

Society of St. Sebastian



For Immediate Release

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Person of the Year Award – Joan Jacobson

For More Information Contact Joe Kral (281-799-8040)

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 went before governmental authority to lobby on behalf of the legally voiceless, our Person of the Year must also advocate bravely before public officials as well. 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 **Joan Jacobson** as Person of the Year. Mrs. Jacobson has shown a commitment to the Culture of Life few have ever faced before. While volunteering to pass out literature on voting "no" on proposition 3 for Right to Life of Michigan, Mrs. Jacobson was shot. While passing out literature on a ballot initiative may not be considered the tradition form of lobbying, it is indeed a form of lobbying. Mrs. Jacobson was lobbying the people of Michigan to vote against this pro-abortion amendment. During her time canvassing and speaking with people about the ballot initiative she went to speak with the people on a property her were not pro-life. Sadly, they were so enmeshed within the Culture of Death that they not only took offense to her message of Life, but also shot her.

Sadly, it is becoming more commonplace to see violence perpetrated against pro-life people and pro-life offices in the *Dobbs* Era. Mrs. Jacobson has shown the type of pro-life witness that literally is along the lines of St. Sebastian. While many pro-life lobbyists do not have to face a fatal level of violence, Mrs. Jacobson actually did. This did not go unnoticed. She advocated for the unborn, those who had no legal voice, and was met with violence. The Right to Life of Michigan Board stated the following regarding Mrs. Jacobson winning the award, "We applaud Joan for the many years she put into advocating for the unborn. We are grateful for her dedication and bravery in standing against the pro-abortion advances in Michigan." Joe Kral, President of the Society of St. Sebastian added, "Joan clearly has the fortitude of St. Sebastian. She not only faced the Culture of Death through her pro-life advocacy, but faced the violence the it brings. She is a true witness to the Culture of Life and an awesome advocate for the unborn.

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