The National Association for Lay Ministry Gives the 2023 Spirit of the Conference Award to Barbara Sutton, D.Min

Chicago—6/5/2023 — Today, the National Association for Lay Ministry announced the Spirit of the Conference award to Barbara Sutton for her long-time support and promotion of lay ecclesial ministry in the United States.

Barbara Sutton, D.Min. is the director of the Thriving Congregations Initiative, and former director of field education and ministerial formation at Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary.

The Spirit of the Conference Award recognizes an outstanding person or organization for their service on behalf of lay ministry. This person or group exemplifies, through their life and ministry, the spirit of the annual conference theme. This year that theme is “Moving Forward in the Spirit, Becoming a Synodal Church.”

Barbara has served in various academic roles, including most recently as the Director of the Thriving Congregation Initiative. She helped plan, organize, and implement the Collegeville National Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry in 2011, the 10th Anniversary Celebration of Co-Workers in Ministry where Mary Gautiere from CARA presented the research of the CSLA: Toward Canonical Authorization of LEM in 2015, and in 2020 planned the symposium: Sustaining a Healthy Ministerial Workplace, which turned into monthly webinars because of Covid.

The work she has done in support of lay ministry throughout the years has always been, and will continue to be synodal, drawing together many voices in leadership.

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