

Seton Hall Exhibit Ensures the Memory of the Holocaust

Collection of Letters gives glimpse of life in concentration camp

WWII Artifacts to be exhibited at Seton Hall

South Orange, New Jersey -- Seton Hall University will exhibit a one-of-a-kind, award-winning collection of World War II era mail and documents related to the Nazi's attempted extermination of Jews. Experience this unbelievable collection in the Beck Rooms of the Walsh Library, Sunday, December 14, 2008 from 1 to 4 p.m. **A reception will follow for all guests. There is no charge.** For more information, call (973) 761-9006.

The collection is owned by the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation, who acquired this extraordinary collection in order to preserve and offer it for public use at Holocaust and genocide educational venues around the world. The display at Seton Hall, hosted by The Sister Rose Thering Endowment for Jewish-Christian Studies, will be the second public exhibition since the acquisition of the historic items from a private collector.

"One of the most heartbreaking artifacts and historical evidence of Nazi desecration is a torn fragment of a hand-written Hebrew parchment from a Bible scroll (*Tanakh*). A German soldier used the holy scripture to wrap a parcel he mailed from Russia to Austria in 1942," explained Daniel Spungen. "The sacred parchment was pillaged from a Russian synagogue. Ironically, the portion used was the story of David and Goliath." These postal artifacts have an incredible historical and emotional value because of their ability to show that many prisoners never lost hope, and the human spirit survived.

Florence Spungen, Founder of the Foundation, recognizes the incredible humanist value the artifacts hold, "This is a permanent educational tool for all generations to document this important period of time that cannot be forgotten." Not only are there items which Spungen has meticulously collected, but the foundation now will be the guardian of more than 250 envelopes, post cards, letters, specially-designated postage stamps used exclusively by concentration camp inmates, Jewish ghetto residents and prisoners of war.

Other notable pieces in the collection:

- A card sent by an inmate at Dachau soon after it opened in 1933 is the earliest known prisoner mail from any Nazi concentration camp;
- An October 3, 1943 letter to his parents in Rzeszów, Poland from Eduard Pys, a 21 year old who arrived on the first transport at the Auschwitz concentration camp in May 1940 and;
- Mail secretly carried by children through the sewers of Warsaw during the 1944 uprising.

The Endowment was created and named in honor of Sister Rose Thering, O.P., Ph.D., in recognition and appreciation of her exemplary dedication throughout her life to improving Jewish-Christian relations through education, especially at the elementary and secondary school levels. The goals of the Endowment's programs are to reduce prejudice born of ignorance and misperception, to

promote means for the conveying the richness of the Jewish and Christian traditions accurately and without bias, and to foster cooperation among Jews and Christians in areas of common social welfare. More than 350 teachers throughout New Jersey have benefited from the Endowment during the past fifteen years, and have had an impact on more than 150,000 students in their classes.

For over 150 years, Seton Hall University has been a catalyst for leadership, developing the whole student, mind, heart and spirit. Seton Hall combines the resources of a large university with the personal attention of a small liberal arts college. Its attractive suburban campus is only 14 miles by train, bus or car to New York City, with the wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities the city offers. Seton Hall is a Catholic university that embraces students of all races and religions, challenging each to better the world through integrity, compassion and a commitment to serving others. For more information, see www.shu.edu