FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Holy Cross Institutions to Hold ‘Holy Cross Harvest’ for Food Bank**

January 13, 2012 (Notre Dame, Ind.)—While area farmers ended their harvest months ago, another “harvest” is about to get underway and winter weather won’t slow it down. The Holy Cross institutions of Saint Mary's College, Holy Cross College, and the University of Notre Dame will hold their second Holy Cross Harvest together, “harvesting” food and monetary donations for the Food Bank of Northern Indiana.

The event will run between January 23-February 14.

Presidents of the institutions said the drive is in the spirit of the Holy Cross tradition of helping where help is needed.

“The Holy Cross congregations have always worked to provide for those people on the margins. In the local community, there is a great deal of hunger and food insecurity due to the economy. We must keep the needs of others in the forefront of our minds and hold ourselves accountable for our response to that need,” said Carol Ann Mooney, president of Saint Mary's College.

“The active response of our Holy Cross-sponsored institutions to the immediate situation of food insecurity in our locale is a most worthy effort; I would encourage all people of good will to join us in this effort to assist our neighbors who are in need,” added Brother John R. Paige, C.S.C., president of Holy Cross College.

“With members of our community struggling for the basic food necessities, we have the responsibility to respond. Let’s take this opportunity to share our blessings with those in need,” said the Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., president of Notre Dame.

While media reports indicate the economy is improving, it’s hard to find signs of it in statistics provided by the Food Bank. The 196 pantries the Food Bank supplies saw a 100% increase in demand in 2011 from 2010. The Community Food Pantry of St. Joseph County, the largest in the Food Bank’s network, saw a 38% increase in the amount of households it helped in 2011. The Food Bank serves the counties of St. Joseph, Elkhart, Marshall, LaPorte, Starke, and Kosciusko.

Milt Lee, executive director of the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, said of the Holy Cross Harvest, “The timing is great for these institutions of higher learning to make such a strong statement of commitment to the issue of hunger. Not just because the need is so great at this time of year, but because hunger is a community health issue that has to be attacked from many angles. I can’t think of a better partnership than that of our universities and colleges.”

The first time the three institutions collaborated on the Holy Cross Harvest was in the fall of 2010. Then, more than 6,600 pounds of non-perishables and $2,700 were collected for the Food Bank. The goal is to collect even more this time around.

Each of the three campuses is approaching the Holy Cross Harvest differently. Saint Mary's College, which held a food drive in the fall of 2011, encourages students, faculty, and staff to make monetary donations in the College’s name on the Food Bank’s website <http://www.foodbankofnorthernindiana.info/>. When visitors scroll down the web page, they will see donations can be made in the name of several local colleges, which also include Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame. According to the Food Bank website, money can go a long way toward providing for the hungry. A donation of $1 provides up to eight meals for an individual.

In addition to the appeal for monetary donations for the drive, Notre Dame is asking for donations of non-perishable food items. The University will have community food drop locations at the Hammes Notre Dame Bookstore and the Hammes Bookstore and Romy’s Café at Eddy Street Commons.

The Holy Cross Harvest is one of several Food Bank drives going on at local colleges in January and February. Drives are also taking place at Ivy Tech Community College, Indiana University South Bend, and Bethel College. Collectively they are part of the Neighbors in Need drive sponsored by WSBT, the South Bend Tribune, and Martin’s Super Markets. For more information, go to <http://www.wsbt.com/news/wsbt-neighbors-in-need-food-drive-kicks-off-20120109,0,5960289.story>

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**About Saint Mary’s College:** Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Ind., is a four-year, Catholic, women’s institution offering five bachelor’s degrees and more than 30 major areas of study. Saint Mary’s College has six nationally accredited academic programs: social work, art, music, teacher education, chemistry and nursing. Saint Mary’s College ranks among the top 100 “Best National Liberal Arts Colleges” for 2012 published by U.S.News and World Report. Founded in 1844, Saint Mary’s is a pioneer in the education of women, and is sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

***About Holy Cross College: Holy Cross College*** *is a Catholic, four-year, co-educational, liberal arts institution founded in 1966 by the Brothers of Holy Cross. With a 13:1 faculty/student ratio, students find personal attention from professors who care about their success. The college focuses on the holistic development of the mind, body, and spirit. Baccalaureate students must complete four requirements before graduation-a professional internship to develop their real-world qualifications, service experiences to develop their compassion, an international experience to expand their horizons, and a senior Capstone presentation to sum up their learning outcomes and attest to a panel of faculty and business leaders that they are ready for life after college. With a campus adjoining Saint Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame, Holy Cross College provides the best of both worlds-a close-knit, small college atmosphere with the resources and social opportunities of a large university.*

***About the University of Notre Dame:*** *Founded in 1842, the* ***University of Notre Dame*** *provides a distinctive voice in higher education that is at once rigorously intellectual, unapologetically moral in orientation, and firmly embracing of a service ethos. The nation’s preeminent Catholic university and rated among the top 25 of all U.S. institutions of higher learning, Notre Dame is organized into four undergraduate colleges — Arts and Letters, Science, Engineering, and the Mendoza College of Business — the School of Architecture, the Law School, the Graduate School, 10 major research institutes, more than 40 centers and special programs, and the University library system. Located adjacent to the city of South Bend, approximately 90 miles east of Chicago, it is highly residential, with 80 percent of students living on campus, and also is known for the quality of its physical plant and the beauty of its campus, including the Golden Dome of the Main Building, the world’s most recognized university landmark.*