



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bishop Bradley announces 2023 recipients of the
“Bishop Paul V Donovan Founder’s Society Award for Outstanding Service”**

JUNE 26, 2023 (KALAMAZOO, MICH.): A priest and a married couple have been chosen as this year’s recipients of the Bishop Paul V. Donovan Founder’s Society Award for Outstanding Service. The distinguished honorees, Reverend Robert Flickinger and Deacon John and Mrs. Jane Bodway, have been chosen for their witness to tireless service in the name of Jesus and for reflecting a love for God through devotion to the Catholic Church and others. Recipients will be honored on **July 9th, 2023, during the 11:30 a.m. Mass at St. Augustine Cathedral, Kalamazoo**

In announcing the 2023 recipients, Bishop Paul J. Bradley affirmed how each of the recipients exemplify the motto of Bishop Donovan, “to serve rather than be served”.

“Throughout his 48 years as a priest Father Bob Flickinger has been vital in expanding outreach to our Hispanic sisters and brothers throughout the Diocese. He has served selflessly at many of the Parishes within the Diocese and been instrumental in strengthening relationships with sister parishes in Central and Latin America,” said Bishop Paul J. Bradley. “Deacon John Bodway and his wife of more than 50 years, Jane Bodway, are beautiful witnesses to the sacrament of marriage in their commitment to each other and also inspiring witnesses to the Gospel in their devotion to their ministries,” said Bishop Paul J. Bradley.



Reverend Robert Flickinger was ordained to the priesthood on May 17, 1975, for the Order of the Salesians of St. John Bosco. He first came to the Diocese of Kalamazoo by invitation of Bishop Donovan in 1981. He has served at more than 12 Parishes including close to 10 years as Pastor of St. Basil Parish, South Haven. Father Bob is most known for his heartfelt and unwavering connection, ministry, and advocacy to

and for the Hispanic/Latino community. He was instrumental in expanding the ministry to the migrant farmworker community and expanded the number of Masses celebrated in Spanish at the various Parishes he served. He has held a number of diocesan roles including Director of Vocations and Associate Director for the Diocesan Hispanic Ministry Office. In addition, Father Bob helped establish a sister parish in El Sitio, El Salvador. Father Bob is currently retired from full-time pastoral ministry, though he frequently can be found celebrating the Mass in Spanish at Parishes throughout the Diocese.



Deacon John Bodway and Mrs. Jane Bodway were married August 14, 1971, less than one month after the founding of the Diocese. Deacon John, who was ordained to the permanent diaconate in 1999, has previously worked as the Parish Administrator for St. Jude Parish, Gobles for close to 20 years. Jane worked in the Diocesan Pastoral Center for more than 20 years

in the offices of Ministry Formation, Marriage and Family and Parish Life. marriage and family life ministry. Together the couple have worked alongside one another in the areas of Deacon Formation, marriage ministry and Parish administration and volunteering. Jane is quick to explain that they have found a way to use their complementary God-given talents. Though officially retired they volunteer their time at St. Augustine Cathedral Parish and are devoted to their family of five children and 11 grandchildren.

The 2023 recipients will receive their medals of honor on **July 9th, 2023, during the 11:30 a.m. Mass at St. Augustine Cathedral, Kalamazoo.** During the Mass Bishop Bradley will also commemorate the 52nd Anniversary of the Founding of the Diocese. All are invited to attend.

Bishop Paul V Donovan Founder's Society Award for Outstanding Service

This prestigious award, which was established in 2021 on the diocese's 50th anniversary, honors the legacy of Bishop Paul Vincent Donovan who served as the first Shepherd of the Diocese from July 21, 1971, until his retirement in January 1995. He chose as his Episcopal Motto: "To serve rather than be served." (Matthew 20:28) Past honorees include Sir Michael Emmons and Sister Betty Veenhuis (2021) and Msgr. Michael Hazard and Mrs. Peggy Gallagher (2022).