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Taking Mary to the Air

04.21.2009 | Catholic  From high atop the University of Dayton's Roesch Library, the knowledge and expertise about Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, that resides at the University is being heard around the world.

Through a new partnership, the faculty and staff of the Marian Library and International Marian Research Institute are broadcasting several shows weekly to more than 50 countries through Radio Maria, an international network of Catholic radio stations.

"It's a wonderful way to broadcast the University of Dayton's message," said the Rev. Johann Roten, S.M., director of the institute. "It allows us to have another way to spread the message of theology nationally and internationally as well as disseminate Catholic and Marianist values."

Roten and other faculty host a weekly program called "Living with Mary Today!" which explores a variety of Marian themes including Mary and ecumenism, the founding of the Society of Mary, Marian apparitions, and Mary and suffering.

"Radio Maria has a Marian orientation but until now they didn't necessarily have Marian experts," said sometimes-broadcaster Michael Duricy, information technology specialist for the library and institute.

The faculty and staff of the library and institute are uniquely qualified to offer expertise on all things relating to Mary, both on-air and to the Radio Maria staff, Roten said.

"We are an international center of study and research on Mary. The Marian Library holds the world's largest collection of printed materials on the Blessed Virgin. The faculty of our academic program are respected around the world for their knowledge," said Roten.

The partnership started in last June through Francesca Franchina, a University of Dayton graduate already working with Radio Maria through two Ohio stations in Anna and Springfield. Franchina earned both master's and bachelor's degrees from the University and has been closely involved in pastoral communications throughout her life.

"Radio Maria allows us to participate in new evangelization through motivation and by creating joy and excitement," said Franchina. "It is truly guided by heaven."

Still in its formative stages, the partners are continuing to explore how they can work together.

- "Living with Mary Today!" is broadcast from 2:30 to 3 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays. Franchina hosts "Francesca and Friends" 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Mondays. All the programs can be heard in western Ohio on WHJM-FM 88.7, WULM-AM 1600 and worldwide at http://www.radiomaria.us.

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