FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sr. Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, Named Director of Center for the Study of Consecrated Life at Catholic Theological Union

CHICAGO (Oct. 15, 2014) The Reverend Mark R. Francis, CSV, president of Catholic Theological Union (CTU), announced that Sr. Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, has been appointed the first director of the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life. The center will launch in February 2015 in celebration of “The Year of Consecrated Life” designated by Pope Francis to begin on November 30, 2014.

In the Roman Catholic Church, “Consecrated Life” is used to describe a stable way of life, recognized by the Church and characterized by a constant search to conform oneself to the life of Jesus Christ. One of the most well-known forms is religious life in which members, drawn to a particular spirituality and charism, express their dedication through the profession of the public vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

In accepting the appointment as director and associate professor of Catholic theological ethics, Cimperman said, “Religious communities are a vital presence in today’s global Catholic Church. With new forms of consecrated life also emerging, there is a compelling need for a center where the theology, spirituality, and history of religious and consecrated life can be studied, and where collaboration, dialogue, and creativity will yield valuable resources for these communities worldwide. I am honored and delighted to serve at CTU as director of the Center. This is a very exciting time in religious life and consecrated life in general. An international school of theology such as CTU is the perfect venue from which to collaboratively engage in scholarship and conversations of consequence in the service of the Church and the world.”

The goal of the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life is to dynamically engage in research and dialogue on contemporary issues in consecrated life today. Yearly courses, workshops, and symposia will be offered online and at CTU on topics such as: vowed life in today’s world; community living that welcomes a diversity of cultures; and collaborative models of church among religious congregations. “We want to encourage new scholarship across disciplines, provide processes for dialogue, assist in the discovery of new vocations, and explore the internationality of consecrated life,” said Cimperman.

Cimperman is a Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Her scholarship is at the intersection of moral theology, social ethics, and spirituality. Her first book, When God’s People Have HIV/AIDS: An Approach to Ethics, received a Catholic Press Association award. Equal to her passion for ethics is her passion for engaging in topics related to contemporary religious life. She earned a Master of Divinity from the University of Notre Dame; a Licentiate of Sacred Theology (STL) from Weston Jesuit School of Theology; and a PhD from Boston College in Theological Ethics. As a member of Giving Voice (women religious under the age of 50), Cimperman brings a post-Vatican II generational lens to the wider theological, pastoral and global concerns of religious life.

About Catholic Theological Union: CTU’s mission is to prepare effective leaders for the Church, ready to witness to Christ’s good news of justice, love, and peace. Founded in 1968, CTU is a Roman Catholic graduate school of theology and ministry sponsored by 24 men’s religious communities. Located in Chicago, Illinois, its more than 4,000 lay and vowed religious graduates serve in 60 countries.