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## Benedictine sister receives award for faith and justice work

by Zoe Ryan

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Benedictine Sr. Mary Lou Kownacki received the Archbishop Oscar Romero Award from the Mercyhurst University Religious Studies Department. The award is given out each year to an organization or individual who meets the criteria of living the call of faith and justice in an extraordinary manner, according to *The Merciad*, Mercyhurst's newspaper.

Among other ministries, Kownacki has been involved with Pax Christi USA since its founding in 1973 and served as national coordinator from 1985 to 1991.

The award is named after San Salvador Archbishop Oscar Romero, an advocate for the poor in El Salvador who was assassinated in 1980 while celebrating Mass.

In an interview with the *Erie Times-News*, Kownacki said she feels like she is accepting the award on behalf of the Benedictine Sisters for their more than 150 years of work with the poor here.

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