

## REMAINING A JOURNALIST IN EMOTIONAL TIMES

The world was “supposedly” supposed to end in 2012, with the end of the Mayan calendar – at least some thought it would. But thankfully, for all of us, that didn’t happen – and Alex Karpa, who was 14 at the time, was able to graduate from Immaculate Heart of Mary School. He graduated alongside 26 other classmates, including his twin sister Adrianna (see photos below).

“A bunch of us, 12 or 13 from IHMS, went to St. Paul’s High School together,” recalls Alex. “All my old friends are still from the school. That’s neat. IHMS was the place you made friends and stuck with them. And my girlfriend also went to IHMS.”

Alex is now a National Reporter with CityNews in Winnipeg and from time to time, is called upon to act as the Newsroom Producer. He began working there in March 2020. His career, however, started back in the Spring of 2018 when Catherine Ryczak, a fellow IHMS alum, told him about the Creative Communications program at Red River College that piqued Alex’s interest.

“What I like about working in media is day in and day out, you don’t know what the day will look like. You’re learning, learning, learning,” says Alex about his work. “And that makes for a unique job, the not knowing what’s going to happen day to day.”

Every working day in the media is a new adventure, he says, with some days being harder than others. For him, there has been

nothing harder than covering the war in Ukraine – a topic close to his heart.

“As a journalist, you need to keep your emotions in check. It’s been tough, especially at the beginning (of the war) because I was being asked for translations, history, and culture, contacts, etc.”



Twelve years after graduating, Alex is still very active in the Ukrainian community. He currently dances in Rusalka, plays in the Ukrainian polka band “Budmo”, and sings in Hoosli with his Tato, Mark Karpa. He also attends Sts. Volodymyr and Olga Cathedral.

Alex says the reason why he is so involved in the Ukrainian community is because of IHMS and the values he was taught during his time there.

Alex fondly looks back at his time at IHMS –

discussing memories constantly with family and friends. When he was in Grade 5, he was given one of the lead roles in the Spring Ukrainian concert, and apparently things didn’t go according to plan.

“I was so nervous! We didn’t know, but we started the wrong scene and just went with it during the show,” he laughs. “We got off stage, and Pani Stanowych, the music teacher at the time, informed us and we just did that same scene all over again.”

Both the Christmas and Ukrainian concerts put together at IHMS remain in his memory and some family traditions started during those performances remain today, “Part of our Christmas tradition, after those shows, was that no matter how late it was, Dad would take us to McDonald’s after.” He smiles.

We asked Alex what he would have told himself in Grade 8.

“Don’t be afraid to do anything! Get out of your comfort zone. Maybe I’d tell him to try harder (I was a bit of a goofball in school). The world is your oyster. Work hard, and you can do anything you want to. Don’t be afraid. Go do it, and you’ll never regret it.”

“But it’s a different world now, then when I was at IHMS. There was really no social media, I didn’t have a phone.”

“Treat people with respect. Be polite. And talk to each other as human beings.”



“Don’t be afraid.  
Go do it, and  
you’ll never  
regret it!”

# YOUR MEMORIES OF IHMS



Sparked by this year's Back to School campaign letter, Allan Buhay ('65), a long-time friend of IHMS and the Sisters, reminisced about being among the first students to sit at new desks and attend the brand-new IHMS, even bringing copies of the first IHMS yearbooks!

With an original budget of \$200,000, IHMS was built next to St. Nicholas School, where students had a front-row seat for the exciting construction of the modern new school.

"We watched the new school being built from our classroom windows," he says. "I remember being fascinated by the plastic hoarding and construction heaters, where workers poured the concrete through the winter."

Allan recalls that the new school opened on the last day of classes in June 1962, which gave staff and workers a couple of months to transfer everything from St. Nicholas before it would eventually be demolished.

"It still had the new-school smell in September," laughs Allan.

A creative youth, Allan's interest in art and design was nurtured by the Sisters, who were always on the lookout for poster competitions for him to enter.

"The first competition I entered was an anti-smoking campaign for the Canadian Cancer Society. Third prize!" The next, for Manitoba Education Week, garnered a silver. His third entry, for the Canadian Forestry Association's fire prevention efforts, won first prize for Manitoba and a presentation in Premier Sterling Lyon's office. "And then that poster won first prize in all of Canada, which included a trip to Ottawa with a parent."

This love of design would become Allan's professional pursuit as well. A graduate of Red River's architectural drafting program, Allan spent his career as an electrical draftsman working on hydroelectric stations.

After spending a number of years in retirement enjoying the climate of beautiful British Columbia, Allan returned to Winnipeg to help care for his mom following his father's death. His mother would eventually live at Holy Family Home, and Allan himself

has lived at the Holy Family Home Tower since 2019.

"I applied in 2016 for an apartment, and there were 32 people ahead of me on the list!"

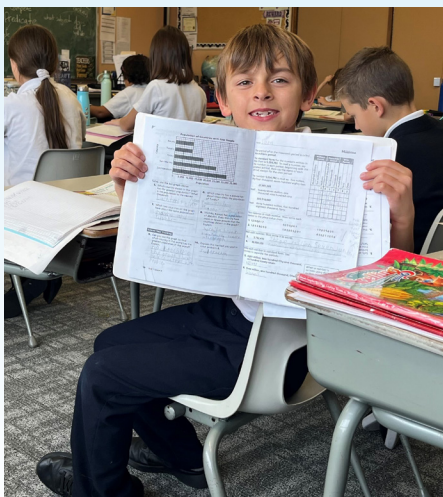
Living on the Holy Family campus has also rekindled other relationships.

"Deacon Humniski was my Grade 9 teacher, as well as for Phys. Ed., Science and French. Now we are neighbours." Allan says fondly. "And I'm back with the Sisters again. Hopefully the Tower will be a stepping stone to Holy Family Home if I live long enough."

We are grateful for friends like Allan, who value the caring influence of the Sisters and powerful formative experiences of St. Nicholas and Immaculate Heart schools.



"The beautiful new desks and molded fibreglass chairs were so futuristic!" – Allan



## THANK YOU FOR MAKING LEARNING MORE COMFORTABLE!

Three classrooms will be wholly refurbished thanks to your generosity during the annual Back to School fundraising campaign!

Sam, the young son of Julianna (class of 2002), is studying math at the same desk as his mom did 20 years ago and Allan Buhay did 60 years ago. There is, of course, a certain charm in this legacy, but students deserve modern and comfortable learning environments that grow with them.

Did you know that IHMS receives no government funding for capital costs? While the teachers and Sisters create an enriching environment rooted in deep faith and our beautiful Ukrainian culture in shkola, any renovations rely on generous donations. Gifts from people like you, who appreciate the school's contribution to the lives of so many children. Thank you for your invaluable gift!

Thanks to you, old chairs and desks can finally graduate!



# WHERE ARE YOU NOW?



**Darian Picklyk (2013)** credits IHMS as foundational to his success. "I got to school early and played sports in the gym with other kids every day. I am so happy I did Running Club with Mr. Dedio, because it really built mental strength." Following IHMS, Darian attended St. Paul's High School, where he continued to play volleyball as his sport. He spent six years (one more than usual, thanks to COVID) as a member of the University of Winnipeg Men's Volleyball Team while completing a degree in Marketing and Communications in 2022. He became the libero on Canada's Men's National Team in 2023 – an important defensive position required to hustle and protect his teammates – and won the coveted 2023 Pan American Cup against Brazil in Guadalajara. He was recently invited to help coach Volleyball Canada's National Excellence Program, an intensive training program for grade 12 students who intend to continue their development towards the national program and/or play volleyball professionally. How has IHMS influenced him as a player and a coach? "The teachers and coaches instilled being a good teammate, being responsible, and being a good human. That has really stuck with me throughout my career." Congratulations, Darian!

## YOU KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL WHEN PEOPLE COME BACK!

### Immaculate Heart has five alumni on its current staff:

Sandra Copp (Educational Assistant) '91 & Super Niner  
Oksana Dudych (Administrative Assistant) '91  
Ola Paulic (Resource Teacher) '05 & Super Niner  
Nicholas Szun (Information Technology Coordinator) '14  
Lesia Wozny (Administrative Assistant) '98 & Super Niner

"IHMS was the first Canadian school I attended as a newcomer and it will always hold a very special place in my heart. As scary as it was to go to school where you didn't know anybody or the language they speak, the kindness from the Sisters, teachers and the students made it so much easier.

Years later the journey of life led me back to Immaculate Heart, where I started working alongside some of my first Canadian teachers and over the years made many lifelong friends. The extra-special moment came a few years later, when my children began their learning journey with Sister Anne and experienced the same caring and nurturing environment at IHMS. I am so blessed and thankful for the opportunity to be a part of IHMS!" –*Oksana Dudych*



## SAVE THE DATE!



- March 9: IHMS Fund Raising Dinner
- March 18-22: Ukrainian Week
- March 21: Ukrainian Week Concert
- June 24: Grades 5-8 Annual Awards Day
- June 26: Graduation Divine Liturgy
- June 26: Graduation Dinner & Dance





# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR SCHOOL

Happy New Year! May you be blessed with good health in the New Year.

What a wonderful beginning to the new calendar year! The children participated in a wonderful Feast of Theophany prayer service and witnessed Father Daniel Wach OSBM (School Chaplain) bless water by the beautiful ice cross in front of the school. The IHMS Choir also brought Christmas and New Year's greetings by carolling at the Festival of Carols, and participating in a carolling tour to many homes in the community including visiting the Sisters at Bethany Home. The basketball season is underway with four teams taking to the court, and Running Club has started up with many of our young athletes beginning to train for the indoor and outdoor track season.

The Grades 7 and 8 students are proudly using the new desks and chairs that have furnished their classrooms as part of the Back to School Campaign last summer. Over the past few years the interior of the school has experienced quite a facelift with new flooring throughout the school, new window coverings, refinished cabinets and closets, repainted gymnasium and a newly refinished gym floor. The school looks great!

We currently have 71 students enrolled from Ukraine (as a result of the war). IHMS continues to support them and their adjustment to life in Canada. Assistance is provided with tuition, school uniforms, school supplies, before / after school child care expenses and Ukrainian / English translation services. It's great to see so many of the newcomer children taking an active part in school activities such as athletics, singing in the choir, participating in school theatrical productions and much more. The parents too are getting involved in many school committees and volunteer activities.

Last spring two very talented, and dedicated teachers retired after many amazing years at Immaculate Heart. Ms. Lutyj and Mrs. Stanowych are now enjoying some much deserved rest. Многая літа! We're thrilled to welcome to the school community Ms. Tetiana Bezhenar (Ukrainian Teacher), Ms. Emily Grant (Grade 8 Teacher), Mrs. Nataliia Obratsova (Grade 2 Teacher), Mrs. Miroslava Paches (Music Teacher), Mrs. Alina Plehutsa (Educational Assistant), and Ms. Halyna Shpak (Educational Assistant). We are blessed to have such talented teachers, and wonderful people as a part of our school community.

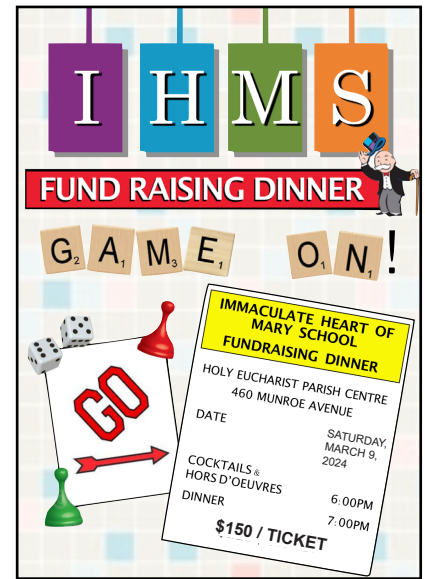
I want to genuinely express gratitude to the very benevolent alumni community that supports Immaculate Heart of Mary School in so many ways. Your prayers, thoughts and financial support of the initiatives we have at the school are very much appreciated. We would not be able to accomplish what we do without your thoughtfulness and generosity. It's also great to hear from so many alumni who are making Immaculate Heart their School of choice for their children. There are quite a few alumni that already have school tours booked as their 'little one' is beginning Kindergarten this coming fall!

Wishing you the best in 2024!

Щасливого Нового Року!

—Rod Picklyk, Principal

## IHMS FUND RAISING DINNER IS BACK!



Having some Minion fun on Halloween!



Blessing water with Father Daniel



Carolling for loved ones who live at Holy Family Home



Singing songs at the Christmas concerts

Let's keep in touch!  
 Follow us on social media:



[facebook.com/immaculateheartofmary](https://facebook.com/immaculateheartofmary)



[instagram.com/ihms\\_winnipeg](https://instagram.com/ihms_winnipeg)

Thank you to our alumni who contributed to this issue. If you have news or stories you would like to share, please contact:



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