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At the Manger

University of Dayton

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Wednesday October 18, 2017

At the Manger

The University of Dayton this year is taking a "behind-the-(Nativity)-scenes" approach to At the Manger, its annual exhibition of Christmas crèches, because of a major library renovation project slated to start in early 2018.

For the first time, visitors will be able to tour the Marian Library's crèche workshop on the fourth floor of Fitz Hall to see how volunteers plan and construct exhibits.

"This will be a chance to have questions answered and learn how we keep this wonderful collection at its best," said curatorial assistant and volunteer coordinator Michele Devitt.

Devitt said volunteers work year-round to care for the collection, which contains more than 3,500 sets from more than 100 countries.

"It's impressive to see the craftsmanship, creativity and ingenuity it takes to showcase these crèches," she said. "Our volunteers are so devoted to the display of these Nativities, which capture both the universality of the Christmas story and the individuality of the cultures and artists they come from. I believe this will be a wonderful

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experience helping families keep their tradition of visiting our crèche exhibit during Advent.”

The workshop is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays Nov. 27 to Jan. 5, 2018. It will be closed Dec. 8, and Dec. 22-Jan. 1. There also will be special hours 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, and Sunday, Dec. 10.

Nativities will be displayed in the Marian Library on the seventh floor of Roesch Library. The first and second floors of the Roesch Library, which typically feature exhibits for At the Manger, will be closed. The open house event, usually held the Saturday after Thanksgiving, will be on hiatus this year.

The three Marian Library displays include:

- Nativity sets of the long-hidden but rich and colorful artistic tradition of Eastern Europe, especially of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Russia.
- Nativities from Africa, including a large Nativity from Malawi, carved from native wood and presented to University of Dayton President Eric Spina in 2016.
- Twelve monotype prints by artist Michelle Arnold Paine about Advent leading into Christmas.

Crèches also will be on exhibit at Bergamo/Mount St. John, 4400 Shakertown Road, Beavercreek. Nativity sets from France — the birthplace of the Marianist orders — and Spain will commemorate the Marianists’ 200th anniversary. They’ll be featured in the Gallery St. John, Bergamo Center, Queen of Apostles Chapel and the North American Center for Marianist Studies.

For more information on hours, parking and other information, see the [event website](#).

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