2010 Lackner Awards: Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch, Thomas Burkhardt

Maureen Schlangen
University of Dayton, mschlangen1@udayton.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/5317
The story of Christianity begins with Mary, who said yes to become the mother of Jesus and thus became his first disciple.

That was the message of Father François Rossier, S.M., during his talk Jan. 25 at the installation ceremony installing him as executive director of the Marian Library at the University of Dayton.

“Her story can inspire us to become the disciples of Jesus Christ,” Rossier said.

Rossier succeeded Father Johann Baptiste, S.M., who headed the institute for more than 30 years, leading its expansive growth and taking it into the digital age. Under Bätzing’s leadership, a significant number of graduate students in theology now come from around the world to study at the institute. Rossier, a native of Switzerland, will move to Dayton in June.

“Whether in your professional life or in your personal life, the reason for our existence is the woman who said yes to the Lord,” Rossier said.

The institute explores how Mary appears in scripture, how she appears in the history of the church and how she appears in people’s lives. It’s a really rich resource for people who want to understand who she was and how she interacted with the other people in her life. It provides a spiritual understanding of Mary.”

Rossier succeeds Father Johann Bätzing, S.M., who headed the institute for more than 30 years, leading its expansive growth and taking it into the digital age. Under Bätzing’s leadership, a significant number of graduate students in theology now come from around the world to study at the institute. Rossier, born in Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1957, took his first vows in 1984 and was ordained in 1991. He came to Dayton in 2003.

At home around the world, he speaks five languages and has taught on every inhabited continent. With extended time in India and Togo, Rossier developed a love for West African people and their cultures. Rossier retains that special affection and is sometimes called to help new students in their faith, because he’s from an African country. Rossier was installed as Marian Library director Feb. 5, 2010 — Cilla Shindell