*** For immediate release ***

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Women Religious honored with the Eileen Egan Peacemaker Award

_Pax Christi USA will present the award to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious at the National Catholic Conference on Peacemaking in Chicago, July 18_

_Washington, D.C._—At this year’s National Catholic Conference on Peacemaking, Pax Christi USA (_www.paxchristiusa.org_) will recognize the significant contributions of women religious by honoring the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) with the Eileen Egan Peacemaker Award. The award, first instituted in 2007, will be presented in Chicago at the closing plenary session of the national conference, Sunday, July 18.

“Everyone in Pax Christi USA knows and recognizes that women religious are the backbone of the Catholic peace and justice movement,” stated Dave Robinson, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA. “These strong, prophetic and compassionate women are always on the frontlines where the weak and most vulnerable suffer at the hands of violent and unjust power. For everything these women do, from their visionary leadership to their personal integrity, we felt this moment to be the opportune time to honor them.”

The Eileen Egan Peacemaker Award is bestowed periodically to honor a group or individual who has made a strong and extraordinary prophetic witness for peace in a time or situation of devastating violence or injustice. The award is named for Eileen Egan, one of the co-founders of Pax Christi USA, a long-time executive with Catholic Relief Services and friend to both Dorothy Day and Mother Teresa. The recipient of the Eileen Egan Peacemaker Award exhibits the same spirit as Eileen: steady courage to speak the truth of nonviolence in a world addicted to war-making, deep compassion for the victims of violence and poverty, and unshakeable perseverance to change the world for the better.

“Women religious have been our teachers, our guides, our mentors, and our conscience. They have called us to be a people committed to living lives fashioned by the heart of the gospel which Jesus proclaimed,” stated Bishop Gabino Zavala, Bishop-President of Pax Christi USA. “For the dedication to peace and justice which they have shown in our Church and to the world, Pax Christi USA recognizes and honors them with this award.”

Sr. Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, President of LCWR, will accept the award on Sunday morning at the National Catholic Conference on Peacemaking. Pax Christi USA plans to honor women religious throughout the weekend conference. Past recipients of the award were Camilo Mejia, the first U.S. soldier to publicly refuse to fight in the Iraq War; and Rev. Vien The Nguyen, pastor of Mary Queen of Viet Nam Church in New Orleans, for his and his community’s perseverance during and after Hurricane Katrina.

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