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**Felice Maciejewski**  
(Information Services)

## December 2008

### Felice Navidad

The Christmas season affords **Felice Maciejewski** (Information Services) the opportunity to showcase her extensive collection of Christmas crèches and share a tradition of her own with the St. Norbert College community.

Her collection of more than 140 nativity scenes goes on display in the Todd Wehr Library each holiday season.

Although Maciejewski acquired her first crèche in high school, her collection really took off about nine years ago, while she was working as the head of access services at Tulane University in New Orleans.

A colleague and friend who had displayed her own collection in the Latin American Library on the Tulane campus charged Maciejewski with carrying on the tradition when she left the university. It was at this point that it first occurred to Maciejewski that she had the makings of her own collection.

The nativities in her collection have come to her from all around the world, often in the suitcases of her own friends and family. Their shapes and forms vary in keeping with the different cultures they represent.

Many of the crèches are beautifully crafted of materials that are native to the area where they originated. For example, one of her Honduran examples is made of seedpods and another is carved out of a Costa Rican walnut shell. Some of the treasures are more primitive while others are more painstakingly finished.

Once, in a market in New Orleans, Maciejewski was asked why she wanted to purchase a crèche depicting a black holy family. She looked at the vendor and said, "That's precisely why I want it."

Traditions like the setting up of a nativity scene make perfect vehicles for carrying on heritage and culture through generations and, according to Maciejewski, they provide families and friends with an opportunity to come together.

It is intriguing that all of the crèches depict a single event that occurred in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago, and yet they all manage to bring a different flavor to the story of Christ's birth. Her collection, Maciejewski says, reminds us that although we are all similarly diverse, we still have

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so much in common.

We invite you to come to campus and see the crèches for yourself. They will be on display in the Todd Wehr Library throughout the holiday season, where all are welcome to visit.

And Maciejewski is already looking forward to next year, when the additional space that will be available in the lobbies of the new [Mulva Library](#) – due to open on campus next summer – will give her the opportunity to display more of her collection.

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