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 Contact: Teri Rizvi
 rizvi@udayton.edu

NEWS RELEASE

MARIANISTS DONATE \$10.5 MILLION TO UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON, LARGEST GIFT FROM AN ORGANIZATION IN UD'S HISTORY

DAYTON, Ohio — Paul Bredestege lives the unpretentious, unmaterialistic, faith-filled life of a Marianist brother.

He's taken a vow of poverty, meaning all but \$10,800 of his annual salary as a lecturer in the department of languages at the University of Dayton is sent to the Cincinnati province of the Society of Mary. With five other brothers and priests, including the University's president, he shares household chores and daily prayer services at a simple, inexpensive house at the corner of Alberta and Chambers streets in one of the student neighborhoods. He enjoys woodworking in a basement woodshop and feeding the multitude of squirrels on UD's tree-filled, 110-acre campus.

Thanks to the frugality and simple lifestyle of the Marianists — coupled with a 150-year-old faith in the mission and a vision for the future of the University of Dayton — the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary has committed a record \$10.5 million to UD's \$150 million "Call to Lead" fund-raising and image-building campaign. It's the largest gift from an organization in UD's history, with approximately half coming from the salaries that the province receives for the services of the 41 brothers and priests who work on campus. The rest comes from an allocation the province makes to UD of the gifts that it solicits through the Marianist Mission, its fund-raising arm.

"There's a lifestyle we have that lends itself to simple living," Bredestege said. "For us to give up this money for this endeavor and then when you see the grandeur of the production, you can't help but feel that this is money well spent."

Brother Joseph Kamis, S.M., provincial of the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary, said the gift "signifies the value we place on our ministry" at the University of Dayton.

"The gift is huge because we value our ministry at the University of Dayton. We believe in education. We were founded on the mission of education. UD is a wonderful place to share our Catholic, Marianist charism. It's putting our money where our mouth is," he said. "It's an

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
 300 College Park Dayton, Ohio 45469-1679
 (937) 229-3241 (937) 229-3063 Fax
 www.udayton.edu

affirmation of what's been done by the faculty, staff and Marianists over the years and a firm belief that it will continue."

The Marianists' gift kicks off the faculty and staff portion of the six-year campaign, which ends in 2002. It will be used to fund scholarships and various other initiatives that strengthen UD's Catholic and Marianist identity. The gift includes partial funding for two \$1.5 million endowed faculty positions in the College of Arts and Sciences: \$1 million to help establish the Father William J. Ferree Chair of Leadership and Community and \$500,000 to fully fund the Marianist University Professor of Faith and Culture position.

Ferree, Dayton native, former provincial of the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary and an internationally known advocate for social justice, died in 1985.

"He was an outstanding scholar and a real thought leader in the area of social justice, and the Marianists want to commemorate that," said Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., president of the University of Dayton. "This chair will be associated with a proposed Center for Leadership in Community in the College of Arts and Sciences."

Fitz said the gift also will help fund initiatives the Marianists have traditionally supported, such as:

- scholarships for high-achieving students from Marianist high schools and graduate scholarships for students earning advanced pontifical degrees with a specialization in mariology from UD's International Marian Research Institute;
- outreach to the Catholic Church through UD's Institute for Pastoral Initiatives;
- service to the Dayton community through UD's Institute for Neighborhood and Community Leadership;
- knowledge and appreciation of Mary, mother of Jesus, through the work of the internationally renowned Marian Library, repository for the world's largest collection of print material on Mary;
- activities designed to strengthen UD's Catholic and Marianist identity, such as the Forum for Catholic Intellectual Tradition and other initiatives from the provost's office; and
- programming out of the rector's office, such as Marianist Heritage Week and welcome dinners for new faculty and staff.

"The Cincinnati province, in a typical German style, has saved a lot and not spent it. That's why we can make this kind of gift," Fitz said. "It's a dynamite gift because we're giving to something we really believe in, what we think is important. Many of the initiatives are extremely important for maintaining a strong Catholic, Marianist character."

Marianists live a simple life together as equals. They draw their inspiration from Mary, the mother of Jesus, and believe strongly in service to youth and the poor. At UD, many live on

campus at Alumni Hall or share houses in the student neighborhoods. They work in various capacities — from the president to a facilities worker, from a new English professor to a retired religious studies professor who's taught a popular marriage class taken by more than 20,000 alumni.

During UD's last major fund-raising campaign in the 1980s, the Marianists gave \$5 million. The more than \$15 million donated during the last two campaigns doesn't adequately reflect the order's contribution to the school they founded, sponsored and built into one of the largest, most-respected Catholic universities in the nation. In 1850, a priest and three brothers started St. Mary's School for Boys, which initially enrolled 14 students. It eventually became the University of Dayton and grew into the state's largest independent university. For most of UD's history, the Marianists earned no salaries, only living expenses from the province. In 1952, the Marianists transferred ownership of all the property to the University of Dayton.

When UD launched its campaign last November, John McHale, a 1978 UD alumnus and Internet entrepreneur, pledged \$10 million, the single largest individual gift for a new curriculum in the School of Engineering, minority scholarships and various technology initiatives. In all, he's promised \$11.4 million. Other gifts of \$5 million and over include \$7.5 million from the late John W. Berry Sr. for scholarships and \$5 million from the Kettering Fund to build a Living and Learning Arts Complex in the south student neighborhood. To date, the Call to Lead Campaign has raised \$118 million in commitments.

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For arrange media interviews, contact **Teri Rizvi** at (937) 229-3241 or **Brother Joe Kamis, S.M.**, at (937) 429-0794.