



## PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Kerry Ann Turner

Office: 202-541-5235

Email: [kturner@wtu.edu](mailto:kturner@wtu.edu)

### **Washington Theological Union Selects Reverend Jan Michael Joncas as its 2012 Sophia Award Recipient**

WASHINGTON, DC - Washington Theological Union (WTU) announced today that Reverend Jan Michael Joncas, prolific composer and Associate Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, has been chosen as its 2012 Sophia Award recipient. The Sophia Award is one of the highest honors WTU grants to a scholar whose work defines national excellence in theological scholarship contributing to the ministry of the Catholic Church. Rev. Joncas will be honored at the 16<sup>th</sup> Sophia Award and Lecture at Washington Theological Union in Washington, DC on Sunday, February 12, 2012.

“Awarding the prestigious Washington Theological Union Sophia Award has been lifted to new heights with the selection of Rev. Joncas,” said Anne E. McLaughlin, RSM, D.Min., Acting Academic Dean of WTU. “A highly productive academic scholar and gifted musician, he continues to disclose the riches of the liturgical tradition in ever new and creative ways.”

Rev. Joncas, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, MN, and composer of some of the most recognizable church hymns, has also served as a parochial vicar, a campus minister, and a parochial administrator. He is the author of three books and over two hundred articles and reviews in journals such as Worship, Ecclesia Orans, and Questions Liturgiques. He has composed and arranged over three hundred pieces of liturgical music, including the devotional song, *On Eagles' Wings*.

Past WTU Sophia Award recipients include Rev. Michael J. Scanlon, O.S.A., Villanova University (2011), Rev. Donald Senior, C.P., S.T.D., Catholic Theological Union (2010), and Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, Ph.D., Fordham University (2009). The 2012 Sophia Award presentation will be followed by a free lecture, open to the general public, by Rev. Joncas, entitled *"Heaven's Harmonies in Human Habitats: Composing for the Church."*

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*Washington Theological Union has educated men and women for ministry in the Roman Catholic Church for over forty years. Founded as a coalition of seminaries for men in religious communities, the Union has earned a reputation as one of the finest graduate schools for ministry in the United States. Graduates often pursue doctoral studies at major Catholic institutions as well as minister and teach around the world in settings as diverse as suburban and inner-city parishes, high school and college campuses, hospitals and hospices, homeless shelters and prison ministries. The student body consists of Catholic religious men and women, laity, ordained ministers, and students from other Christian traditions who are part of the Washington Theological Consortium. More information about the Washington Theological Union is available at [www.wtu.edu](http://www.wtu.edu).*