

# Youth and young adult ministry division honors service to the young church

Mark Pacione fired his secretary – for 10 minutes. In that time, the archdiocese's director of youth and young adult ministry honored secretary Susan Smith with a special award at The 54th Annual Youth and Young Adult Ministry Recognition Dinner April 24.

She was then rehired.

"It was time to break that rule of never awarding anyone while still in the office," said Mr. Pacione, director for 26 years. "It's never good to honor yourselves – that's self-gratification. We work for those in the field."

Yet for the fact that many people involved in youth ministry personally comment to Mr. Pacione about Mrs. Smith's graciousness and the way she takes care of them, it was fitting she was recognized for the 19 years of "helping volunteers and professional youth ministers do whatever they need to make their ministries succeed," he said. "Susan often refers to them as 'our people.'"

The Mass, dinner, and awards at St. John, Westminster, presided over by Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski, eastern vicar, honored 18 volunteers of the year from separate parishes, plus 11 award recipients for: Medal of Honor, For God and Youth, and Messenger of Light.

"The annual recognition dinner is an opportunity to lift up those men and women who are exceptional in their leadership and service to the young church," said Mr. Pacione. "They serve as role models and inspiration for the thousands of volunteers and professionals who provide the outreach of the Catholic Church to youth and young adults."

Recipients are nominated in the field, and by the youth ministry office, after consulting with pastors, principals and youth ministers. Volunteers of the Year are

nominated by parishes and schools.

Those awarded were:

#### Medal of Honor

- James Dunne, Troop 216, Church of the Crucifixion, Glen Burnie
- Paul Higgins, Troop 216, Church of the Crucifixion
- Kirk Johnson, New All Saints, Liberty Heights
- Father Charles M. Wible, pastor, St. Francis de Sales, Abingdon (former youth minister at St. Louis, Clarksville)

#### For God and Youth

- Paul Gallagher, St. John, Westminster
- Missy Lawrence, Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School, Essex
- Colleen Mitsopoulos, St. Mary, Annapolis
- Joseph Wolf, St. Peter the Apostle, Libertytown
- Susan Smith, Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

#### Messenger of Light

- George Miller, Loyola College of Maryland, Baltimore, campus ministry
- David Zaldivar, Catholic Community of St. Michael/St. Patrick, Fells Point