

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sr. Maria Ciriello Honored with Spirit of Holy Cross Award

PORTLAND, OR – The Congregation of Holy Cross, which operates the University of Notre Dame and the University of Portland, has honored Dominican Sisters of Peace Maria Ciriello, OP, as a recipient of the 2009 Spirit of Holy Cross Award. The honor recognizes her many years of close association with the province and the ways in which she helped to enhance the mission of Holy Cross in her ministry at the University of Portland, where she served as Dean of the School of Education for 13 years.



Sr. Maria left the university this year to serve her own congregation, the Dominican Sisters of Peace, as the Director of the Founded Ministries Board. As director, she coordinates the congregation's relationship with many institutions they founded, including three colleges, four high schools, three literacy centers, and other institutions of learning, health care, and spirituality.

Ciriello came to Oregon from Catholic University of America in Washington, where she had served on the faculty since 1987. She had also served as coordinator of the Catholic School Leadership master's program jointly operated by Catholic University and the Archdiocese of Washington. While at UP, she led the Pacific Alliance for Catholic Education, which provides teachers for underserved Catholic schools in the United States. The university, during Sister Maria's time at the helm, graduated about 1,200 teachers and 100 principals.

The Spirit of Holy Cross award acknowledges the importance lay collaborators and religious of Holy Cross and others play in living out the vision of Holy Cross founder Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau: to make God known, loved and served in education, parish and mission settings. "Thousands of lay collaborators and others assist in fulfilling the important work in Holy Cross apostolates throughout the world each year," said Holy Cross Father David Tyson, provincial superior of the Congregation's Indiana Province, which includes the western U.S. Father Tyson says the award is a way to "thank all who are helping to make a positive difference in the world."

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