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Boston College Law School

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Gift Announced for the School's First Endowed Chair

8/23/00--BCLS Dean John Garvey has announced a gift of $1.5 million to fund the first endowed chair at Boston College Law School. It will be the Darald and Juliet Libby Chair in Memory of Michael G. Pierce, S.J.

Darald ('55) and Juliet Libby, from Manchester, New Hampshire, initially made the gift anonymously, wanting to call attention only to the man in whose name they had made the gift: Father Michael G. Pierce, S.J. After some thought, however, the Libbys decided to go public about their gift. They hope it will encourage others to support the Law School in a similar fashion.

"We're very private people," says Darald, "but we would like others to contribute. I'll be interested to see how it goes, how people will respond. The Law School is a wonderful place. It can only stay that way if those who care about it support it."

The man to whom the Libbys are paying tribute with their gift was a friend for many years. They met Father Pierce through David Clark, founder of the Worchester, Massachusetts spacesuit company where Libby is chairman of the board. The story goes that Clark, who had a plane, wanted to be converted to Catholicism. Father Pierce wanted to learn to fly. Clark promised to give him flying lessons if he'd teach him to be a Catholic. Clark ultimately became Catholic, but Father Pierce never did get his wings.

The game, however, sealed a friendship that was shared by the Libbys. Darald attended retreats conducted by Father Pierce at Campion Hall in Weston, Massachusetts, and both Libbys continued to visit him after he moved to the Jesuit Mission Bureau in Boston.

"We wanted to find some way to honor him. He had a great sense of humor. He was always doing something for others," Darald says.

The first occupant of the Libby Chair will be selected this fall. Dean Garvey has solicited nominations from faculty and has convened a group of distinguished professors across the university to help him in the selection process.