

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Mary's University College Celebrates Restoration of Historic Calgary Landmark

Calgary, AB (June 30, 2007) – St. Mary's University College today celebrated the grand opening of the Le Fort Centre, the newly restored and renovated former Lacombe heritage buildings which are designated Provincial Historic Resources. When its doors officially open to classes in September, the Le Fort Centre will provide more space for students as enrolment increases, including three additional classrooms, a bookstore, a cafeteria, and student gathering space.

The restoration was made possible by a \$1.2 million donation from local businessman Ronald P. Mathison in memory of his mother, Mary Theresa Mathison (nee Cush) and as a tribute to close friend, Monsignor Joseph E. Le Fort (for whom the building is now named). Additional funding was received from the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation and Alberta Community Development.

Dr. Terry Downey, President of St. Mary's University College, welcomed Mr. Mathison and Monsignor Le Fort, as well as Bishop Frederick Henry, Bishop of Calgary, former Alberta Minister of Advanced Education, Denis Herard, students, donors, faculty and staff to the grand opening. A plaque was unveiled during a morning ceremony.

The grand opening was held on the same day as convocation as a symbol of St. Mary's commitment to keeping student needs at the forefront of all campus development.

"The opening of the Le Fort Centre directly impacts the quality of education for our students, providing additional space where they can learn, study and interact," said Dr. Downey. "Located at the very heart of our campus, the spirit of the Le Fort Centre will serve as a model for all future campus development as our student population grows."

Mr. Mathison's investment not only has a profound effect on St. Mary's, but also on the Calgary community.

"We are grateful to Mr. Mathison for the generous gift that made the restoration of these historic buildings possible," said Dr. Downey. "The Le Fort Centre is a lasting legacy for the benefit of current and future students and all Calgarians who treasure the city's historic landmarks."

Since accepting its first class of 25 full-time students in 1997, St. Mary's University College has experienced steady growth with enrolments increasing significantly in each year of operation. Enrolment for the 2007/2008 academic year is expected to be between 750 and 800. The University College limits the size of each class in order to ensure that students are provided with the most stimulating learning environment possible.

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 and university courses in 27 different academic disciplines and programs. For more information, visit www.stmu.ab.ca.

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