

## DIVINE WORD FR. FRANZ-JOSEF EILERS RECEIVES SOCIAL COMMUNICATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

Manila – Divine Word Father Franz-Josef Eilers received this year's Titus Brandsma Leadership in Social Communication Award in a ceremony held on November 27 at the Carmelites' Titus Brandsma Media Center (TBMC) in Quezon City, Philippines.

The Philippine-Province of the Carmelite Order (OCarm) has conferred the award for this category for the first time to recognize Fr. Eilers' broad involvement in social communication.

Known for his writings on social- and pastoral communication, the priest-author has an international track record spanning four decades in social communication formation and academic work.

He has taught for many years in different universities including the Pontifical Gregorian- and Salesian Universities in Rome. In 1968, he founded in Germany the very first academic journal for Christian Communication titled *Communicatio Socialis*. It still exists after 47 years.

In 2001, Fr. Eilers initiated a graduate program in social and pastoral communication (MAT-SPC) at the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

The forty (40) MAT-SPC/ Licentiate graduates today include priests, religious and laity from Asian countries like China, Vietnam, Myanmar, Korea, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

For 25 years, Fr. Eilers taught at Divine Word School of Theology in Tagaytay, Philippines. He also taught at the Salesian "Don Bosco Center of Studies" in Paranaque, and the CICM Fathers' Maryhill School of Theology in Quezon City. He was adjunct professor at University of the Philippines at Los Banos in Laguna.

He served for many years as Consultant to the Holy See's Pontifical Council for Social Communication (PCCS) and was from 1995 to 2010 the Executive Secretary for Social Communication of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC-OSC).

He is now the Director of the "Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication" (ARC) at Saint John's University in Bangkok, Thailand; and Program Director of St. Joseph Freinademetz Communication Center, Inc. (JFCC) in Quezon City, Philippines.

Titus Brandsma Awards Philippines (TBAP) recognizes Filipino journalists and community media who embody the life and principles of Blessed Titus Brandsma, Carmelite priest and journalist who died on July 26, 1942 at the Nazi concentration camp in Dachau.

Since 2000, TBAP were given under six categories: Leadership in Press Freedom, Journalism, Emerging Leadership in Journalism, Community Communication, Communication and Literature, and Communication, Culture and Arts. (END)