

Contact: Sandra Soliz 713-906-7912

solizs@stthom.edu

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

# University of St. Thomas Hosts "Word of God: The Bible Unites"

### WHAT:

The University of St. Thomas will host, "Word of God: The Bible Unites," an ecumenical event where people of all faiths will continuously read the Bible aloud — from Genesis to Revelation — around the clock for the duration of the three-day event.

The University invites the Houston community to attend this inspiring show of faithful unity for the first time on the UST campus.

#### WHO:

Various Catholic and non-Catholic religious leaders, civil leaders, Catholic high school and grade school principals, UST faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends will read the Bible aloud for 15-minute intervals

#### WHEN:

This three-day event:

- Begins 9 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 20, 2009
- Ends at approximately 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 22
- Reading will cease only for regularly scheduled Masses on Friday at 12:30 p.m. and Saturday at 7 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 5 p.m.
- The Bible will be read in Spanish both Friday, Feb. 20 and Saturday, Feb. 21 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.
- An opening ceremony featuring all special guests including religious and civic leaders will be held at 9 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 20. After the opening each special guest will read the Bible for five minutes.
- A closing ceremony will be held at 9 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 22.

## **WHERE:** Chapel of St. Basil

3802 Yoakum on the University of St. Thomas campus Parking at the Moran Center Parking Facility \$2 (Corner of West Alabama and Graustark)

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

UST Chaplain Father Mike Buentello, CSB, said he was inspired when the recent Senate of Bishops started the session in Rome with a non-stop reading of the Bible. "I thought, we can do that," Fr. Buentello said. "We are a Catholic institution. Let's unite under the reading of the Bible."

The decision to host a continuous reading of the Bible was born out of a collective desire to recover unity of all Christians as a gift of Christ and a call of unity of the Holy Spirit, he said.

"One criticism and misconception that you often hear about Catholics is that we all have a Bible in our homes, but we seldom open and read it," Buentello said. "It's very important that we are comfortable with scripture. Too often, we talk about what divides us, and we overlook what we have in common. We should concentrate on what unites us, what brings us closer together and closer to God – and that is our Bible."

**COST:** Free and open to the public

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Contact Fr. Mike Buentello, CSB, at buentem@stthom.edu or call 713-525-6981.