



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **PAPAL HONORS CONFERRED UPON DIOCESAN CLERGY, ONE WOMAN RELIGIOUS AND LAITY**

(Nov. 29, 2011) GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Bishop Walter A. Hurley announced that Pope Benedict XVI has conferred papal honors upon three priests of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, a woman religious and seven members of the laity in recognition of their distinguished service to the Church. Pontifical Honors conferred are:

#### **Prelate of Honor to His Holiness**

Rev. Monsignor William H. Duncan

#### **Chaplain to His Holiness**

Rev. Monsignor Edward A. Hankiewicz

Rev. Monsignor R. Louis Stasker

#### **Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross**

Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P.

Mrs. Mary Ann Keeler

Mr. Roy P. Lorenz

Mrs. Joan M. Secchia

Mr. Ronald D. and Mrs. Joan Griffith

Mrs. Mary E. O'Connor

#### **Benemerenti Medal**

Mr. Philip H. McCorkle, Jr.

“I am grateful that our Holy Father has conferred papal honors on these priests, woman religious and members of the laity,” said Bishop Hurley. “They have served the church and the community faithfully and with a spirit of commitment and dedication. I am thankful for their service as I am for the service of all our priests and people.”



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The diocesan bishop nominates candidates for the honors and submits their names and biographies to the Holy See.

Once the Holy Father confers the honor, the Vatican Secretariat of State issues a document confirming the honor. The priests upon whom papal honors are being conferred are given the title monsignor.

The Pro Ecclesia (“For the Church and the Holy Father”) award and medal, founded by Pope Leo XIII in 1888, “recognizes the commitment of men and women and their service to the ecclesial community.” The Benemerenti (“To a well deserving person” or “Good merit”) award, first presented by Pope Pius VI, “is given to those who have shown exemplary service to the church, family and community.”

Bishop Hurley will present the medals and documents of these distinguished honors during a prayer service at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew on Monday, December 5 at 7:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

*The Diocese of Grand Rapids serves over 178,000 Catholics, 101 parishes and missions, and 31 schools in an 11-county area of West Michigan. For additional information, visit our website [www.dioceseofgrandrapids.org](http://www.dioceseofgrandrapids.org). Connect with us on Facebook: search for and “Like” Diocese of Grand Rapids.*

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