NEWS RELEASE - PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

For Immediate Release Basilica of Saint Mary Hosts Downtown Choral Festival

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. -- The Basilica of Saint Mary will host a service of song on February 11, 2007 at 2:30 p.m. to celebrate the teachings of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount. The festival features Arvo Pärt's *Beatitudes*, Healey Willan's *An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Host*, and the world premiere of the newly commissioned work, *All Nature Listened* by Canadian composer Mark Sirett and St. Olaf College's W. Bruce Benson, pastor and poet.

Nearly 400 voices from 8 downtown Minneapolis church choirs will participate in this choral celebration. "This is a biennial music event we've been doing together since 1999 says Teri Larson, Director of Music for the Basilica of Saint Mary. "We come together from different Christian denominations, and we find harmony through music."

The downtown Minneapolis churches participating in the choral festival include:

Basilica of Saint Mary

Cathedral of Saint Mark

Central Lutheran

Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church

Plymouth Congregational

Saint Olaf Catholic Church

Wesley United Methodist Church

Westminster Presbyterian

A free-will offering will be taken to benefit sacred music. All are welcome to join in this afternoon filled with celebration, song, and prayer.

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