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NEWS RELEASE

**AUTHOR OF MARIANIST HISTORY IN U.S. TO HOLD
BOOK SIGNING ON SEPT. 15 AT BOOKS & CO.**

DAYTON, Ohio — As the University of Dayton celebrates its sesquicentennial anniversary, the religious community that founded the school — the Society of Mary — also is marking a milestone this year. The Roman Catholic teaching order has reached 150 years in its presence in the U.S.

“The University of Dayton was the motherhouse, this country’s center for Marianist life, from its early beginnings in this country until 1911,” says author Christopher Kauffman. “It was the training ground for all Marianists in the U.S.”

Kauffman, author of *Education and Transformation: Marianist Ministries in America since 1849*, will hold a book signing at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 15, at Books & Co. in Kettering.

In his book, Kauffman, a professor at the Catholic University of America, recounts the Marianists history and the order’s influence in Catholic elementary and secondary education in this country, especially in the evolution of the American Catholic high school.

A teaching order of brothers and priests, the Marianists came to the U.S. in 1849 to establish a base in Cincinnati. In that summer, however, the Rev. Leo Meyer, S.M., and Brother Charles Schultz, S.M., were sent to Dayton to minister to the sick during a cholera epidemic, Kauffman recounts in his book. There, they met parishioner John Stuart, whose young daughter had died of cholera.

Stuart, wanting to return to Europe to be with his wife, sold Meyer his 125-acre farm — where UD now sits — for \$12,000. A year later the farm became St. Mary’s School for Boys, the precursor to the University of Dayton. As more Marianists arrived in those early years, it became the first permanent foundation of the Society of Mary in the Western hemisphere, Kauffman writes. -

Kauffman’s book is considered by many religious and cultural historians to be the first

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comprehensive work of the Marianists in this country.

“(Christopher Kauffman) has gathered a tremendous amount of research in putting together the history of the Marianists in the U.S.,” says the Rev. Joe Lackner, S.M., assistant provincial of the Cincinnati Province of Marianists. “He has put this history in the larger context of what was happening in the country and within the Catholic Church.”

As for Catholic education in the U.S., “it owes a great deal to the Marianists,” says Lackner, a former director of campus ministry at UD. “They were integral in shaping it into what it is today.”

Lackner says the Marianist philosophy of education still continues today at the nation’s primary and secondary schools and universities. Those tenets are to educate for personal and communal faith; to educate for family and community spirit; to educate for integral quality education; to educate for service, peace and justice; and to educate for adaptation and change.

- 30 -

For media interviews, contact **Christopher Kauffman** at work, 410-242-4499, or home, 410-377-0189; and **Father Joe Lackner, S.M.**, at 937-429-0794.