In 1943, when the Marianists at UD started a new library devoted to the study of Mary, they were planning ahead for the commemoration of back-to-back centennials in 1949 and 1950 – the Society of Mary’s arrival in the United States and the founding of the school that would become the University of Dayton.

Within six years, the Marian Library became more than an anniversary gift; it was a tribute to the Blessed Mother, a monument to the order’s educational mission, and an important asset for the Catholic Church.

In 2018, as we mark the library’s 75th anniversary, we honor the foresight of the founders, the ambition of their vision, and the dedication of all those who have served it. Spanning eight centuries, the collection attracts University of Dayton students from many disciplines as well as scholars and theologians from around the world.

Inspired by the Marian Library’s rich musical holdings, our 2018 celebration will feature two concerts. In January, the vocal ensemble Eya will perform medieval music interpreted for women’s voices. In October, the Marian Consort, an early-music ensemble, will perform in the Immaculate Conception Chapel. We also will present two art exhibits and a variety of other anniversary events.

Please come and celebrate with us.

Learn more at go.udayton.edu/marianlibrary75

Los Angeles is the largest Catholic community in the United States — about 5 million Catholics; a territory larger than the state of New Jersey; and probably the most diverse in terms of race, ethnicity culture, economic status, and even geography. The future of the Catholic Church in this country is already here now in Los Angeles. Globalization is one of the signs of the times: The Catholic Church is a global Church, worldwide, universal. The Church is called to be a sacrament, the sign of the single family that the Father in his love wishes to create in his Son, and the Church is called to be the instrument by which all peoples realize their identity as God’s children and as brothers and sisters in his universal family, his Kingdom on earth.

At the heart of the church is the divine liturgy, the Eucharistic celebration. It is always wonderful to pray as a Catholic. The Eucharist is always the “ordinary means” of sanctification, the ordinary way that people grow in holiness and move toward heaven. How do we bring people to the Eucharist?
Culture expresses their faith, all their different ways of praying, all their devotions, customs, and saints. We know of course that true popular piety is rooted in the Eucharist and leads to the worship of Christ in his Body and Blood. But I think too often we overlook popular piety. We dismiss it as kind of naïve, a superstition, or a form of “magical thinking.”

But, my friends, what I see here in Los Angeles is something beautiful. The faith of the people is expressed in countless humble ways: kissing their fingers after they make the Sign of the Cross, crossing themselves when they pass by a Church. There are so many ways that our people make their faith a natural part of their ordinary daily lives. This is popular piety, and we need to appreciate it as liturgists, as pastors, as theologians. And I believe that all these ways that express their humble faith in God can be an important resource for the New Evangelization.

Popular piety is the faith of the family of God, and when we reflect on it, I think we see that the devotions of the people reflect a kind of “family faith.” I am struck by how much of popular piety is rooted in the rhythms of family life and in people’s reflection on the humanity of the Holy Family. There is something deeply touching, a tender humanism, in these devotions. We see how people feel that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are close to them; that they understand the joys and the struggles and sufferings that we go through in our families and in our daily lives.

One example: There is a very old popular devotion in Latin America, especially in Mexico, called Las Posadas. It is a novena that we celebrate nine days before Christmas. Every night for those nine days, families get together and re-create the journey that Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus make on their way to Bethlehem.

It was really moving. The whole story of how Mary and Joseph could find no room at the inn on that first Christmas — these families saw that as their story. And witnessing this devotion, you get the powerful sense that because the Holy Family has suffered these things, it lends dignity and hope to their sufferings. A couple of years ago in Los Angeles, some families here turned their Posada into a beautiful emotional reflection on the sufferings of undocumented immigrants and their families.

Our Filipino brothers and sisters have a beautiful Easter devotion they call Salubong (“The Encounter”). Gathering before dawn, they relive the meeting of the risen Jesus with his Blessed Mother on the first Easter morning. Popular devotion sometimes starts where the scriptures leave off . . . . We have to think about the power that this devotion can have for families who have lost children.

People are identifying with Mary as a mother — as a mother who has lost her son, a mother who is in mourning. So this devotion expresses people’s faith that death is not the end, that we will be reunited with those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith. As Jesus came back to Mary, Jesus will give our loved ones back to us in the joy of the Resurrection. It is a beautiful expression of faith, and there are many more examples we could mention. My point is that these popular devotions are a rich source for communicating the power of the Gospel. They are not a substitute for the divine liturgy, but they are a means for communicating the good news of God’s love and preparing people’s hearts for the encounter of Christ in the Eucharist.

Despite the widespread secularization of our societies, we see that people are still hungry for God. They long to make contact with him. They long to know his love and power in their lives. They are searching for spiritualities that will bring them holiness and wholeness and communion with God and with other people. Popular piety speaks to this spiritual hunger, this restlessness, in a deep way. In a world where people no longer seem to sense God’s nearness, popular devotions and customs are a concrete way to communicate God’s mercy and his tenderness to others.

This is the power of popular devotion, the potential for popular piety at this time in our history. I think it can inspire a new generation of disciples — a new generation of saints and missionaries — to build a new world faith in the Americas.
Preparation.

This seems to be the word of the season in the Marian Library, as we prepare ourselves for a busy 2018. We recently hosted Tom Clareson, a national authority on library preservation, who presented a workshop on disaster preparedness for personnel from across the University Libraries (and some colleagues from other local libraries). We discussed emergency kits, phone trees, insurance plans, and collaboration with first responders. The afternoon included a wet materials training, in which we soaked a number of discarded library holdings, including books, papers, photographs, microfilm, even a few statues and textiles, and then did our best to recover them as we would in a real crisis. (Even fires often lead to water damage in libraries, since fire is mitigated by means of water.) Of course, we hope never to need these tools, but the sad reality is that many libraries, archives, and museums have had to respond to environmental crises—so it is best to be prepared.

We are preparing our space for new purposes. The move of rare materials to a new-to-us space in the library building is mostly complete, and final work by internal and external contractors is finishing up this fall. In 2018, we will be able to host library patrons in the reading room space on level 3 of Roesch Library. One of the key benefits of this space is that it can accommodate larger groups than we can currently host on level 7, so it could be a good option for undergraduate classes.

We are also preparing for the Marian Library’s 75th anniversary in 2018. As you will note on the cover of this newsletter, we have a variety of programs planned. One of the strengths of the Marian Library collection is its musical holdings, including circulating CDs and a collection of sheet music, the digital facsimiles of which are among our most popular downloads by people around the world. (Browse them yourself at ecommons.udayton.edu/imri_sheetmusic.) The collection also includes hymnals and other books of music that have been used to celebrate Mary over the millennia. Given these rich holdings, it seemed appropriate to mark the 75th anniversary of the Marian Library with not one but two concerts. In January, we will welcome Eya, a vocal ensemble from the Washington, D.C. area that interprets medieval music for women’s voices. In October 2018, we will host the Marian Consort, an early-music ensemble. Both concerts will take place in the Immaculate Conception Chapel. In addition to these free concerts, the Marian Library will present two exhibits in fall 2018, exploring the history of the Marian Library and celebrating some of its collection highlights. We plan to share interesting content via social media throughout the year, so please consider following us on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and the Marian Library blog. Please visit the 75th anniversary website for more information: go.udayton.edu/marianlibrary75.

One of the lessons we learned from moving approximately 12,000 rare books and 175 archival collections is that many items in the Marian Library collection are in need of professional conservation work. Many religious books have had long lives; they have been used for personal prayer or public missionary work over multiple centuries. Several hundred books in the Marian Library are physically falling apart. To that end, unless otherwise specified by the donor, all 2018 gifts to the Marian Library will be directed to conservation work for the collections. In this way, we hope to extend the lives of these materials—preparation, in this case, for their continued use in prayer and scholarship over the coming centuries.

God bless you,

Sarah Burke Cahalan
Making the Manger

The University of Dayton’s annual At the Manger exhibit goes behind the scenes this year, offering the public its first opportunity to see how the exhibition is created.

When the Marian Library began to exhibit Nativities from its collection in 1997, they were modest displays of small crèches set among the books or on top of the shelves in the library. It was not until 2009 that the exhibit was named At the Manger and began to draw thousands of people each year with its display of Nativity sets on three floors of Roesch Library.

The library is undergoing renovations starting in early 2018, causing some changes to this year’s At the Manger exhibit. The display in the library will be smaller and restricted to the seventh floor. A new behind the scenes component has been added at the Marian Library workshop in Fitz Hall and will give visitors the chance to see where the Nativities are stored and how the settings are made. Also at this location, will be a display of Nativity sets that illustrate the twenty-five-year crèche tradition of the Marian Library.

The Marian Library’s Nativity collection includes more than 3,500 sets from more than 100 countries. This year, African and Eastern European Nativities will be displayed in the gallery and crèche museum on the seventh floor of the library. The exhibit will feature a large Polish Nativity donated by a former Marian Library volunteer, Danuta Romanowska.

Danuta brought the nativity set over from Poland piece by piece during the Cold War years. Members of the Cepelia artists collective in Krakow created the set at the request of Mrs. Romanowska. With its beautiful embroidery and attention to detail, the Nativity demonstrates Polish artistry.

The Nativity sets that will be on display at the workshop have not been displayed in the last ten years, including the smallest in the Marian Library collection: one painted on a grain of rice. Visitors will see the process of preparing Nativities to go out on exhibit and view the “wall of inspiration,” the shelves filled with materials volunteers use to create settings for the Nativities. A model train set, engineered to make stops at various scenes recounting Christ’s birth and scenes from his early life, will also be exhibited.

The extension of the exhibit to the Marian Library workshop shines a spotlight on the volunteers who play an indispensable part in the planning and execution of At the Manger each year. Michele Devitt, curatorial assistant and volunteer coordinator at the Marian Library, says as many as thirty volunteers are involved in preparation around Christmas, doing anything from giving tours to building settings. In 2016, Marian Library volunteers put in more than 4,400 hours of work maintaining the Nativity and art collections.

Ginny Saxton, a volunteer at the Marian Library since 2000, spends most of her hours there organizing on-campus crèche loans. At least 100 offices on the University of Dayton’s campus borrow Nativity sets from the Marian Library to decorate their spaces each year. This work keeps many volunteers busy almost year-round.

Harry Mushenheim, who has volunteered in the Marian Library for about 10 years, crafts settings and repairs crèches. He usually works on three or four
sets at once, so he said it is hard to estimate the time he spends on each setting. It can be as little as a couple of hours or a longer process stretching out over several days. Harry said that while it can sometimes be difficult to create a concept for a setting, some countries have distinctive styles that make it easier to develop an idea.

Maintaining the crèche collection so it can be shared with the University community and the public is truly a labor of love and a demonstration of the spirit of community so integral to UD. We thank the volunteers for the time and heartfelt work they put into making *At the Manger*.

### Symbols of Grace

The Marian Library’s new exhibit, *Symbols of Grace*, opened on September 25. The exhibit features twenty-eight prints of emblems that celebrate the Immaculate Conception: Mary’s privilege of existing from conception without original sin.

Also on display with the prints are the three emblem books from which the images were taken. Twenty-seven of the emblems came from *Conceptus Chronographicus de Concepta Sacra Deipara*, a book by the Benedictine Joseph Zoller, published in 1712. One image was pulled from *Theatrum gloriae sanctorum*, a liturgical calendar written by Casimiro Füessin and published in 1728 in Argentina. Seven emblems (not on display in this exhibit, but referenced to in the exhibit guide) came from *Virgo Maria Mystica Sub Solis Imagine Emblematica Expressa* written by Fr. Johann Leenheer, a Belgian Augustinian monk, and published in 1681. These compare the Virgin Mary to the sun: beautiful, shining, highest, and pure.

The objects and figures included in the emblems are symbols that represent the mystery of grace that is the Immaculate Conception. Symbols have a rich history in religious art of being used to make the divine more understandable to human beings in order to help strengthen spirituality.

The exhibit highlights many areas from which symbols of Mary’s grace originated: from objects of creation, like the palm tree and animal symbols, to those drawn from daily life and cultural traditions, like the letter “B” or the shepherd’s staff. One emblem utilizes an episode from Greek mythology, the Trojan War, to relate Mary’s escape from the human condition of sin.

Emblems require more than a simple glance in order to grasp the meaning and to gain spiritual insight from the images and their words; therefore, they are well-suited to personal devotion and reflection. Viewers are encouraged to look at the image portion of the emblems while also observing the short inscription on each and reflecting on the accompanying Bible verse in order to appreciate the significance of the symbolism in every one.

The Marian Library displayed a similar exhibit, *Litany of Loreto in Images*, in January, which drew its material from 18th-century books by Joseph Sebastian Klauber. The Litany of Loreto is the Marian litany approved for public recitation in the Roman Rite, having been sanctioned by Pope Sixtus V in 1587. These images also rely heavily on symbols to highlight the grace of the Virgin Mary and communicate their spiritual message.

Both of these collections are available as traveling exhibits to universities, parishes, galleries, and other institutions through the Marian Library’s art loan program. For more information, contact Michele Devitt, curatorial assistant, at 937-229-4213 or devittm2@udayton.edu. Or, see udayton.edu/imri/art/art-loan-programs/traveling-exhibits.
Fr. René Laurentin, a theologian brilliant and indefatigable whose works were centered on the Virgin Mary, died September 10, 2017, in Evry, a suburb of Paris. He was 99. A lengthy obituary in the New York Times placed him alongside Jacques Maritain and Henri Bergson and described him as “an expert on historic religious visions and an investigator of celestial sights.”

“Double degrees” characterized Laurentin’s early theological studies: He received two “Licentiates,” one in philosophy and another one in theology. For his mammoth 1952 *Maria, Ecclesia Sacerdotium*, he received two doctorates: one from the Sorbonne in Paris for the first volume on the history of the topic; the second from the Institut Catholique in Paris for the second volume of theological analysis.

In 1953, he wrote the “ground-breaking” *Court Traité de Theologie Mariarie*. Rather than a commentary on of the Mariological dogmas, he presented the Virgin Mary within the Scripture, the Church, and salvation history. He stated clearly what was obvious but at times forgotten: “The fundamental mission of Mary is to unite the Savior to humanity.”

At Vatican II, he was a mediating influence between Marian maximalists and minmalists. With Stanislaus Lyonnet he identified Mary as “Daughter of Zion,” a term from Scripture recognized at Vatican II (LG 55). His position on the knowledge of Mary differed from that found in other Marian treatises of the period: Mary, he wrote, was truly a Jewish woman of the Old Testament when she received the revelation of the mystery of the Incarnation. She was not ignorant of what God would accomplish, but neither did she possess the concepts and the formulae that were later used to explain the mystery of Christ.

In 1955, he was asked by the bishop of Lourdes to write the complete history of the apparitions for the upcoming centenary of the apparitions. He was given access to all the civil and church documents available. He produced a seven-volume history, along with a compendium of six volumes of documents related to Lourdes. He would later write the biography of Bernadette of Lourdes.

After the Council, he visited and investigated virtually every site associated with an alleged apparition of the Virgin Mary — Medjugorje, Cuenca, Scottsdale, San Nicolás Argentina. *The Dictionary of Apparitions* (1,426 pages), which he coauthored, was published when he was in his early nineties.

He taught for over twenty years at the University of Dayton, first at the Marian Library’s summer institutes in the 1960s, and then at the International Marian Research Institute from 1975 until 2003. André Cabes, dean of the basilica of Lourdes, offered a beautiful tribute. “In Fr. Laurentin,” he said, “what we retain and admire is the solidity of the theologian, the seriousness of the historian, and the agility of the journalist, capable of transmitting what he had worked on in such depth, and the fervor of the believer, witness of the happiness of the other world promised by Mary to Bernadette.”

**LAURENTIN ARCHIVES**

At the University of Dayton, the Laurentin archives contain the course materials, lectures, manuscripts, and published articles of Laurentin from 1948 to 2003. A wide variety of Catholic and Marian topics are covered in the collection, including Marian apparitions, Mary and the Church, Mary in scripture, Mary in the Liturgy, ecumenism, Charismatic Renewal, and Mary in the mystical tradition.
The course materials were translated from the French by Brother William Fakovec, S.M. The collection also includes Laurentin’s 1992 manuscript “From Secularization to Consecration” as well as conference papers, published articles, and regular columns written by Laurentin. Additionally, the collection contains some personal correspondence related to Laurentin’s teaching and writing.

View and download the guide to the Fr. René Laurentin collection, 1958–2003 by visiting ecommons.udayton.edu/finding_aid/85/

The photo on page 6 is of Fr. René Laurentin circa 1960 and taken from the Marian Library Photograph collection.

New Acquisition
Hore in Laudem beatissime virginis Marie (1523)

Thanks to the generosity of Stuart and Mimi Rose, the Marian Library’s collection includes a new—but very old—Book of Hours. Books of Hours are prayer books that allowed lay people to pray an abbreviated form of the Divine Office; they are particularly associated with the Virgin Mary because of the inclusion of the Little Office of the Virgin in the prayer cycle. Because they were produced continuously from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, Books of Hours offer important insight into devotional history and book history. Their illustrations (domestic life, gardens and farms, birth and death) create relatable windows onto the past—albeit the privileged past of a literate member of society who could afford a book.

This book, printed on vellum in 1523, bridges the gap between medieval manuscripts and books produced entirely by printing processes. The text is printed in letterpress with hand-illuminated initial letters. The illustrations are especially interesting since they were printed from metal plates and subsequently colored. In addition to this new acquisition, Marian Library holdings include one handwritten and hand-illuminated late medieval Book of Hours (ca. 1480-1500), as well as several printed Books of Hours, including a sixteenth-century example that is considered “provincial,” inasmuch as it was printed both in Latin and in French outside of the major printing capitals, and another that has printed illustrations with no added color.

Holding such a book allows us to put ourselves in the place of a medieval reader; these were privately owned books that were often highly individualized based on their owners’ interests and concerns. The Marian Library is privileged to add this item to its collection, and we look forward to sharing it in classes and exhibits.

Rare French Hymnal Aquired
Chants à Marie pour le mois de Mai et les Fêtes de la sainte Vierge (1841)

While wandering in a book store in Houston, Texas, Rich May found a copy of this 1841 French hymnal, purchased it, and gifted it to Fr. Tom Thompson, S.M. and the Marian Library.

The hymnal includes Marian songs written by Fr. Louis Lambillotte, S.J. which may have been sung by the Marianist Brothers in the 1840s. What is extraordinary are the elaborate piano accompaniments which go with the hymns.
Your generous donation to the Marian Library during our anniversary year can buy:

$75
A scholarly book on a Marian topic to be used by patrons of the Marian Library
Supplies for proper handling and display of fragile items such as photographs

$750
Supplies for instruction sessions on topics such as historical techniques of book production
Professional conservation work to repair the binding of a rare book from the 16th or 17th century

$7,500
Professional conservation work for a historical artifact, such as a multi-piece Nativity set made out of wax in 1850s Mexico
Equipment to measure and record the temperature and humidity of multiple collection areas, to ensure we are providing the best possible conditions for the collections

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