

4-16-2012

A Man For All Seasons

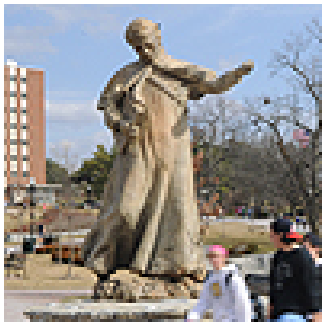
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A Man For All Seasons

04.16.2012 | Catholic, Students, President

The University of Dayton will dedicate and bless a new statue of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade at 4 p.m. Friday, April 20, on the Central Mall on campus.

President Daniel J. Curran and Claire Renzetti donated the Chaminade statue as "a gift of thanksgiving for the Marianists." Chaminade founded the Society of Mary, a Roman Catholic teaching order that sponsors the University of Dayton.

Artist Joseph Aspell, a 1968 University of Dayton graduate, created the sculpture. It was commissioned during a yearlong celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Chaminade and installed in late February.

Aspell's sculpture is one of four; two smaller versions are in the provincial offices of the Society of Mary in St. Louis and at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, while a final one will be installed at Chaminade University in Honolulu.

During the height of the French Revolution, Chaminade escaped into exile in Spain after refusing to take an oath of fidelity imposed upon the clergy. When he returned to Bordeaux, he brought together an eclectic group of merchants, priests, teachers, chimney sweeps, former soldiers and others from all walks of life who drew their inspiration from Mary, the mother of Jesus, and believed strongly in service to youth and the poor. That vision of a new religious order became the Society of Mary, or Marianists.

"The statue depicts Father Chaminade as a younger man returning to France from his exile in Spain," said Joan McGuinness Wagner, director of Marianist strategies. "He is moving, working to begin his mission and looks down on us to invite us to join him in this work. The book in his arm is a symbol of the Marianist quest for knowledge through faith and reason."

For more information, contact Father Jim Fitz, S.M., vice president for mission and rector, at 937-229-2899, or Joan McGuinness Wagner, director of Marianist strategies, at 937-229-3094.