

Society of St. Sebastian

For Immediate Release

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Person of the Year Award – Dr. Michael J. New, PhD

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December 18th of each year marks the Feast Day of Saint Sebastian in the Eastern Catholic Rites and the Eastern Orthodox Traditions. Many have remarked on the bravery of Saint Sebastian concerning his double martyrdom. Still, most people recognize him as the early Christian martyr who was shot with arrows for refusing to rebuke his Christian faith before the Roman Emperor Diocletian. Yet, there is another important part of Sebastian's bravery, and that is he survived this initial attempt on his life. After his miraculous recovery, he publicly sought out the Roman Emperor and urged him to change his public policy of persecuting Christians. For his efforts, he was martyred again. In many ways, he is the first Christian lobbyist in his second act of bravery. Many pro-life activists also must face authority figures who refuse to acknowledge the dignity of the human person. In their own ways, they too suffer a sort of martyrdom.

It is in the spirit of the second act of St. Sebastian's that the Society of St. Sebastian seeks out its Person of the Year. Just as Sebastian sought a Culture of Life advocating for the lives of his fellow Christians, our Person of the Year must advocate for a Culture of Life. The Society of St. Sebastian Person of the Year must be not only exceptional in their duties of legislative activism but must also be exceptional in their voice for the voiceless.

In this regard, it is with great pleasure that the Person of Year Committee for the Society of St. Sebastian awards **Dr. Michael J. New, PhD**, as Person of the Year. Dr. New has shown a commitment to the Culture of Life and pro-life legislation and laws to an extent that few ever realize. While he is a full-time professor at Catholic University of America, Dr. New also is highly published when it comes to the subject of pro-life legislation and laws. Over the last year and a half, Dr. New has analyzed and shown the effectiveness of such laws as the Texas Fetal Heartbeat Act. This in turn has given pro-life lobbyists much to celebrate. It also helps inform legislators how effective such laws can be. In addition, Dr. New has published several articles detailing how pro-abortion studies and polls are misleading. This also has helped both pro-life lobbyists and legislators. In addition to his academic work, Dr. New is also a Senior Associate Scholar at the Charlotte Lozier Institute where his research has been invaluable on a number of pro-life topics. Lastly, but certainly every bit as important, he also does weekly sidewalk counseling at the Washington DC Planned Parenthood.

Dr. New's body of work detailing these phenomena has been impressive. Truly, he has been a voice for the voiceless in both his writing and in his sidewalk counseling. Chuck Donovan, President of the Charlotte Lozier institute had this to say about Dr. New's honor, "Michael New is a scholar, teacher and mentor who has devoted his own life to the service of others, leading the way for professional analysis of data and policy in the setting of the university, the media, and the think tank community. His wide influence is well-earned and consistently sets a high mark for others to follow. No one is more deserving of recognition." Joe Kral, President of the Society of St. Sebastian, added, "Dr. Michael New has been a stalwart in the pro-life movement. His articles not only help inform the everyday pro-lifer, but the professionals as well. Without his work we would be years behind in understanding the social science behind the effectiveness of pro-life laws." Congratulations to Dr. New for this exceptional award.

We are truly thankful for all the hard work and effort Dr. New has put into the pro-life movement. When learning about his honor, Dr. New had this to say, "For years the Society of St. Sebastian has done first-rate work amplifying

the research and writing of leading pro-life scholars, analysts, and professionals. It has been a privilege to assist the Society of St. Sebastian with their mission and I am very honored to be named the Society's Person of the Year for 2023."

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