



Sister of Notre Dame de Namur Gwynette T. Proctor receives the Doris Johnson Award from Bishop Denis J. Madden at the 41st Social Ministry Convocation Feb. 29 at Mercy High School in Baltimore. (Mary Tilghman/Special to the Review)

Social Ministry Convocation honors those working to strengthen community



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Monsignor William Burke, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in Baltimore, awards Suzie Hill, a service award during the Feb. 29 Social Ministry Convocation at Mercy High School in Baltimore. Bishop Denis J. Madden (right) looks on. (Mary Tilghman/Special to the Review)

“People should be able to say that man, that woman – they’re Christian,” said Bishop Denis J. Madden, urban vicar for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, in his reflections during the 41st annual Social Ministry Convocation’s closing service Feb. 29. “Your actions will say who you are.”

Bishop Madden pointed to the group of people on the stage at Mercy High School who were to be honored for their work in the parish and the community, calling them “shining examples of how we all can bring the love of Christ.”

Honorees have visited the sick, ladled soup, comforted the bereaved, collected school supplies and helped pregnant women.

Sister of Notre Dame de Namur Gwynette Proctor said people often asked her if she felt safe when she was executive director of Christopher Place Employment Center, a Catholic Charities’ outreach in Baltimore. Not only safe, but grateful, she said.

“They don’t have to let me in their lives,” she explained.

They were the inspiration for her life’s work, she said.

“If you create an environment where they can succeed,” she said, “they do.”



Delores Moore, Doris Foster and Eloise Jackson, members of the St. Ann Racial Justice Circle, which was honored with a Bishop P. Francis Murphy advocacy award, attend an afternoon session at the Feb. 29 Social Ministry Convocation at Mercy High School in Baltimore. (Mary Tilghman/Special to the Review)

Sister Gwynette, a graduate of Mercy High School in Baltimore, returned to her alma mater as one of three honorees at the Social Ministry Convocation. Also honored were Michael G. Middleton, Sr., who directs the Disciples of God youth group for St. Cecilia and Immaculate Conception parishes in Baltimore, and Pat Shannon Jones, executive director of the Immigration Outreach Service Center, headquartered at St. Matthew Parish in Baltimore.

A Sister of Notre Dame de Namur for 40 years, Sister Gwynette received the Doris Johnson Award, for her work for justice. She has served as coordinator of Urban Youth Ministry, director of Our Daily Bread and Christopher Place Employment Academy and director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministries for the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

“I always hope and pray that I’m going to be used as an instrument for God’s message,” said Sister Gwynette, who is retiring though she plans to begin working for the Baltimore-based National Black Catholic Congress. “I want my whole life to be about empowerment, for people to see possibilities they never saw before.”



Michael G. Middleton Sr. receives the John Hook Parish Award from Bishop Denis J. Madden Feb. 29 at the Social Ministry Convocation.
(Mary Tilghman/Special to the Review)

Middleton received the John Hook Parish Award, honoring commitment to social justice ministry through a parish setting. Since 2007, some 200 youths have participated his program which is well known for its annual camping trips.

(Click [here](#) to watch a related video.)

“I realize everything I have has been given to me, if not by God then by my family and others in my life,” Middleton said. “The least I could do is give back.”

He credits his team, including his wife Phyllis, for the program’s success. “It’s important to help the young church as much as we can,” he said.

Pat Shannon Jones, a nurse and epidemiologist whose career took her around the world, has served since 2007 at the Immigration Outreach Service Center. She says she believes in a life of contemplation and action. “It became my mantra,” she said.



Pat Shannon Jones is honored with the International Peace and Justice Award by Bishop Denis J. Madden during the Feb. 29 Social Ministry Convocation at Mercy High School in Baltimore. (Mary Tilghman/Special to the Review)

The recipient of the International Peace and Justice Award, she said she has been blessed by her work advocating for immigrants.

“What you get back is far greater than what you give,” she said.

Some 320 people attended the convocation. Ansel Augustine, former director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministries for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, offered the keynote address. Bishop Madden led both the opening and closing prayers.

Parish leaders in social justice were also honored with the P. Francis Murphy Social Ministry Recognition Awards. This year's awards went to

- St. Alphonsus Parish, Carol Lapeau, Chris Hermann
- St. Ambrose Parish, Bencine Blake, James Bell
- St. Ann Parish, Elizabeth M. Lutz, St. Ann Racial Justice Circle Members
- St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Laura Weatherington, Anthony "Tony" Landers
- St. Cecilia Parish, St. Cecilia Soup Kitchen Ministers, Dr. Larry Martin
- St. Dominic Parish, Louise Knorr, Dennis Sullivan
- St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Suzie Hill, Tom Curtin & Kate McAvinue
- Immaculate Conception Parish, Bernadine Douglas
- St. Joan of Arc Parish, Mary Ellen Dunn, Terry Welker
- Most Precious Blood Parish, Bernard Glendon
- St. Pius X Parish, Elizabeth Wagner, Clair Myer
- Shrine of the Little Flower, Mary Catalfamo
- St. Stephen Parish, Betty Morgan
- St. Thomas More Parish, John Gray
- St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Alana Florio