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The University of Dayton

News Release
May 16, 1991
Contact: Teri Rizvi

UD TAPS CATHOLIC CHURCH COMMUNICATOR FOR NATIONAL RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

DAYTON, Ohio -- The man who began the Catholic church's Campaign for Human Development and initiated the first nationally televised broadcast of midnight Mass on Christmas Eve from Vatican City will receive the University of Dayton's Daniel J. Kane Religious Communications Award on June 13.

Robert B. Beusse is a communication consultant who served as the national director of communications for the Catholic church throughout the 1970s. Named after the former director of communications for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the national award honors persons who have made significant contributions to religious communications in the United States.

"There's no doubt that Bob Beusse played a significant role in the development of church communication in the U.S. after the second Vatican Council," says Sister Angela Ann Zukowski, M.H.S.H., executive director of UD's Center for Religious Telecommunications and president of Unda-USA, a 500-member national organization of Catholic communicators. "He's an outstanding Catholic layman who has committed himself to communication in the church."

In 1970, Beusse started the Campaign for Human Development, the church's now-permanent national poverty education and funding program. Using all media for the first time to support diocesan and parish promotion.

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throughout the nation, the campaign was able to attract $8.1 million in contributions its first year, the largest collection in church history to that date. He also initiated the Catholic Communication Campaign, a national development program to encourage more effective use of the media by the church.

In addition, Beusse helped raise funds to establish the international wire transmission system of Catholic News Service. At the same time, he was able to equip Vatican Radio with all the major wire services.

Beusse has managed the co-production of hundreds of network religious radio and television programs, including news coverage of two papal transitions in 1978. For 12 years, he served as a member of the Pontifical Commission on Social Communications, having been appointed successively by Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II.

In 1979, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops cited Beusse for "dynamic leadership in building awareness of the importance of the media in the life and mission of the church," and NBC honored him for "superb performance, skills and talent...and for major contributions he provided to NBC and the entire broadcasting industry."

"I look back on those years with the U.S. Catholic Conference as the most thrilling years of my life," says Beusse.

Before joining the U.S. Catholic Conference, Beusse was vice president of WOR-AM-FM-TV in New York City and director of public affairs for RKO General Broadcasting, which operated 20 stations in the U.S. and Canada. Earlier, he held management positions with Schering-Plough Corp. and McCall Corp.

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As president of his own communications management company since 1979, Beusse has handled religion, media, public health and higher education clients. Included are church-affiliated clients, such as the archdioceses of Chicago and New York and Catholic universities. At Fordham University, he helped his alma mater convert a student-operated radio station to a public broadcasting station. As a general communications consultant to the president of Seton Hall University, he arranged for President Ronald Reagan to speak on campus as part of the college's 125th anniversary in 1983.

Beusse is a member of the boards of directors of Our Sunday Visitor Inc., the largest Catholic publishing company in the country; the Office of Substance Abuse Ministry for the Archdiocese of New York; and the International Catholic Organizations Center Inc., an organization of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations. He is also a member of the board of regents of America Press Inc., publishers of America, the Jesuit weekly magazine. Last year, he was appointed by John Cardinal O'Connor as special communication advisor to the New York State Bishops Committee for Pro-Life Activities.

Beusse holds a bachelor's degree in English literature from Fordham College and a master's in communication arts from Fordham University. He resides in Caldwell, N.J., with his wife, Patricia. They have six children and six grandchildren.

The University of Dayton is private, co-educational school founded and sponsored by the Society of Mary (Marianists), a Roman Catholic order. UD is the largest independent university in Ohio and ranks among the 10 largest Catholic universities in the country.

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For media interviews, contact Robert Beusse at (201) 226-5925 or Sister Angela Ann Zukowski at (513) 229-3126.