



For Immediate Release  
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### ***Le Point Vierge: Mary and the Catholic Imagination***

Interpretation by Wendy M. Wright, PhD and photography by Dorothy Tuma

*Hartford* — The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Le Point Vierge: Mary and the Catholic Imagination*. This exhibition is free and open to the public and extends from August 25 to October 23, 2011. A reception and artist lecture will be held on Saturday, September 10, 5 to 7 p.m. where Dr. Wright and Ms. Tuma will discuss the concept and process of their exhibition.

This exhibition directs its focus on the varied images of the Virgin Mary within the context of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, California. Because of its diverse population, this Archdiocese developed into a wonderful microcosm of global Catholicism. The images within churches, sacred spaces and outside altars—photographed over a seven-year pilgrimage by Dr. Wright and Ms. Tuma—richly illustrate the Catholic Marian experience with both tenderness and vigor.

Along with the photographs, interpretive text accompanies each piece exploring the Catholic imagination. When viewing this exhibition, questions pour out of the images such as: is the image temporal and why? How is sacred space explored? How is Mary visually or physically depicted? Are rituals involved? Is there any performance or gestural characteristics to the piece? Is irony or paradox exhibited? The interpretive texts guide us to a better understanding of the spiritual, cultural and Catholic meaning of each image. Dr. Wright writes, “Mary emerges in this visual and textual portrait as the global Church’s *point vierge*, the “virgin point” of deep convergence of the tradition’s wide theological, cultural, historical, and geographical diversity. The polyvalent figure of Mary encountered in the Los Angeles area both illustrates a distinctive Catholic imagination and finds in that imagination the seeds of creativity, reconciliation, renewal, and hope.”

Wendy M. Wright, PhD is Professor of Theology and holds the John C. Kenefick Faculty Chair in the Humanities at Creighton University. She is the author of fifteen books on Christian spirituality. Find more information at [wmwright@creighton.edu](mailto:wmwright@creighton.edu) and <http://moses.creighton.edu/Wright/index.htm>

Omaha artist Dorothy Tuma specializes in photographs that emphasize the spiritual and natural qualities of images. More information can be found at <http://www.photosbydt.com/>

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery’s hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The Gallery and all related events are free and open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church, and the facility is handicapped accessible. More information may be found at [www.spsact.org](http://www.spsact.org), click “Community Life” and then “Clare Gallery”.