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## Marianist Plan Weekend of Prayer and Festivities to Celebrate History Before Consolidation of Provinces

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## NEWS RELEASE

*(Editor's Note: The Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary includes Cincinnati, Dayton, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Kalamazoo and Memphis.)*

### **MARIANISTS PLAN WEEKEND OF PRAYER AND FESTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE HISTORY BEFORE CONSOLIDATION OF PROVINCES**

DAYTON, Ohio — Celebrating in the words of the hymn that thanks God "for the good we trust will follow, for what is and what has been," the members of the Society of Mary's Cincinnati Province will gather at Mt. Saint John in Dayton April 19-21 to reminisce and relive the history of the province.

This summer, they will join Marianists from three other provinces (St. Louis, New York and Pacific) to form the new Province of the United States in a centralized headquarters in St. Louis. New York Provincial Brother Stephen Glodek, S.M., will serve as provincial, and the Rev. James Fitz, S.M., director of UD's campus ministry, has been named assistant provincial.

The Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, a persecuted French priest who escaped arrest, imprisonment and probable death during the French Revolution, founded the Society of Mary religious order in Bordeaux, France, in 1817. The Marianists came to the U.S. in 1849. Chaminade was beatified — the final phase before canonization — by Pope John Paul II in 2000. The Marianists draw their inspiration from Mary, the mother of Jesus, and believe strongly in service to youth and the poor.

From the time of the Marianists' arrival in America in 1849, the Society of Mary has operated elementary and secondary schools, universities, retreat houses and parishes. The province's legacy of service in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Kalamazoo, Memphis, Cincinnati and

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Dayton, among others, always sought to fulfill the injunction of the founder of the Society of Mary, Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, according to Brother Joseph Kamis, S.M., provincial of the Cincinnati province.

Chaminade exhorted members to follow the words of Mary at Cana: "Do whatever He tells you." That mission will not change under the consolidated province, which will administer the ministries of nearly 500 religious who serve in more than 30 dioceses.

The weekend of prayer and festivities will provide the Cincinnati province's 168 brothers and priests the opportunity to relive the rich ministry of the province, which dates from its formal institution in 1908 out of what was then the Province of America.

"Integral to the weekend of remembering and reinvigorating the Cincinnati Marianists is the ongoing commemoration of the beatification of Father Chaminade in 2000 in Rome by Pope John Paul II," Kamis said. "Father Chaminade's vision of educating the whole person and his commitment to working with lay Christians underlies the many works of the Marianists, all of which will be honored in the weekend's activities."

A series of prayer services, Eucharists and socials "will afford the Marianists of the Cincinnati Province the time to summon up the memories of the province since 1908 and to commit themselves fully to the bright prospects that lie ahead in persevering by carrying out Father Chaminade's creed of prayer, education and service to all," Kamis said.

Today, 1,500 brothers and priests and 800 sisters work in 34 countries on six continents with ministries in secondary and primary schools, universities and technical schools, parishes, renewal centers, missions and social justice enterprises. Another 10,000 lay Marianists have formed small faith groups. In the United States, the Marianists founded three universities, the University of Dayton, St. Mary's University in San Antonio and Chaminade University in Honolulu.