

In the Heartland
Papal Honor “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice to be Awarded

By Bishop Richard Pates
Bishop of Des Moines

On May 6th at the 10:30 am Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral the Papal Honor *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* (For the Church and the Pope) will be awarded to the following members of the Diocese of Des Moines:

Kyle and Sharon Krause
Stephen and Cathryn Lacy
Robert and Janice Myers
Dennis and Constance Purdum
Lawrence and Kathleen Zimpleman

In the December edition of *The Mirror*, six individuals from the Diocese were pictured being given the same distinction. The theme that runs through both of the presentations is the role of the laity in the Church which has been heightened with the implementation of the Second Vatican Council.

The first group to receive the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* medal were recognized on the basis of their activity of leadership within the institutional church, its agencies and schools. In effect, they held “inside” responsibility.

The second group of leadership highlighted are those individuals associated with the business sector of society. The Church teaches that one’s faith is not only to be

a private matter but a philosophy of life that is the guiding light for all of one's activity. This, obviously, involves everyone. In the case of business honorees the standards of morals and ethics stand tall.

In 2011, February 24th and 26th, the Pontifical Council for Peace and Justice under the leadership of Cardinal P.A. Turkson conducted a conference entitled: "Caritas et Veritate: The logic of Gift and the Meaning of Business." This was one of two meetings which was in support of the Church's conviction that all Christians are called to practice charity in a manner corresponding to their vocation and according to the degree of influence they exercise in the polis. (society). (*Vocation of the Business Leader*; page 1)

The seminar and consequent reflection pointed out that business women and men have a calling to exercise leadership within the context of the commercial community.

Certain principles guide the business leader which in turn are anchored in the principles of human dignity and the common good. The reflection on the business leader hinges on four dependent principles:

- 1) "the principle of meeting the needs of the world with goods that are truly good and truly serve without forgetting, in a spirit of solidarity, the needs of the poor and vulnerable;
- 2) "the principle of organizing work within enterprises in ways that respect human dignity;

- 3) “the principle of subsidiarity, which fosters a spirit of initiative and increases the competences of the employees who are thereby considered co-entrepreneurs;
- 4) “the principle of the sustainability of creation of wealth and its just distribution among the various stakeholders.”

Those being honored today represent a great number of counterparts in the Des Moines community all of whom are worthy of this distinction. They are committed to a family wage, to benefits that keep employees healthy and upbeat, to humane working conditions, to job protection in turbulent economic times; to total prohibition of corruption in all forms; to working environments characterized by strict personal boundaries; to a commitment to global justice – where all are brothers and sisters, all one family.

Leadership in our contemporary times is exercised by spousal teams who support one another and who undertake projects that span the world of influence in fulfilling one’s vocation.

At the heart of this leadership is a deep Christian personal faith which is exercised within the community of faith.

Rich and heartfelt commendations are extended to those who have been explicitly honored by Pope Francis. The same is rendered to ever so many in our midst who are guided by the same faith and principles. Faith and vocation are intricately connected.