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University of Dayton

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NEWS



Friday September 11, 2015

Revelation Cast in Bronze

The University of Dayton's Marian Library will offer a rare glimpse into a private collection of icons used in Christian devotion centuries ago.

"Revelation Cast in Bronze" opens Tuesday with pieces selected from a collection of thousands

belonging to George Contis, from Arlington, Virginia.

The exhibit is free and open to the public. It will be on display through Nov. 13.

Contis was in Russia more than a decade ago when he saw a street vendor selling a small bronze icon. The encounter sparked his interest, launched his collection and led to his place as an expert on the religious items.

Common in Russian and Greek Orthodox cultures, icons were given to children. Families kept them in a special area of the home. Soldiers would carry them into military service. And they were traditionally left on a person's grave, said Michele Devitt, curatorial assistant at the Marian Library gallery.

Contis has found many icons of the Trinity, saints and Mary. Sometimes they include the feast days of the church and other important elements of the Catholic faith.

"While it's common to have a painting of Mary or a crucifix, this exhibit is very unique," Devitt said. "People will learn a lot about icons."

The gallery is located on the 7th floor of Roesch Library and is open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Complimentary visitor parking passes are available at the visitor parking information center.

The University of Dayton's Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute is a globally recognized center for the study of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and holds the world's largest collection of printed materials and artifacts devoted to her. The collection includes more than 100,000 books and pamphlets in more than 50 languages, and a vast collection of more than 3,000 Nativity sets and pieces of Marian art from around the world.

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