



ISoN Director's Message  
May 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Today marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale – a name synonymous with compassionate and science-based nursing care. This week is *Nurses Week*, the year 2020 has been acclaimed *The Year of the Nurse and Midwife* by the World Health Organization and it marks *McGill's Ingram School of Nursing's Centennial*. This is a time for acknowledging the nursing profession and you as nurses and supporters of nurses!

Deemed the “Mother of Modern Nursing”, Nightingale transformed the face of nursing into what it is today. She worked tirelessly in challenging conditions while treating patients with careful consideration and exceptional technique. How auspicious that today, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we find so many nurses worldwide working in similar situations as she did those many decades ago but with so much more education as a result of her efforts. Nightingale's leadership inspired generations of nurses; the heroes of today.

Some ISoN nurses have considered returning to our clinical roots during this time of crisis, wanting to be there for those ill and to support our clinical colleagues. ISoN staff and students have considered responding to the Premier's request for volunteers to help control the effect of COVID-19 on the health care system and on our elderly. With work, family responsibilities, and personal risk factors, that has been impossible for most of us. But hold on...haven't we been contributing? Let's take a minute to consider what the ISoN community has been doing since this pandemic began. *Really* think about it! **YOU have ensured that our graduates received, and our students will continue to receive, the best nursing education possible.** And this, in the absence of classrooms, equipment, teaching labs, and clinical placement sites! **By doing so, you have touched the health and lives of literally thousands of patients and families**, far more than you could have helped through direct care as nurses or through the work of administrative personnel as volunteers. You did this with your usual skill, commitment to excellence, and good humor, all the while carrying out your responsibilities as a parent, a child, or both, and with a need to simultaneously protect your own health. This is no small feat and I commend you for it! I invite you to allow yourselves to acknowledge what you, as an individual nurse or nurse-supporter, have accomplished in your career and in particular, in these last two months and to feel proud to stand among the many great nurses and supporters of nursing in history, such as Florence Nightingale.

The dedication of all members of the Ingram School of Nursing is consistently exceptional, but since the beginning of this pandemic, it has been astounding. The ways in which you are adapting to a new “normal” while supporting one another has been inspiring through and through. These arduous times demand that we continue to show our love and support not only towards those we hold dear, but to the nurses who are risking their wellbeing for the lives of patients all over the world. As today we celebrate the professionalism of a historic nurse, let us also celebrate the courage, commitment and expertise of the ‘Guardian Angels’ worldwide who uphold the nursing profession.

And let's not forget, to Florence, Happy Birthday!

With gratitude,  
Anita