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Georgetown University Research Center Honors
Two Catholic Sisters for Research Contributions

The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University Celebrates Church research with reception and awards presentation

Washington DC- On October 26th the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University will honor Sr. Patricia Wittberg, SC and posthumously, Sr. Mary Ann Walsh, RSM for their contributions to Church research.

Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans, chairman of CARA's Board of Directors, will present Sr. Wittberg, SC with the Rev. Louis J. Luzbetak, SVD, Award for Exemplary Church Research. The Luzbetak Award, named in honor of CARA's first executive director, is given annually to a researcher who has made a significant lifetime contribution to research on the Catholic Church.

Sr. Wittberg has been a member of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Ohio, since 1966. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago. She taught sociology for 28 years and is now a professor emerita at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis.

Among her many achievements, Sr. Wittberg is the author of numerous books and articles on the sociology of religion and on religious communities, including most recently, "From Piety to Professionalism-And Back" (Lexington Books, 2006), "Building Strong Church Communities: A Sociological Overview" (Paulist Press 2012), and "New Generations of Catholic Sisters," (Oxford University Press 2014).

Archbishop Gregory Aymond will present the Richard Cardinal Cushing Medal for the Advancement of Church Research posthumously to Sr. Mary Ann Walsh, RSM. This award is named after the Boston archbishop who was one of the principal founders of CARA and is awarded to a person or organization that has advanced Church research through their active support of research and their understanding of its uses.

Sr. Mary Ann Walsh was a member of the Northeast Community of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. She held a master's degree in English from the College of St. Rode and a master's degree in pastoral counseling from Loyola College of Maryland.

Sr. Mary Ann began her journalism career with The Evangelist a diocesan newspaper in her native Albany, New York, before serving as a correspondent for Catholic New Service in Rome and Washington. She served as director of communications for World Youth Day in Denver in 1993 and then began her work in media relations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. She wrote for publications including America, The Washington Post, The Huffington Post and USA Today. She was the producer of the award-winning video, Five Extraordinary Days and editor of books that included profiles of St. Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. She also served as a frequent commentator on major networks, including CNN, MSNBC, ABC, CBS and NPR.
Sr. Mary Ann was awarded the Presidents Medallion in 2013, the highest membership honor presented by the Catholic Academy of Communications Professionals. She also received the St. Francis de Sales Award in 2015 from the Catholic Press Association, honoring her lifetime achievement in the field of journalism.

"During this Year of Consecrated Life, CARA is honored to present these awards to Sr. Patricia Wittberg, SC and posthumously to Sr. Mary Ann Walsh, RSM" said Fr. Thomas Gaunt, S.J., executive director at CARA. "We are grateful for their contributions to research in service of the Church and especially for their work in advancing the Church's self-understanding."

**About CARA**

CARA is a national, non-profit research organization that conducts social scientific studies about the Catholic Church. Founded in 1964 and affiliated with Georgetown University since 1989, CARA has three major dimensions to its mission: to increase the Church's self-understanding, to serve the applied research needs of Church decision-makers, and to advance scholarly research on religion, particularly Catholicism. To learn more, visit the CARA website at [www.cara.georgetown.edu](http://www.cara.georgetown.edu)

**About Georgetown University**

Georgetown University is the oldest Catholic and Jesuit university in America, founded in 1789 by Archbishop John Carroll. Georgetown today is a major student-centered, international, research university offering respected undergraduate, graduate and professional programs on its three campuses. For more information about Georgetown University, visit [www.georgetown.edu](http://www.georgetown.edu).