For immediate release

The Rev. Mark R. Francis, C.S.V., Elected Seventh President of Catholic Theological Union by Board of Trustees

CHICAGO [April 16, 2013] At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago on April 15, 2013, the Rev. Mark R. Francis, C.S.V., was elected to the presidency of CTU. In accepting the post, he succeeds the Rev. Donald Senior, C.P., who is retiring from the office on June 30, 2013. Fr. Senior served as the president of CTU for a total of 23 years. He is scheduled to return to the faculty as Professor of New Testament Studies in the fall of 2013.

President-elect Fr. Francis is a member of the Clerics of St. Viator (Viatorians) and was ordained to the priesthood in 1982. He obtained a Master of Divinity degree and a Master of Arts degree in Theology from Catholic Theological Union. He served for three years in Bogotá, Colombia, and then, in 1988, he earned a Doctorate in Sacred Liturgy (S.L.D.) from the Pontifical Liturgical Institute of Sant'Anselmo in Rome. He taught liturgy at CTU for 12 years and was a regular lecturer at the Liturgy Institute of Chicago and its Spanish language counterpart. In 2000, he returned to Rome as Superior General of the Clerics of St. Viator, where he oversaw the mission of the international community until 2012.

Widely respected for his work in liturgical studies, Fr. Francis served most recently as a visiting scholar at Santa Clara University. He has written numerous books and articles on liturgical topics, including Liturgy in a Culturally Diverse Community: A Guide Toward Understanding (Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions: Washington, D.C., 2012) and Shape A Circle Ever Wider: Inculturating the Liturgy in the United States (Liturgy Training Publications, 2000).

Fr. Francis was moved to seek the presidency of CTU because, he noted, “I am convinced of the importance of CTU’s mission and contribution to the Church in the United States and in the world. In many ways, having been a student at CTU and having been on the faculty, I have developed a very singular affection and respect for the school.” In accepting the presidency, Fr. Francis said, “I look forward to contributing to the continuing vitality of this school of ministry whose graduates have touched so many lives around the world.”

The Rev. Kurt Hartrich, O.F.M., chair of the CTU Board of Trustees said, “I’m very excited that Fr. Francis has accepted the presidency of CTU. He will be a dynamic leader, and has a background that will help to lead the school into the next phase of our development.” Current president, Fr. Senior said, “I have known and respected Fr. Mark Francis for many years and am fully confident that he will help lead CTU into a new future. I know that CTU is in good hands.”

About Catholic Theological Union: CTU is the largest Roman Catholic graduate school of theology and ministry in the United States. Our mission is to prepare effective leaders for the Church, ready to witness to Christ’s good news of justice, love, and peace. CTU’s 3,500 lay and religious graduates are serving in more than 65 countries worldwide.

###