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UNIVERSITY of



DAYTON

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NEWS RELEASE

CAMPUS TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO WINTER WONDERLAND FOR CHILDREN: THOUSANDS OF ADULTS TO ATTEND LATE-NIGHT MASS

DAYTON, Ohio — What started in 1964 as a way for University of Dayton students to celebrate Christmas before they went home for the holidays has evolved into a major community-wide event: Christmas on Campus.

About 1,200 children are expected to arrive on campus at 6 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 8, to join students for a night of holiday entertainment. All of the activities, which include arts and crafts projects, music performances and zoo animals, are free and open to the public. Following the festivities, a late-night Mass will be held involving about 5,000 people.

On Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, there are no classes at UD. Instead, UD students transform campus into a winter wonderland with lights and decorations. Hundreds of Dayton-area children are "adopted" for one night by the students, who usher the children to different activities around campus. Parents are also invited to bring their children to campus.

Christmas on Campus will officially begin with a tree-lighting ceremony at 6 p.m. in the Kennedy Union Plaza. There will also be a live nativity scene and Santa will make a surprise entrance. UD's Frericks Center will be set up with carnival games and throughout campus there will be musicians and carolers as well as activities such as cookie decorating, ornament making and gingerbread house construction.

After the children leave campus, there will be a Mass at 10 p.m. in the Frericks Center. The Mass will include a 300-person choir and liturgical dancers.

The UD Christmas on Campus committee is a 24-student organization that works nearly year round to coordinate the event.

Many University alumni are also continuing the campus tradition in their own communities. This year alumni in 22 cities across the country, as well as in Puerto Rico, are organizing Christmas off Campus events for children and adults in their communities.

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For media interviews, call **Dan Durbin**, publicity co-chair, at the Christmas on Campus office at (937) 229-3483 or at home at (937) 285-8358.

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