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The University of Dayton

News Release

FATHER CHARLES CURRAN VISITS UD TO SPEAK ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

DAYTON, Ohio, January 12, 1988--Father Charles E. Curran, a Catholic theologian suspended from his tenured teaching position at The Catholic University of America because of his disputes with the Vatican over issues of artificial contraception and sexuality, will speak on "Academic Freedom in Catholic Institutions of Higher Learning" at the University of Dayton on Thursday, January 21.

Part of UD's Distinguished Speakers Series, the speech takes place at 8 p.m. in the Kennedy Union Ballroom on campus. It is free and open to the public.

Curran's presentation will be followed by responses from Father James Heft, S.M., chairman of the Religious Studies Department, and Lawrence Ulrich, chairman of the Philosophy Department at UD.

"Father Curran's visit to campus provides an opportunity for an open discussion on an issue of critical importance for the future of Catholic education on the University level," said Father Heft.

Curran received his bachelor's degree from St. Bernard's College in 1955. He was ordained a Catholic priest in 1958 and later received a Licentiate in Theology degree in 1959 and a Doctorate in Theology in 1961.

While involved in many aspects of the ministry, Curran has worked primarily as a teacher, beginning his career as a professor of moral

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theology at St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester, N.Y. For 21 years, Father Curran taught at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., achieving the rank of professor in 1972.

In 1969, Father Curran was elected president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, and in 1971 he became the first Roman Catholic elected president of the Society of Christian Ethics. In 1972, Curran received the Catholic Theological Society of America's first John Courtney Murray Award for distinguished achievement in theology. He later served as treasurer for the American Theological Society.

In addition to many articles in theological journals, Curran has written several books on moral theology. His recent works include American Social Ethics: Twentieth Century Approaches, Critical Concerns on Moral Theology, Directions in Catholic School Ethics, Directions in Fundamental Moral Theology and Toward an American Catholic Moral Theology. Curran's controversial Faithful Dissent, published in 1986, records his dispute with the Vatican over the artificial contraception issue.

It was Curran's refusal to recant his position on this issue that precipitated the Vatican's removing him in 1986 from his tenured teaching position at The Catholic University of America. At the end of January, the Board of Trustees at The Catholic University is expected to reach a decision on Curran's future with the university. For the past year, Curran has served as a visiting professor at Cornell University where he teaches Catholic studies.