Finding faith in translation

BY ALEX CARLSON
Staff Reporter.

Classics major senior Lauren Milburn is traveling through time to the 1500s through her work translating sacred Christian text from Latin to English. And she is not alone in this effort. Milburn’s professor Rebecca Harrison, head of the classics department at Truman, is also working on this project. 

Milburn’s capstone course requirement is to translate a Latin text into English. “The Book of Hours” in the library, Harrison agreed to the proposal. 

“I was shown the text, ‘The Book of Hours’ in the library, Harrison said. “It’s a book that many other classes have looked at, but they don’t have a translation of it yet. I also said that I thought it would be helpful for the library to have a way to show the translated text for other classes.”

Milburn was raised Catholic, and as a child she read the Bible. “I was raised Catholic, and I’ve always been interested in sacred Christian texts,” Milburn said. “They’re a part of our history.” 

Harrison says translating ancient texts is a fascinating process. “The fact that we’re able to understand how many different languages of sacred texts to gather knowledge about the subject area being translated,” Harrison said. “It’s very difficult to begin translating these texts, so I have to find the passage in the Bible to find the words that it came from to help me translate the text more easily.”

Milburn’s work is a reference material in translating the Book of Hours. “I’m working on the prayer that I’ve said before,” Milburn said. “Sometimes the text will surprise me when I look at it, and I have to find the passage in the Bible to find the words that it came from to help me translate the text more easily.”

Milburn also wants her time traveling to be her way of thanking the library, the university and her religious community. “I view this project as a way that I can give back to Pickler Memorial Library. It’s nice to know that we have within the library, we’re all fortunate and blessed to have, so I feel that accomplishing this task says ‘thank you’ to the library.”

More information about the translation can be found at http://library.truman.edu/. More information about the classics department can be found at http://www.truman.edu/.

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