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University of Dayton

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God’s Word Received

God’s Word Received, this fall’s exhibition of 20 Bibles from the University of Dayton’s collections, presents a rare opportunity for students, faculty and members of the community to connect scriptural presentations from many eras to art, history, education, the sciences, religious formation and more.

“Scripture has been translated and artistically rendered by different generations and cultures for
people of many ages, languages and abilities,” said Brother Andrew J. Kosmowski, S.M., a librarian in the Marian Library who helped select from the University's extensive collections of Bibles for the exhibit. “Each one has relevance for its own time, as well as relevance for today.”

Among the Bibles on display in the exhibit, open Oct. 3 through Nov. 8 in the first-floor gallery of Roesch Library, will be:

* A Jerusalem Bible from France featuring images of paintings, frescoes, sculptures and icons by renowned artists, including Salvador Dalí and Nicolas Poussin, spanning art history from antiquity to the 20th century.

* A 1611 first issue of the King James Bible, called the "He Bible" because the first printing contained a printing error in Ruth 3:15 that reads, "and he went into the citie," while speaking of Ruth (gift of Stuart and Mimi Rose).

* The Saint John's Bible Heritage Edition, a 2007 fine-art reproduction of the first handwritten and hand-illuminated Bible in more than 1,000 years.

* A leaf from a 1663 Algonquin Bible.

* A fine-art facsimile of a Biblia Pauperum (Bible of the Poor) — a 40-leaf “blockbook” of 15th-century wood block-printed scriptural scenes.

* Douai-Rheims Bible from 1582.

* A facsimile of the Book of Kells, an illuminated Irish manuscript of the four Gospels (gift of alumnus Dennis Newell ’76).

* A German Bible illustrated by Marc Chagall.

* A 1999 limited-edition Pennyroyal Caxton Bible designed and illustrated by Barry Moser (gift of Bruce and Suzie Kovner).

* A host of other illustrated Bibles, children's Bibles and early translations.

All of the Bibles are coming from collections at the University: the Marian Library, University Archives and Special Collections, the U.S. Catholic Special Collection and Roesch Library.

“Ensuring that all peoples may come to know Jesus has been the mission of Christianity from its beginning,” Kosmowski said. “For this reason, Scripture has been translated into many languages.
Some languages such as English have many translations of the Bible, with each giving different insight into receiving the Word of God more completely.”

Father Thomas Thompson, S.M., research assistant of the Marian Library, said the selections will appeal to many, and though the presentations of scripture are diverse, they are all divinely inspired.

"The Bibles on display will show how 20 centuries have visualized the scripture, representing the convergence of the sacred and the profane, the written word and the image," he said.

As part of the exhibition, Jim Triggs, the executive director of the Saint John’s Bible Heritage Program at Saint John’s University, will present two programs:

* Thursday, Oct. 15 — Opening lecture: “Faith, Reason, and the Saint John's Bible.” Triggs asks, “What do the Fibonacci sequence, mitochondrial DNA, fractals, chaos theory, digital voiceprints, harmonics, and Hubble images of deep space have in common?” 7 p.m., Roesch Library second floor; dessert reception follows. Event registration is appreciated and is available in the related links.

* Friday, Oct. 16 — Brown-bag lunch program: “Seeing the Word” — 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Roesch Library's first-floor Collab. Discussion of the Saint John's Bible illuminations and their connection to spirituality.

For more information, contact Katy Kelly, communications and outreach librarian, at 937-229-4274 and kkelly2@udayton.edu.