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Exploring Rituals of Healing

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Exploring Rituals of Healing

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Monday February 13, 2023

By Michelle Schweickart

Rituals of Healing: Body, Mind, Spirit, the Marian Library's newest exhibit, is open now through April 20. The idea behind this exhibit started with a visit to the Marian Library from University of Dayton Professor Liz Hutter's March 2020 writing research seminar class, which was exploring the course's theme of Narrative and Medicine. The students learned about the baths at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France and the medical miracles connected to it. During the visit, students discussed the coronavirus and what impacts it might have at Lourdes and around the world. Not long after their visit, the University of Dayton (and the world) went into lockdown as the coronavirus spread and was declared a pandemic, and the idea of exploring rituals of healing further was put on hold.

Students' Perspectives: More Than a Writing Assignment

In the Fall of 2022, Hutter returned to the Marian Library and the theme of rituals of healing with her first-year ENG 100 writing seminar students. The *Rituals of Healing* exhibit was a collaboration between these students and Marian Library staff to explore the beliefs and practices surrounding religion, medicine, and healing of the body, mind and spirit. The students curated the display of artifacts from the Marian Library collections and wrote the accompanying narratives and case labels explaining their interpretations of these artifacts in relation to rituals of healing. Materials include Miraculous Medals, holy-water bottles from Lourdes, ex-votos, milagro charms and scapulars, to name a few. Students explored themes such as finding comfort through spirituality; calling on Mary across cultures; and miracles at Lourdes.

Religious, Cultural, Historical Perspectives

Marian Library staff curated the upstairs Marian Library Gallery space with other items from the Marian Library collections related to rituals of healing — including tarot cards, Catalan *goigs* and *Schluckbildchen*. The exhibit explores the intersection of Catholic rituals with other faiths and spiritualities, as well as the history of Our Lady of Health across regions and centuries. Giclée prints by 2023 Marianist Award recipient Brother Mickey O'Neill McGrath, O.S.F.S., depict Mary in her various roles as helper and healer.

How to go

To plan your visit to explore the discoveries and insights of first-year UD students as they helped to curate this exhibit alongside Marian Library staff, see [*Rituals of Healing: Body, Mind, Spirit*](#).

— Michelle Schweickart is a library assistant in the Marian Library.



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Miraculous Medal flower pin, Marian Library collections