



Being Creative: Voices that Accompany

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“Creativity is turning an original idea into a reality.”

- **Keynote Speaker, Mr. Paul Crough (St. Peter's CSS)**



01.

Introduction

An introduction to the
Student Retreat Handbooks



Land Acknowledgement

Before we begin, I'd like to acknowledge that we are situated on Indigenous land. While we go to school and live in various regions across PVNC, it's vital that we recognize the land, which we each call home in Canada, as a step towards reconciliation. We acknowledge the land to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improve our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures. From coast to coast, we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people that call this nation home.

Prayer

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Lord,

Thank you for creation itself and the incredible gifts and talents you so generously entrust to me. May I appreciate and develop these talents, always recognizing that they come from you and remain yours.

Guide me in using them for the benefit of everyone that I touch, so that they may be more aware of your creative presence and develop the creativity entrusted to them for the good of others.

Help me also to use your talents to bring a creative spark and new possibilities to your world, living out my call to be an integral part of your creative force.

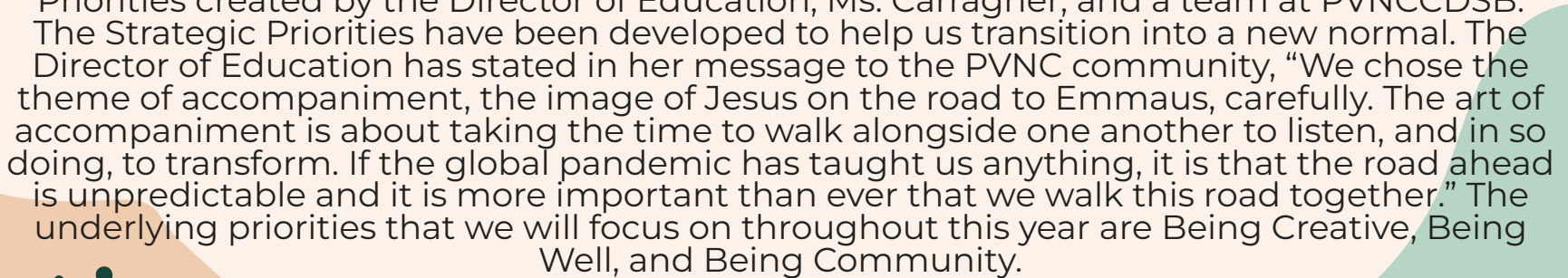
Amen.

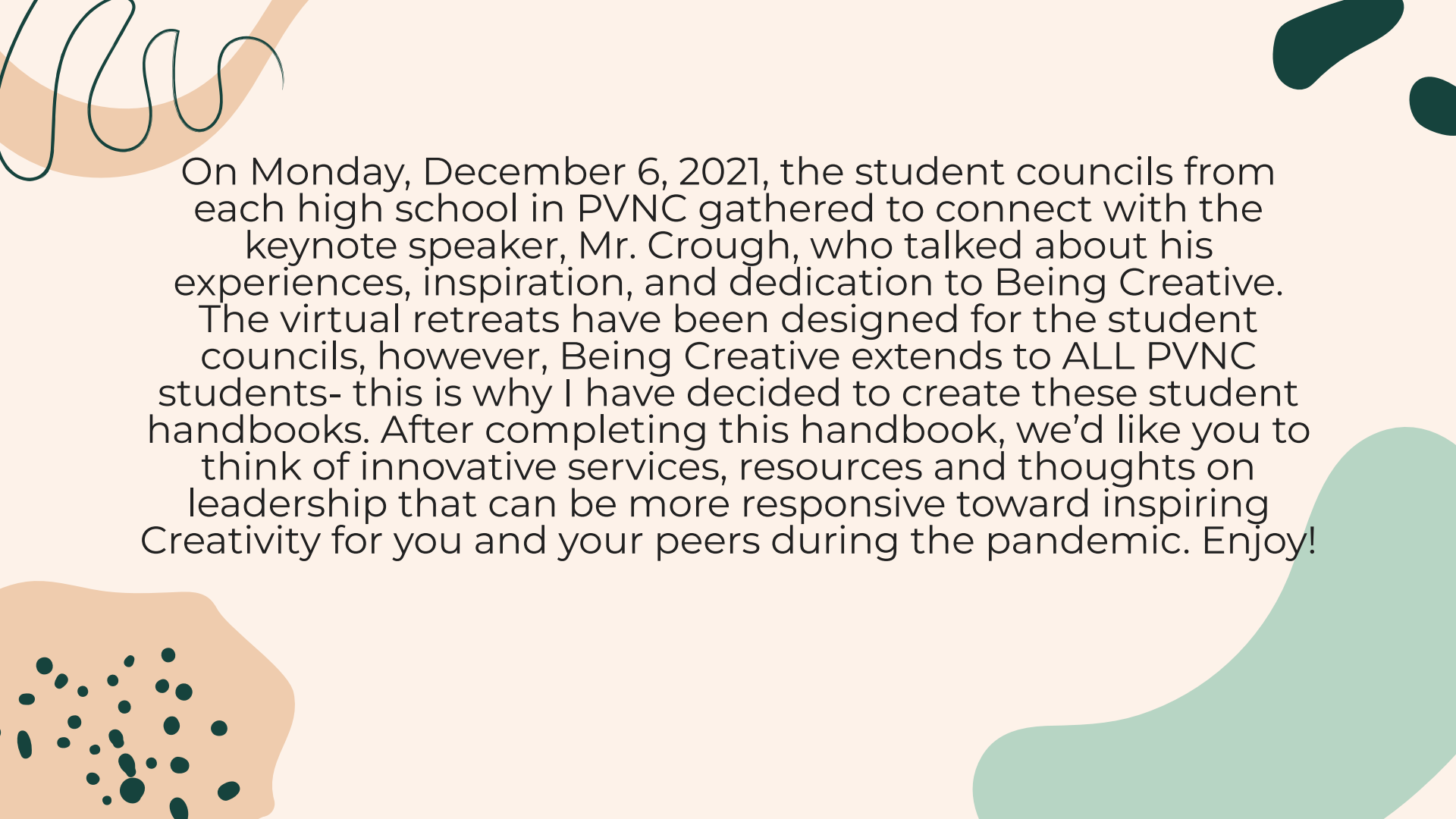


Welcome!

I'd like to welcome you all to this year's first volume of Voices That Accompany: Being Creative. For those of you who are not a member of or are new to student council, each year, the Student Council Liaison Committee plans four events for the student councils from across the board to meet with one another. I'm sure that we can all agree that the last few years have been unpredictable and a time of adjustment, not only to our school and work lives, but also to our personal lives.

This year, our vision is Voices That Accompany. It's been derived from the new Strategic Priorities created by the Director of Education, Ms. Carragher, and a team at PVNCCDSB. The Strategic Priorities have been developed to help us transition into a new normal. The Director of Education has stated in her message to the PVNC community, "We chose the theme of accompaniment, the image of Jesus on the road to Emmaus, carefully. The art of accompaniment is about taking the time to walk alongside one another to listen, and in so doing, to transform. If the global pandemic has taught us anything, it is that the road ahead is unpredictable and it is more important than ever that we walk this road together." The underlying priorities that we will focus on throughout this year are Being Creative, Being Well, and Being Community.





On Monday, December 6, 2021, the student councils from each high school in PVNC gathered to connect with the keynote speaker, Mr. Crough, who talked about his experiences, inspiration, and dedication to Being Creative. The virtual retreats have been designed for the student councils, however, Being Creative extends to ALL PVNC students- this is why I have decided to create these student handbooks. After completing this handbook, we'd like you to think of innovative services, resources and thoughts on leadership that can be more responsive toward inspiring Creativity for you and your peers during the pandemic. Enjoy!

02.

Being Creative

Collaboration, Innovation,
and Authenticity



Collaboration!

As we walk alongside one another in each of our unique journeys, it's important to recognize the innovative and creative sides of not only ourselves, but also our fellow peers! Collaborative leadership is key to success because:

- It allows for a greater, more valuable exchange of ideas!
- You can rely on your peers to help you!
- It prevents burn-out!

According to a student from St. Peter's CSS: **“Creativity is definitely not just involving myself, but involving my peers around me- hearing their thoughts and outlook on a specific topic, whatever their version of creativity may be.”**



Innovation & Authenticity!

One of the main takeaways from Mr. Crough's presentation was the importance of keeping your inner child alive. As a young child, we would turn the most mundane of objects into a creative idea. From slaying demons to being skilled warriors, ruling kingdoms to training as a Padawan, what do all of these fantasies have in common? Innovation, the act of forming an idea and turning it into something tangible.

As we begin to transition from childhood to adulthood, stuck in an awkward stage known as adolescence, it's difficult to keep our creative inner child alive. The presence of social media often encourages conformity, however, it's important to remember that you are your own person! Be open minded and keep your individuality- pretend you're a mysterious author while writing that boring essay, imagine that you're a soon-to-be olympian while trying out for the track and field team. Authenticity and creativity are synonymous with one another. Being authentic means self-awareness, self-discovery, and self-improvement, and being your authentic self means something different to everyone!

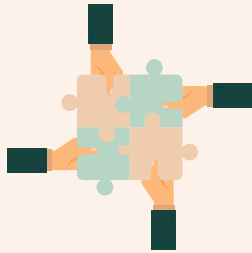


03.

Catholic Student Leadership

Finding a connection
between our Catholic faith
and Creative flow

Finding a connection between our Catholic faith and Creative flow



Creativity

Writing
Entrepreneurship
Art
Social Justice
Meditation



Catholicism

Bible Study
Creating a small Catholic business
Painting Catholic images
Acts of Mercy & Service

Creativity & Our Faith

We create because we were made in the image of a Creative God. It's important to remind ourselves that creativity and Catholicism are not separate concepts, however, they are meant to be together. Creativity in the lens of faith can be expressed through small actions and creating with God in mind.

According to Fr. Paul Massel, an energetic support of Catholic creativity:

“As a singer/ actor for 25 years of my life, I have long seen creativity as drawing on a force within, so much larger than ourselves and yet one that unites us as well. Whatever our gifts and talents, and we all have many, we express uniquely something that speaks to the world. Every artist I have known has identified that creative source within though often ascribing different names. For me that is our creator God who gives us life, and through whom we are beautifully diverse and one in the same breath. So take a breath right now and as St. Augustine said, breathe in that which is, “ever ancient and ever new.”



04.

PVNC Creativity

What do PVNC students think of creativity?



What was the main message of Mr. Crough's presentation?



Creativity...

Can be found anywhere!

It's important to...

Lean on others!

Stop...

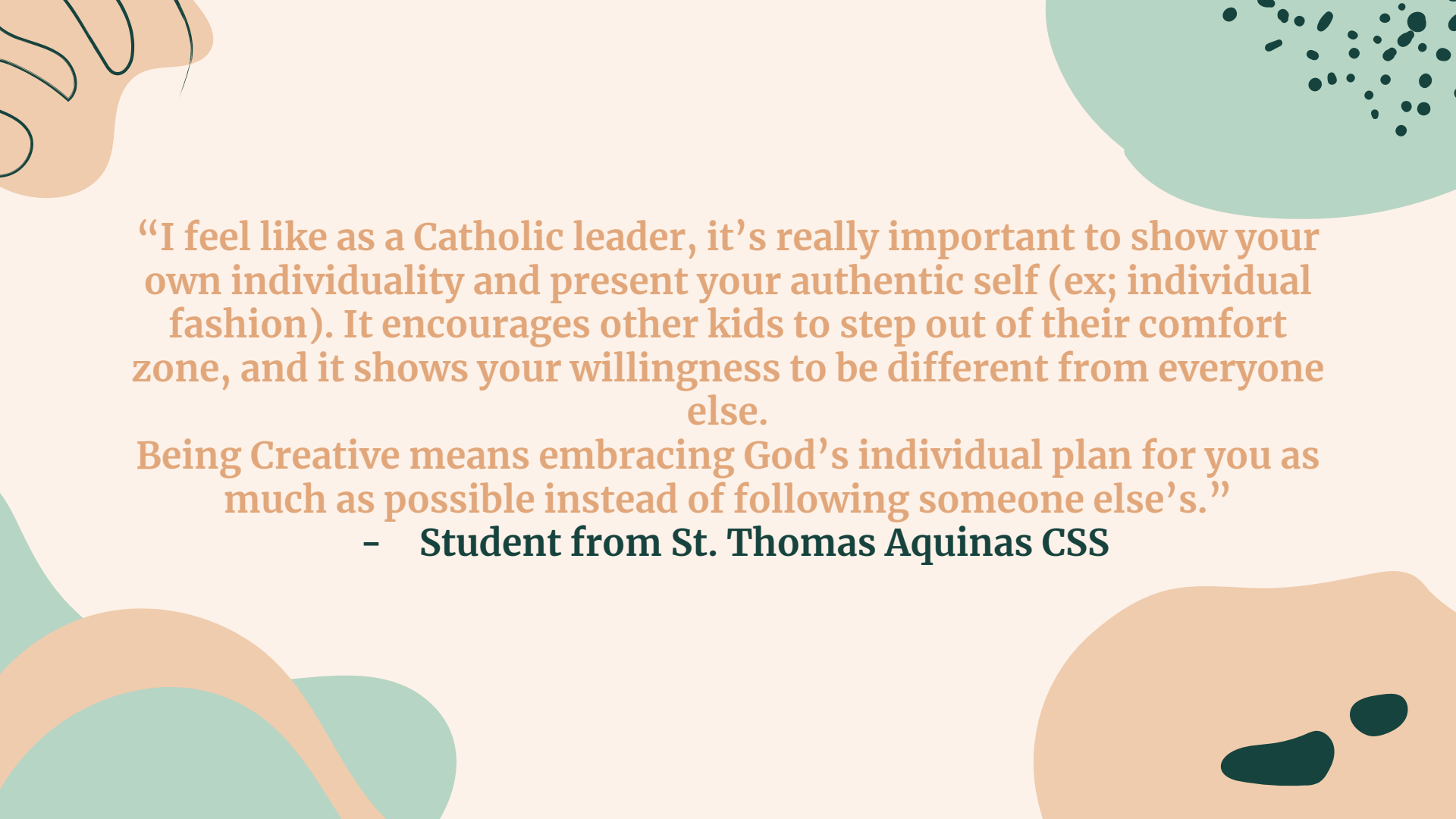
Putting immense pressure on yourself- allow your creativity to flow rather than forcing it!



As a Catholic Student Leader, how do you relate to this message? How does it apply to your life? What does it mean to you?

“Trusting in God, faith, the universe, whatever background you come from, trusting that things are bigger than us and expected to grow.”

- Mr. Crough, Keynote Speaker



“I feel like as a Catholic leader, it’s really important to show your own individuality and present your authentic self (ex; individual fashion). It encourages other kids to step out of their comfort zone, and it shows your willingness to be different from everyone else.

Being Creative means embracing God’s individual plan for you as much as possible instead of following someone else’s.”

- **Student from St. Thomas Aquinas CSS**

How do people around you view Creativity?

“Creativity is often thought of as confined to the arts, however all subjects and activities take Creativity. For instance, Math- you can find multiple solutions to one problem. You can apply Creativity to all aspects of life.”

- Students from St. Peter's CSS

What should we commit to in order to inspire Creativity?

“Listening to others even if you don’t agree.”



“Keep a positive attitude and only focus on the positive, not the negative!”



“Trust in yourself and follow through with your goals!”

“Unplug for a day- no tech.”

“Be open to collaborating with others, exposing yourself to new experiences & ideas!”



Conclusion

Thank you so much to the keynote speaker, Mr. Crough, the Student Liaisons who helped collect student voice and organize the retreat, and of course, all of the students across PVNC! We look forward to developing the next student retreat handbook, Being Well, in February. We hope that you've finished reading this handbook inspired to create innovative services, resources and thoughts on leadership that can be more responsive toward inspiring Creativity for students during the pandemic.



Alternative resources



[New Strategic Priorities](#)

[Community Resources for PVNC](#)

[A Creativity Prayer for Inspiration](#)

[Self-Care 101](#)



Thank You!

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