

All are welcome! The ceremony will be interpreted!

Pope Francis honors 40 Catholics in Philadelphia Archdiocese

Congratulations to the Deaf Apostolate – two leaders are receiving Papal Honors!

Norman Smeal, Former President of the ICDA

Sr. Kathleen Schipani, Deaf Apostolate

September 5, 2019 at 5:00 PM

Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia

18th St. & [Benjamin Franklin Parkway](#)

The honors will be conferred by Archbishop Charles Chaput during a ceremony with Evening Prayer Sept. 5 at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia.

All are welcome! The ceremony will be interpreted!

(Please RSVP by Sept. 3rd with # attending by emailing deafcatholicphilly@archphila.org so we save enough seats in front of the interpreters.)

The awardees, who include lay individuals, couples, religious sisters and a permanent deacon, will receive their honors among five award categories. To read the full list [CLICK HERE](#).

The Benemerenti Medal was instituted by Pope Gregory XVI and dates to the 18th century. It was first awarded to soldiers in the Papal Army. The medal was later extended to members of the clergy and laity for exceptional service to the Roman Catholic Church.

Receiving the Benemerenti Medal is:

Norman Smeal serves as the president of the International Catholic Deaf Association, Chapter #8. This organization is a local Catholic Deaf Lay group that supports the

mission of the Deaf Apostolate. Over the last 23 years, he has performed vital work in pastoral ministry to the deaf so that they may fully experience the Word of God.

The Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice, also known as the Cross of Honor, comes directly from the Vatican and is composed of a gold medal with the name of the honoree inscribed, as well as a scroll. Pope Leo XIII established this honor in 1888. It is given to Catholics who have shown distinguished service to the church and to the papal office.

Receiving the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice is:

Sister M. Kathleen Monica Schipani, I.H.M., has been at the forefront of ministry to the Deaf Apostolate and those living with other disabilities in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for over 25 years. Sister Kathleen is a member and past chairperson of the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities and sits on its education committee. Most recently, she has led the development and administration of Lily's Gift, a peer ministry of women for women who have had a poor prenatal diagnosis.