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CCJU HONORS LEADERS AT NOSTRA AETATE

In celebration of its 14th year of working to promote inter-religious dialogue and understanding, Sacred Heart University's Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU) honored Archbishop Pietro Sambi and Mr. Gary Krupp at its annual *Nostra Aetate* Awards Ceremony and dinner. The event took place on Wednesday, December 6th, at the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York.

Nostra Aetate is the 1965 Vatican II document that overturned centuries of hostility in the Catholic Church's relationship with Judaism and signaled a new era of dialogue and mutual understanding between Christians, Jews and all peoples of good will. Founded in 1992, CCJU provides forums for research and dialogue that can advance the principles of *Nostra Aetate*. The *Nostra Aetate* Award recognizes world leaders who embody the spirit and support the practices of sincere inter-religious encounters that can foster religious harmony and world peace.

Archbishop Sambi is widely regarded as one of the Vatican's most able leaders and diplomats. He was appointed in December 2005, by Pope Benedict XVI, as the Apostolic Nuncio (ambassador) to the United States, with concurrent responsibilities as Permanent Observer to the Organization of American States. As the Vatican ambassador to the U.S., he represents the pope to church leaders and government officials in the U.S.

Archbishop Sambi's appointment to the U.S. followed 36 years of Vatican diplomatic service, including posts in Cameroon, Jerusalem, Cuba, Algeria, Nicaragua, Belgium, India, Burundi, Indonesia, Israel and Cyprus. The Archbishop's tenure in Israel earned him a reputation among Jews, Christians and Muslims as a courageous and uncompromising voice for peace in the region. He personally



Dr. Anthony J. Cernera, president of Sacred Heart University, presents the Nostra Aetate award to Mr. Gary Krupp, founder of the Pave the Way Foundation, at the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding's annual Nostra Aetate event in New York City.



negotiated an agreement between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces when the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem had become the site of a standoff. He also worked to promote Jerusalem as a place that would safeguard the freedom of religion for all in Israel and worked to end the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda in Palestinian school textbooks.

"His work as a peacemaker for the three Abrahamic faiths has strengthened efforts by people of good will to secure safe and equitable coexistence for future generations," stated Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of CCJU.

Dr. Anthony J. Cernera, president of Sacred Heart University, presents the Nostra Aetate award to Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the U.S. and Permanent Observer to the Organization of American States, at the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding's annual Nostra Aetate event in New York City.

Gary Krupp is a leader in the business of developing medical facilities whose dedicated humanitarian efforts include 18 years of gratis consulting that resulted in \$15 million worth of medical equipment donated to a hospital in Rome. In the year 2000, in recognition of his efforts on behalf of the Roman hospital, he was appointed a Knight of the Pontifical Equestrian Order of St. Gregory the Great, the highest honor bestowed by the Catholic Church to a layperson. Mr. Krupp was only the seventh Jewish man in history to receive this honor. That same year, he and his wife Meredith started the Pave the Way Foundation. Pave the Way advances the active reconciliation and mutual respect between Jews and Christians through meaningful symbolic gestures that uphold the dignity of all human life and cultures.

Among Pave the Way's main goals is fostering a strong partnership between the Holy See and the State of Israel. When negotiations relating to the Fundamental Agreement of 1993 became stalled and Israel withdrew from the negotiations, Mr. Krupp took on the role as a lead mediator and reached out to Israeli diplomats, Jewish philanthropic organizations and influential Jewish leaders to draw Israel back to the negotiation table. In 2002, Pave the Way undertook the Maimonides Project, an innovative cultural exchange that brought Jewish scholars to the Vatican Library to view the manuscripts of the revered medieval Rabbi and philosopher and was followed by a loan of the manuscripts to the Israeli Museum for the first time in history.

In November 2006, Pave the Way completed its most recent project in the acquisition of the earliest known manuscripts of the Gospels of St. John and St. Luke for permanent loan at the Vatican Library.

"The work that Gary and his wife, Meredith, accomplish through the Pave the Way Foundation, is inspirational and is a shining example of hope for a peaceful reconciliation between the children of Abraham and all religions of the world," said Rabbi Ehrenkranz.

Suzanne Newmark, president of Newmark Associates, Inc., in Whippany, New Jersey, CCJU Board member and chair of the 2006 CCJU *Nostra Aetate* Awards Ceremony, acted as emcee. The invocation was offered by Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. In his introduction of the award recipients, Dr. Anthony J. Cernera, president of Sacred Heart University, recalled the example of Pope John Paul II in his mission to move inter-religious dialogue to the front and center of Catholic life. "At the Pope's funeral in 2005," reflected Dr. Cernera, "the presence of Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders gave visible expression to the unity-in-diversity that inter-religious dialogue seeks to share and deepen."