



## Press Release

For more information contact  
Barbara Esteves-Moore  
292-5134, ext. 272 or  
[estevesmooreb@dominicancampus.org](mailto:estevesmooreb@dominicancampus.org)

### St. Cecilia Academy creates Scriptorium space

St. Cecilia Academy enhanced their library this spring by creating a Scriptorium, an area dedicated to the study and practice of calligraphy, writing and the illumination. Such places are normally associated with monasteries, but Sister Nicholas Marie, O.P. wanted to bring the beauty of this practice to SCA students.

Sister Nicholas Marie, an SCA mathematics and religion teacher, offered a class in calligraphy during the January 2010 Interim week. The class became highly popular, ending up as three sections of 10-15 students each. Sister introduced both calligraphy and illumination, the art of decorating text or initial letters on a page.

Mrs. Braddock, the SCA librarian, has worked closely with Sister Nicholas Marie in the Scriptorium set-up. She sees students from the calligraphy classes excited to have a place to work on projects they began during Interim. According to her, the space is set up with all students in mind, complete with the necessary pens, nibs, inks, paper and calligraphy resource books.

Mrs. Braddock, a former art teacher, is glad Sister is sharing the beauty of this craft. “I come from a long line of calligraphers. It is a lot of fun. I hope the girls experience the love of beautiful writing. It is something they can share and give to others forevermore.”

Sister Nicholas Marie, a PhD in mathematics, had no exposure to the arts in high school or college. “It was only after I entered the St. Cecilia Congregation that I discovered a thirst for artistic expression and tried calligraphy.”

“For me calligraphy, in a beautiful way, unites faith, art and geometry—finding an expression for all of these was a great personal blessing. All my calligraphy projects are spiritual.”

She has great hopes that this art can deepen the SCA experience for the students. “It would be wonderful to have a calligraphy guild at SCA. Calligraphy requires silence, patience and perseverance. It is a great tool for meditation. It develops symbolic and sacramental imagination and artistic sensitivity. It unites written word with visual pictures. I believe that all these are important aspects for our students to experience for these are sometimes difficult to find in our modern culture.”

St. Cecilia Academy is Nashville's oldest private high school, founded in 1860 by the Dominican Sisters of the St. Cecilia Congregation. The Academy has been named to the Top 50 best Catholic high schools in the U.S. list four times since 2004. Seventy-eight percent of the Class of 2009 earned college scholarships totaling \$4.6 million. Five St. Cecilia Academy students—9% of the senior class—have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program for high scores on the PSAT for 2009.