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# Empowering the Laity

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## Empowering the Laity

**10.19.2011 | Campus and Community, Catholic** The University of Dayton will host a Nov. 12 conference to explore the mission of the laity today by calling on the foresight of the Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

Chaminade, the priest who founded the Society of Mary, which established the University, saw in the laity the hope for a revived Catholic Church during the era of the French Revolution when persecution and turmoil threatened the existence of the church in France.

Focusing on how the laity continues to energize the Catholic faith, "Empowered by Baptism: The Mission of the Laity Today" is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, in the Kennedy Union Ballroom. It's open to anyone in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and beyond, and to University of Dayton alumni, faculty, staff and students. The \$25 registration includes lunch; registration deadline is Monday, Nov. 7. Scholarships are available by applying at the time of registration. University of Dayton students are admitted free.

"For the church to be strong today, we need lay people to step up and be involved," said the Rev. James Fitz, S.M., vice president for mission and rector of the University. "The church can take its mission out into the world only if lay people feel that vocation and take that mission into neighborhoods, workplaces and all parts of society."

Bishop Matthew Clark, Bishop of Rochester, N.Y., and author of *Forward in Hope: Saying AMEN to Lay Ecclesial Ministry*, will deliver a keynote address at 10 a.m. on "The Challenge of the Contemporary Lay Vocation."

Clark, who has served as Rochester's bishop for 32 years, has actively supported and promoted increasing the number of lay ministers as well as expanding the roles of lay people in the church.

The conference also includes roundtable discussions, with topics that include: parish councils and leadership, young adult ministry, educational ministry, liturgical ministry and civic engagement.

The conference is part of Chaminade Year, the University's celebration of the 250th anniversary of Chaminade's birth and his legacy. Through the example of Mary, the mother of Jesus, Chaminade came to realize that faith is best communicated through personal relationships and nurtured through lived experiences of community and service — principles that continue to guide the Marianist family and the University.

When Chaminade was beatified in 2000, Pope John Paul II recognized his commitment to empower the laity in the Church: "The beatification during Jubilee Year of William Joseph Chaminade, founder of the Marianists, reminds the faithful that it is their task to find ever new ways of bearing witness to the faith, especially in order to reach those who are far from the Church and who do not have the usual means of knowing Christ.

"William Joseph Chaminade invites each Christian to be rooted in his Baptism, which conforms him to the Lord Jesus and communicates the Holy Spirit to him."

For conference details and to download a registration form, visit the conference website (url: <http://www2.udayton.edu/rector/chaminade250/conference.php>).

**For information, contact the University's Office for Mission and Rector at 937-229-2899 and [RectorEvents@notes.udayton.edu](mailto:RectorEvents@notes.udayton.edu).**