

Margaret-Ann Moran to Receive 2009 Saint Thomas More Award
By Courtney Eschbach

When New Hampshire Bishop John McCormack recently called Margaret-Ann Moran, she thought he was about to invite her to serve on another diocesan committee. When he instead asked if she would accept this year's Saint Thomas More Award, she was speechless. "I was surprised," she said, "especially since I had nominated someone else for the award!"

A native of the Granite State, Moran grew up in Manchester and attends Saint Raphael's, the parish at which her Irish immigrant grandparents were married over 100 years ago. She attended Mount Saint Mary's Day School and Trinity High School, and credits the Sisters of Mercy, her early teachers, as being extraordinary role models of strong, intelligent women who instilled in her the importance of public service and social justice. After graduating from Wellesley College and Suffolk Law School, she returned to New Hampshire. Moran first served as law clerk to the late Honorable Martin F. Loughlin, judge of the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire. After her clerkship, she began working at the Hatfield Law Office in Hillsborough which became a part of Upton & Hatfield in 2001. There, her practice focuses on education law, assisting school districts around the state with issues relating to special education and student discipline. For Moran, her work allows her to work with teachers, a joy to her, and has enabled her to fulfill her dream of working on issues that impact children.

In addition to her practice, Moran often presents at conferences on education issues in hopes of pro-actively approaching problems school districts face. In the past, she has served on numerous charitable boards and committees, most notably as a member of the Board of Trustees of New Hampshire Catholic Charities and the Board of Directors of New Hampshire Legal Assistance, and currently serves on the Board of Directors of Catholic Medical Center.

The Saint Thomas More Award is given each year by the Catholic Lawyers Guild of New Hampshire to recognize a lawyer or judge who is a practicing Catholic and embodies the spirit of Saint Thomas More in his or her courage, dedication, integrity, civility, and compassion toward others. It is named after the patron saint of lawyers, known for his uncompromising integrity and dedication to family, community and the rule of law. This award holds a special significance for Moran, who in 2006 presented the first Saint Thomas More Award to her longtime friend and mentor, Judge Martin F. Loughlin.

Moran described Loughlin as "a judge who acted in a way that everyone should aspire to act: fair but compassionate." Judge Loughlin taught Moran to "see beyond the case to the people it affected." She recalled that Loughlin's court gave priority to social security appeals because the decision rendered would so deeply affect the petitioner.

The Catholic Lawyers Guild will present the Saint Thomas More Award to Moran at its annual dinner on October 8, 2009 at CR Sparks at 6:30pm. Tickets to the dinner are \$25 and are available from Robert Carey, P.O. Box 3550, Concord, New Hampshire 03301; telephone: (603) 224 -8191.

The dinner follows the Red Mass, which will be celebrated at St. Joseph Cathedral, 145 Lowell Street, Manchester at 5:15pm. The annual Red Mass is designed to provide all attending members of the legal community, including judges, government officials, legislators, lawyers, and members of the law enforcement community, the opportunity to join those who administer justice in the Church and reflect on the power and responsibilities of their offices. The Red Mass this year will be celebrated by Bishop John B. McCormack, D.D. The homilist for the Mass will be the Most Reverend Donald W. Wuerl, S.T.D., Archbishop of Washington, DC..