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Aug. 29, 2000
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NEWS RELEASE

CELEBRATIONS SLATED LOCALLY AND IN ROME FOR BEATIFICATION OF FATHER WILLIAM JOSEPH CHAMINADE, FOUNDER OF MARIANIST FAMILY

Approximately 260 "pilgrims" from the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary (Marianists) are traveling to Rome this week to celebrate the Sept. 3 beatification of the Rev. William Joseph Chaminade in St. Peter's Square, presided over by Pope John Paul II. Beatification is the highest spiritual honor next to sainthood that the Catholic Church can bestow on someone. Chaminade founded the Marianist Family. In Dayton, the religious order founded the University of Dayton. For background, see <http://www.udayton.edu/news/nr/122099.html> and <http://www.marianist.org>.

From Dayton, the 125-member contingent includes an 83-year-old Marianist brother, Montgomery County's auditor and more than two dozen students from the University of Dayton and Chaminade-Julienne High School. Most are leaving on **Thursday, Aug. 31**, for a celebration that also includes a prayer vigil and festival, an audience with the pope, a special Mass in memory of Chaminade at St. Paul's Basilica Outside the Walls and an excursion to Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis. The group returns **Wednesday, Sept. 6**. To request interviews with the group in Rome, contact Teri Rizvi at Hotel Fenix at 01-39-06-854-07-41. For background, see <http://www.udayton.edu/news/nr/082100a.html>

Local celebrations include two events. Cameras are permitted in the chapels, but the priests request that they remain unobtrusive in the back of church.

Sunday, Sept. 3: The proclamation of the beatification will be read at all the Masses (10 a.m., noon, 6, 8 and 10 p.m.) in the Immaculate Conception Chapel on campus. The homily will focus on Chaminade and his spiritual traditions.

The Rev. James Fitz, S.M., director of campus ministry, says it's important to celebrate the beatification on two levels. "A beatification is a recognition that the spiritual insights of a particular person have led to holiness, that these insights have led the person to a great sense of love for God and others. The Church recognizes that these insights might be helpful to others seeking to live the Christian life. This person's life can be a model for other Christians," he said. "Specifically for the University of Dayton, the beatification of Father Chaminade is an affirmation of the Marianist spirit on campus." Contact Father Fitz at (937) 229-3339.

Labor Day (Monday, Sept. 4): The Marianists will celebrate the beatification at a 10:30 a.m. Mass at the Queen of Apostles Chapel at Mount St. John (4435 E. Patterson Rd.), followed by a picnic lunch in the newly created Chaminade Park. For more information, contact the Rev. Joseph Tedesco at (937) 429-0794. For background, see <http://www.udayton.edu/news/nr/070600.html>

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