

Ebener receives prestigious national award

**By Barb Arland-Fye
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Dan Ebener of the Davenport Diocese has been honored with this year's Yves Congar Award, presented by the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development (CPPCD). Congar, a prominent 20th century theologian, was a major contributor to the work of the Second Vatican Council.

Ebener, an associate professor at St. Ambrose University in Davenport and diocesan director of Stewardship and Parish Planning, accepted the award April 21 during the CPPCD's annual convention in San Antonio, Texas.

He said he felt honored and humbled. "Honored because this award is for leadership development and my mission is to develop leaders who can lead the change we need in the church and the world. Humbled because the award comes from my respected colleagues who are still teaching me about leadership and change. I have so much yet to learn."

Bishop Martin Amos said "it is an honor for Dan, but also for the diocese that he should be chosen to receive the 2015 Yves Congar Award. He has done so much in the diocese in forming true servant-leaders for ministry."

Forming servant leaders is a mission that has taken Ebener beyond the Davenport Diocese, which the CPPCD recognized.

"Dan is a gracious and knowledgeable proponent of servant leadership. He is admired and respected by his peers for his articulate and tireless efforts to shape church leaders who can lead from this foundation," said Terry Ginther, past chair of the CPPCD board of directors. "In particular, his book 'Blessings for Leaders' was cited by the members who nominated Dan for the Yves Congar Award."

Ginther noted that Ebener, a longtime member of CPPCD, has "distinguished himself as a diocesan planning colleague, as an author, as a college professor and a trainer. Serving in all of these various roles, his work has had an impact on a significant number of people beyond his own diocese. For these reasons, we are thrilled to recognize his work with the Yves Congar Award."

In addition to his teaching responsibilities at St. Ambrose and service for the Davenport Diocese, Ebener provides consulting especially for not-for-profit groups on leadership, strategic planning, teambuilding, fundraising, community organizing and board development.

He has led the strategic planning process for more than 100 organizations, ranging from parishes and religious communities to health care facilities and municipalities. He also facilitated the process of creating a Community Mental Health Initiative to develop a plan of action for addressing mental health services in the Quad-City area.

Last month he gave a presentation at Seton Hall University and this month he speaks at the International Catholic Stewardship Conference and teaches at Zagreb School of Economics and Management in Croatia. In June, he will lecture at the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany.

As an author, Ebener's first book "Servant Leadership models for your parish" received a Catholic Press Association Award in 2011; his second book, "Blessings for Leaders," received two awards. "Servant Leadership models for your parish" was based on his study of parishes in the Davenport Diocese where he previously served as director of the Social Action Department for 20 years.

His work has also been recognized with the Social Justice Award from St. Ambrose University and the Spirit of Service Award from United Way of the Quad Cities, among other awards.