

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Catholic Women's League endows \$1.2 million Chair for Catholic Studies at St. Mary's University College

Calgary, AB (June 3, 2010) – St. Mary's University College and the Catholic Women's League (CWL) today jointly announced a \$1.2 million endowment for a permanent chair for Catholic Studies at St. Mary's University College. The agreement was signed at a formal ceremony in the historic Le Fort Centre on the St. Mary's campus followed by a luncheon for special guests.

The endowment was made possible by funds raised by the CWL Chair Foundation, whose original members, Agnes Bedard, Marie Cameron, Joan Baudais, Florence Bernakevitch and Betty Lodermeier, pioneered the idea of supporting a Chair for Catholic Studies at St. Mary's. Special guests who attended the signing ceremony included The Most Reverend Fredrick Henry, Bishop of Calgary and Chancellor of St. Mary's University College, Bernice Thomas, Chair of St. Mary's CWL Chair Foundation, and Joe Ladouceur, Chairman of the St. Mary's University College Board of Governors.

The CWL Chair for Catholic Studies, the first of its kind in Western Canada and the first endowed chair in St. Mary's history, will establish a permanent academic position in the area of Catholic Studies. The senior academic position was founded to encourage and foster the advancement of Catholic knowledge and education through exemplary teaching and pre-eminent research. In addition to classroom teaching responsibilities, the chair will be a source of intellectual leadership for St. Mary's and for the broader Catholic and local communities through an annual public lecture, guest lectures, invited presentations and regular publications. The position will be in the Humanities Area and report directly to the Vice-President Academic and Dean.

The appointment will be a reputable scholar who either holds or is qualified to hold a tenure-track or tenured appointment at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor in one of the disciplines of theology, religious studies or philosophy. St. Mary's University College will consider nominations in the coming months and expects to fill the position by September to coincide with the beginning of the 2010/2011 academic year.

"We are profoundly grateful to the CWL for their sustained support of St. Mary's over many years and in particular for making possible this historic milestone whereby we establish the first Chair for Catholic Studies in Western Canada," said Dr. Terry Downey, President of St. Mary's University College. "This endowment ensures the presence of strong scholarship to advance Catholic knowledge and education now and for the time to come. We know that all members of the community, Catholic and otherwise, will greatly benefit from the intellectual leadership provided by the Chair for Catholic Studies."

"We, the members of the Calgary Diocesan Catholic Women's League of Canada are proud to have achieved our goal of more than \$1,000,000 to support a Chair for Catholic Studies at St. Mary's University College," added Bernice Thomas, Chair of St. Mary's CWL Chair Foundation. "Educating our members and the community at large is a primary focus of the CWL. The Chair for Catholic Studies honours this mission and will enrich both the community and the students at St. Mary's. We give thanks to God for the courage to embark on this journey and the perseverance to stay the course."

MORE

About St. Mary's University College

St. Mary's University College is a Catholic post-secondary, student-focused liberal arts and sciences teaching and research institution open to people of all faiths and traditions. St. Mary's offers Bachelor of Arts degrees, a Bachelor of Education degree and university courses in 33 different academic disciplines and programs. For more information, visit www.stmu.ab.ca.

About the Catholic Women's League

The Catholic Women's League is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God. For more information, visit www.cwl.ca.

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