

For Immediate Release

Sandra Prather to receive NTC's Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award

Edmonton, July 25, 2017 – **Sandra** (Sandy) Prather, a long-time retreat director, writer and facilitator known for an infectious joy in her faith, is being honoured by Newman Theological College as this year's recipient of the Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award.

The award, named for the first layperson to serve as president of the college, recognizes individuals whose outstanding Christian leadership reflects the values of the college and the qualities that Carr cherished and exhibited in his work.



Sandy, who holds a Master of Theology degree from Newman, served for 21 years as executive director of Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert before retiring in 2012. She is in demand locally, nationally and internationally for teaching and leading retreats, seminars and workshops for educators, lay formation programs, parishes, and men's and women's religious organizations.

She also serves as Provincial Animator of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate Lacombe Associates, and in 2009 was named an Honorary Oblate for her **dedication** and service with the OMI at various levels of leadership and ministry.

Readers of the *Prairie Messenger* know Sandy as the author of "Breaking Open the Ordinary," a monthly column that inspires, enlightens and evangelizes her readers, and she also contributes reflections to the *Living With Christ* missalette.

Gregory Bounds, who nominated Sandy for the Carr Award, said he has come to know her as a person of integrity and wisdom, both in her work with the Oblates and in the community at large.

"Sandra has made service her life vocation by sharing her gifts and talents with the many groups, parishes and individuals who seek her well-honed theological and facilitation skills," he wrote in his nomination. "It takes courage and faith to live such a public life of witness."

He noted that Sandy values family as a priority of her faith and service. She and her husband, Bob, have four children and 10 grandchildren. They live in Sherwood Park, where they are members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.

"Over the years, as she has tirelessly dedicated herself a mother, grandmother, sister and wife, she has also demonstrated at least 25 years of **professional** integrity travelling to cities and towns proclaiming the good news of Christ in the world," he wrote. "Sandy continues to be a model disciple, teacher and leader in Western Canada and beyond."



Newman Theological College President Dr. Jason West commented, "We are proud to acknowledge the years of leadership and service which Sandy has given to the Catholic community in so many ways. Her tireless work has contributed greatly to the development of a spiritually mature and engaged Church."

Sister Jeannette Flthaut SP, chair of the Star of the North board of directors and one of several people who wrote letters in support of the nomination, described her as "one of those women whose spirit is so imbued with God's love that she can't help but share that with the people around her."

"Sandy brings a unique presence to any group she guides because she is fully present to the people and the place/workshop/retreat she is guiding. She is very well read and shares her insights from well-thought reflections on the material she has embraced."

Father Mike McCaffery, a longtime friend and collaborator, said Sandy is particularly gifted at "perceiving, discerning and articulating the challenges people experience on their faith journey."

Sandy Prather will be honoured at the 14th Annual Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award Luncheon on October 25, 2017, at Santa Maria Goretti Hall, Edmonton.

For more information contact:

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Previous Recipients of the Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award:

2016 – Joyce Tutt
2015 – Glen Argan
2014 – Marc Barylo
2013 – Mary Molloy
2012 – Kae Neufeld
2011 – Rosanna Saccomani, Q.C.
2010 – Ben Hochhausen
2009 – Sr. Annata Brockman
2008 – Don Zinyk
2007 – Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.
2006 – Tim Spelliscy
2005 – Ernest Chauvet
2004 – Hon. Jean Forest