

Interfaith Groups to Present Holocaust Commemorative Menorah to Baltimore's Saint Mary's Seminary & University

In a 30-minute ceremony scheduled for 12:15 p.m. Monday, March 5, 2001 in Laubacher Hall at Saint Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, two Jewish-led groups will present a specially commissioned 4' tall menorah to commemorate the Holocaust, highlighting continued Catholic/Jewish efforts at mutual understanding and education about the Holocaust and fostering continued improvement in interfaith relations. Representatives of the New York-based Interreligious Information Center (IIC) and New Jersey-based Center for Interreligious Understanding (CIU) will make the presentation.

The Yom Hashoah Menorah was conceived by Gunther Lawrence, Executive Director of the IIC. It was created by Israeli sculptor Aharon Bezalel of Jerusalem. It exists in both large (4') and small (13") versions. Rabbi Jack Bemporad, Director of the CIU, is a co-sponsor of the event. Cardinal William H. Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore and the Very Reverend Robert F. Leavitt, S.S., President and Rector of Saint Mary's Seminary & University will accept the menorah, which will be placed on permanent display on the grounds of the new library, currently under construction, at Saint Mary's.

In 1999 the groups also co-sponsored the placement of a large version of the menorah at the Pontifical North American College in Rome and the presentation of a small copy to Pope John Paul II. They presented Cardinal Keeler with a tabletop version of the menorah last year. The groups plan to present large copies of the menorah at other Catholic institutions around the country. Ceremonies are scheduled for Palm Beach, March 15th; Miami, May 1st; and Boston, Washington, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Rockville Centre, New York, St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles (dates to be scheduled).

Media are invited to attend. Saint Mary's Seminary & University is located at 5400 Roland Avenue in Baltimore (from I-83 take Northern Parkway east).

Points of contact are Ray Kempisty or Matt Lane at 410-547-5379.