

**MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Release****2026 Saint Michael Award Recipients Announced**

TORONTO, ON (September 14, 2026) – The Archdiocese of Toronto is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Saint Michael Award, recognizing distinguished and faithful service by members of the Catholic community throughout the archdiocese.

Each year, recipients are nominated by their local pastor in recognition of their exceptional witness of Christian faith, commitment and dedication to serving others. Nomination packages, including letters of support and reference, were reviewed by an archdiocesan committee before the final winners were selected.

The 2026 award recipients will be honoured during a special celebration at the Noon Mass on Sunday, September 27, 2026 – celebrating the Solemnity of Saint Michael at Saint Michael's Cathedral Basilica in downtown Toronto. Cardinal Frank Leo, Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto, will preside and present the Saint Michael Award to this year's worthy honourees.

The following are the 2026 recipients of the Saint Michael Award:

**Central Pastoral Region**

**Bonnie Beverley – St. Bonaventure, Don Mills** –for close to 45 years, Bonnie Beverley has dedicated herself to Catholic education and faith formation, serving as a teacher, catechist and mentor to generations of young people. Since becoming involved in the parish's religious education programs in 1979, she has helped prepare hundreds of children for First Reconciliation and First Communion, drawing on her experience as a primary school teacher and her theological studies at St. Augustine's Seminary. Bonnie's gentle manner, patience and unwavering commitment to the faith have made her a cherished presence in parish life, where she continues to serve as a lector and active volunteer. Her witness of Christian discipleship is further reflected in her longstanding involvement with the Catholic Women's League, the Secular Franciscan Order and outreach initiatives serving those in need.

**Carlos & Colette Carreiro – St. Ann, Toronto** – for many years, this couple have been a dedicated and inspiring presence in parish life, helping to foster a culture of welcome, generosity and shared responsibility. Through their leadership of the parish food bank ministry, they have helped build a reliable source of support for families in need, coordinating volunteers and ensuring that all who seek assistance are treated with dignity and respect. Known for their compassion, humility and commitment to serving others, they extend Christ's love beyond the parish walls through their attentive care for those facing hardship. Carlos and Colette Carreiro's faithful witness and selfless service continue to strengthen both the parish community and the wider neighbourhood, inspiring others to live the Gospel through acts of charity and accompaniment.

### **Northern Pastoral Region**

**Andrew Ligama – St. Joseph the Worker, Thornhill** – a man of deep faith whose generous service has enriched parish life in countless ways, Andrew serves as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, lector, Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus, Street Patrol volunteer and outreach minister to those experiencing poverty, while also supporting the development of Alpha Youth. Known for his humility, dedication and willingness to help wherever needed, Andrew consistently offers his time and talents with a joyful spirit of service. Through his prayerful witness and commitment to Christ and His Church, he inspires others and helps build a strong and vibrant parish community.

**Geoffrey & Elizabeth Tan – St. Paul the Apostle, Alliston** – parishioners for 18 years, the Tans have generously shared their time, talent and faith in action, making a lasting contribution to parish life and faith formation. Geoffrey has provided leadership through youth and music ministry, liturgical service, the Knights of Columbus, parish council and, most recently, as leader of the RCIA program, accompanying those entering the Catholic faith. Elizabeth has devoted herself to youth ministry and sacramental preparation while faithfully supporting parish operations and events through countless hours of behind-the-scenes service. Together, they have fostered a vibrant Catholic family life, inspiring others through their witness of Christian discipleship and raising nine children who are actively involved in parish ministry, reflecting the family's deep commitment to the Church and community.

### **Eastern Pastoral Region**

**Renato Baldari – Epiphany of Our Lord, Scarborough** – contributing to virtually every aspect of parish life since for more than five decades. Beginning his volunteer service in 1971 with the Italian Missions of Scarborough, Renato played a foundational role in the establishment and growth of the parish, serving in numerous leadership positions, including parish council, finance and building committees, liturgical ministries, fundraising initiatives and community organizations. A long-time leader of the parish's Italian ministries, the Knights of Columbus and various social and charitable activities, he has consistently offered his gifts in support of both the parish and the wider community. Renato's unwavering commitment, spanning more than 50 years without interruption, stands as an extraordinary witness of faith, stewardship and dedication to the Church.

**Paul Butka – St. Gregory the Great, Oshawa** – since 1988, Paul has faithfully served as sacristan at St. Gregory the Great Parish, dedicating countless hours to ensuring the church, sanctuary and sacristy are prepared for the worthy celebration of the liturgy. For nearly four decades, he has generously volunteered his time in support of parish life, assisting at Masses, weddings, funerals and the annual Mass for the Faithful Departed at Resurrection Catholic Cemetery in Whitby. Since 2022, Paul has also extended his service to Holy Cross Parish in Oshawa, continuing his quiet and dependable ministry in support of clergy and the faithful. His unwavering commitment, humility and devotion to the Church have made him a treasured presence in both parish communities and an outstanding witness of faithful service.

## **Western Pastoral Region**

**Ursula Matthews – Our Lady of Sorrows, Etobicoke**—a devoted and faithful presence for many years, serving in numerous ministries including Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, visitation of the sick, Catholic Women's League leadership, parish fundraising and faith formation initiatives. Guided by a deep love for Christ, Our Blessed Mother and the Church, Ursula has generously shared her gifts both within the parish and beyond, volunteering with organizations such as the Red Cross, Good Shepherd, Village Mosaic, the Sisters of St. Joseph and Catholic Missions in Canada. Known for her prayerful spirit, compassion and hospitality, Ursula has touched countless lives through her care for those in need and her unwavering commitment to Christian service. Through her joyful witness, resilient faith and dedication to family, parish and community, she continues to inspire others to live the Gospel with hope, generosity and love.

**Dr. Andrew & the late Joan Simone – Our Lady of Sorrows, Etobicoke**— for more than four decades, Dr. Andrew Simone and his late wife, Joan, have offered an extraordinary witness of Christian discipleship through lives marked by simplicity, faith and service to those most in need. Inspired by an encounter with Saint Mother Teresa, the couple founded Canadian Food for Children, a humanitarian mission that has provided food, clothing, medical supplies and hope to vulnerable communities around the world, while remaining deeply rooted in prayer and trust in God's providence. Dr. Simone has united his professional vocation with a profound commitment to seeing Christ in every person, especially the poor, the suffering and the forgotten. Together, Andrew and Joan have exemplified the Gospel call to holiness through humble sacrifice, generous charity and a steadfast dedication to serving their neighbour, inspiring countless people to live their faith through concrete acts of love and compassion.

The Archdiocese of Toronto gives thanks and heartfelt appreciation for the 2026 Saint Michael Award recipients and all those nominated for consideration. As the Saint Michael Award enters its third year, the archdiocese continues to celebrate the many faithful men and women whose quiet acts of service, leadership and Christian witness enrich parish communities and inspire others to live the Gospel each day. Additional information regarding the Saint Michael Awards can be found at [www.archtoronto.org/awards](http://www.archtoronto.org/awards).

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