

MARY EMIL PENET AWARD

History

Peggy Nichols, CSJ, Executive Director of the RFC had attended several NARB annual meetings. At these meetings recognition/appreciation awards are given to Brothers. The awards are given to Brother as Proclaimer, Brother as Enabler, Brother as Healer. Peggy was impressed with the spirit the award generated. In 1988 she presented to the RFC National Board the idea that RFC might want to consider presenting such an award at the National Congress. The purpose of the award is to recognize / honor a person or a group who has made a contribution to formation work in terms of their commitment and investment of energy and insight. The work could be in the area of written work, program founding and directing, or direct personal involvement in the work of formation.

Peggy's suggestion was to honor Sister Mary Emil Penet, IHM, who had founded the Sister Formation Conference which was the precursor of the RFC. Sister Mary Emil, at that time elderly and frail, certainly had made a significant contribution to the work of formation. The National Board highly endorsed the idea. A plaque was created and the presentation was made by Peggy Nicholas, CSJ, to Sister Mary Emil at the Monroe Motherhouse, because the 1989 Congress was cancelled due to the earthquake in San Francisco, California.

The Board identified a committee to develop a set of criteria (see Criteria) to determine the recipient(s). Although the Board noted (1989) that giving the award could be perceived as hierarchical - to single out one person or group - it decided to continue with the award. The importance and significance of the award was again discussed by the Board in 1992. The Board determined to continue presenting the award.

This history was compiled by Barbara Higgins, SC, National Board Chairperson 1989 - 1991, from conversations with Peggy Nichols, CSJ, Executive Director of RFC, 1983 - 1990.

Recipients of the Mary Emil Penet Award:

1. 1989 Mary Emil Penet, IHM
2. 1991 Institute of Formative Spirituality, Duquesne University. (Award accepted by Adrian Van Kaam, CSSP, and Dr. Susan Muto)
3. Institute of Religious Formation at St. Louis University (Award accepted by Joan Pitlyk, CSJ)

4. 1993 Adorers of the Blood of Christ of Ruma, Illinois, in memory of their sisters who died in Liberia: Mary Joel Kolmer, ASC, Agnes Mueller, ASC, Kathleen McGuire, ASC, Shirley Kolmer, ASC, Barbara Ann Muttra, ASC. (Award accepted by Mildred Gross, ASC, Provincial.)
5. 1995 Review for Religious, St. Louis, Missouri. (Award accepted by David Fleming, SJ.)
6. 1997 John Malich, FMS
7. 1999 National Black Sisters Conference
8. 2001 Carole Riley CDP
9. 2003 Maryann Seton Lopiccolo SC and Don Bisson FMS
10. 2005 Sandra Schneiders IHM
11. 2007 Gary Riebe-Estrella SVD
12. 2009 Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN
13. 2011 Janet Mock, CSJ
14. 2013 Anthony Gittens, CSSp
15. 2015 Lynn Levo, CSJ
16. 2017 Mary Pat Garvin RSM
17. 2019 Helen Cahill OP
18. 2022 Mary Johnson SNDDeN