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UD'S CHRISTMAS ON CAMPUS CELEBRATES ITS 25TH YEAR ON DEC. 8

DAYTON, Ohio, November 17, 1988--"Memories Wrapped in Silver"--it's an appropriate theme to celebrate 25 years of the University of Dayton's popular "Christmas on Campus" celebration. Since 1964, the festivities have been enjoyed by members of the Dayton community, especially hundreds of children and senior citizens who attend as guests of UD students.

Each year on Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, UD students "adopt" inner-city underprivileged children and senior citizens as guests for the celebration. This year, more than 1,000 children from City of Dayton recreation centers and several hundred senior citizens will come to campus by bus to participate in a massive candlelight procession, lighting of the Kennedy Union Plaza Christmas tree and a re-enactment of the Nativity.

"Everyone is invited to Christmas on Campus," said Ellie Kurtz, director of the Kennedy Union and founder of the holiday tradition. "Members of the public, students, alumni and their families, faculty and staff members, members of UD organizations and all Marianists are invited to take part in the candlelight procession, Plaza and campus activities and the Christmas Mass. This is our Christmas present to the Dayton community."

Candlelight will begin the festivities. For the first time, luminaries will line every street in the UD campus neighborhood. Residents will begin lighting them at 5 p.m. A candlelight procession to the Kennedy Union Plaza will begin at 6 p.m., starting from 10 gathering places on and around campus. Dayton residents can join UD faculty and staff members at the Immaculate
Conception Chapel to receive candles and take part in the procession. Choir members will accompany each group and lead the singing as the procession winds toward the darkened Plaza.

In the Plaza, the Nativity will be recreated in the manner of the historic "You Are There" television show, allowing visitors to experience the sights of the first Christmas Eve. Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., UD president, will light the central Christmas tree in the Plaza at approximately 6:30 p.m., followed by the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn buggy. Musical and comedy performances by campus groups, puppet shows, magic shows, games and refreshments for adults and children will be featured at numerous locations on campus. "Dayton Daily News" columnist Dale Huffman will emcee activities in the Kennedy Union Ballroom, and Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand to greet children and adults.

A Christmas Mass will be held in the UD Fieldhouse at 10 p.m., with more than 3,000 participants expected. A poinsettia procession will begin the celebration, leading to the altar area where participants will decorate the entire stage with the donated flowers. On Friday, the poinsettias will be distributed to area nursing homes by the UD Commuter Club.

"Christmas on Campus signifies the Christmas season at UD," said Kurtz. "It's a community connection for everyone on campus."

For further information on Christmas on Campus, contact the Office of University Activities at (513) 229-4114.

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