



## Fordham University to Host 2010 Opus Prize Awards on Nov. 11

**New York, N.Y. (Nov. 2, 2010)** – Fordham University has partnered with the Opus Prize Foundation to host the 2010 Opus Prize Awards, to be handed out on Nov. 11 on the Rose Hill campus.

The annual event honors faith-based humanitarian leaders around the globe with a \$1 million award made possible by the Opus Prize Foundation.

The award is presented at a Catholic college or university as a means of inspiring students to do humanitarian work that is firmly rooted in religious faith.

Opus Prize winners combine a driving entrepreneurial spirit with an abiding faith to empower the disenfranchised, give opportunities to the poorest and inspire others to pursue lives of service. To date, 16 individuals from around the world have been recognized by the foundation since the first award was presented in 2004.

In addition to hosting the event, Fordham has been actively involved in the nomination and selection process of this year's "unsung heroes," through a special committee of Fordham community members.

"Fordham literally 'searched the world' to discover the truly saintly and extraordinary individuals to be honored as Opus Prize recipients this year," said Msgr. Joseph G. Quinn, vice president for University Mission and Ministry and member of the nominating committee. "What an honor it is for Fordham to uphold these unsung heroes, and how grateful we are to the foundation for the opportunity to inspire our students with these faith-based tales of social innovation."

This year, the Opus Prize finalists are:

**Sister Beatrice Chipeta**, a Rosarian nun who directs the Lusubilo Orphan Care Project, a non-governmental organization (NGO) that serves thousands of orphan children and caregivers in one of the world's poorest areas, northern Malawi, Africa. A former teacher, Sister Beatrice began ministering to the poor on her own in the impoverished and AIDS-stricken area of Karonga with the mission of empowering every child and adult. Today, at age 68, she oversees a staff of 60 in 10 to 12 villages that support themselves by farming without the aid of machinery. Sister Beatrice and Lusubilo have developed infant feeding programs, a youth-led agriculture program, an HIV/AIDS support group and preschool and primary school education programs for the poor in these rural villages, where more than 280 orphan-headed households are supported. For her devoted commitment to empowering these communities, Sister Beatrice has received no previous recognition, making her a true "unsung hero."

**John Halligan, S.J.**, founder and director of the Working Boys' Center (WBC), an NGO that has served more than 6,000 poor families in the heart of the city of Quito, Ecuador. Father Halligan began the WBC in 1964 in the attic of the centuries-old La Compania Church. His simple aim was to provide lunch and spiritual inspiration to a few dozen "shoeshine boys" who worked in the streets of Quito to support their families. Forty-six years later, the WBC serves approximately 400 families annually (2,000 individuals) with a staff of 32 and 1000 volunteers. The center offers services for the whole family, including three meals a day, schooling, technical job training and certification in 11 vocational programs, savings programs, health and dental care, daily Mass and daily bathing. Father Halligan instills 10 basic moral and spiritual values in those he serves: loyalty, personal development, family, religion, education, economy, work, recreation, health and housing. The WBC places close to 100 percent of its graduates in jobs, provides a home-ownership program and owns and manages a beauty salon and a bakery.

The winner will be announced on **Thursday, Nov. 11, at 5:15 p.m. in Keating Hall's first-floor auditorium**, on the Rose Hill campus.

According to the foundation, the Opus Prize is designed to provide a single significant infusion of resources to greatly advance the work of the winners, and to bring greater visibility to their causes. The foundation's mission is to support those unsung heroes who exemplify the adage, "Give a person a fish; you have fed him for a day. Teach a person to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime."

Members of this year's nomination committee are: Monsignor Joseph G. Quinn, vice president for University Mission and Ministry; William Baker, Ph.D., the Claudio Aquaviva Chair and Journalist in Residence at Fordham; John Kriss, FCRH '62, retired senior vice president of the Capital Group Companies, American Funds Distributors; E. Gerald

Corrigan, Ph.D., GSAS '65, '71, chairman, Goldman Sachs Bank USA and managing director, Goldman, Sachs & Co; author and National Book Award winner Alice McDermott; Loretta Brennan Glucksman, chair of the American Ireland Fund; Archbishop Celestino Migliore, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations; Vartan Gregorian, Ph.D., president of the Carnegie Corporation; NBC News veterans Tom Brokaw and Chris Matthews; and John Tognino, FCLS 75, chairman and CEO of Pepper Financial, and chairman of Fordham's Board of Trustees.

(Note: Please share with us your stories of the unsung heroes in your own lives by leaving an entry on the Fordham Notes blog: <http://fordhamnotes.blogspot.com/2010/10/tell-us-about-your-unsung-heroes.html>)

#### **About Fordham University**

Founded in 1841, Fordham is the Jesuit University of New York, offering exceptional education distinguished by the Jesuit tradition to approximately 14,700 students in its four undergraduate colleges and its six graduate and professional schools. It has residential campuses in the Bronx and Manhattan, a campus in Westchester, and the Louis Calder Center Biological Field Station in Armonk, N.Y.

#### **About the Opus Prize Foundation**

The Opus Prize Foundation recognizes unsung heroes of any faith tradition, anywhere in the world, solving today's most persistent social problems by annually awarding the Opus Prize, a \$1 million faith-based award. Opus Prize winners combine a driving entrepreneurial spirit with an abiding faith to give power to the disenfranchised, opportunities to the poorest, and inspire others to pursue lives of service. Each year the Opus Prize Foundation partners with a university or college to maximize the scope and impact of its mission. The 2010 partner is Fordham University, New York, N.Y. The first Opus Prize was given in 2004. Today, 16 individuals from the United States and around the world have been recognized. The Opus Prize Foundation, established in 1994, is a private and independent foundation and does not accept unsolicited nominations. For more information, visit [www.opusprize.org](http://www.opusprize.org).