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PHOTOS / INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

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LOUISE M. DAVIES FOUNDATION LEADS EXPANSION OF NEW HISTORY TEXTBOOK SERIES

(LOS ANGELES, CA) — Michael Van Hecke, president of the Catholic Textbook Project today announced reception of the organization’s lead gift in its new, \$500,000 campaign to underwrite the development and production of four new history textbooks for Catholic schools, grades 1 through 4. Five previously published textbook volumes, used in grades 5 through high school, are already in use in Catholic schools in 51 dioceses nationwide.

“We are grateful to the Louise M. Davies Foundation for their unwavering commitment to Catholic education, over many years,” said Mr. Van Hecke. “Their enthusiasm in embracing this new project, and in fact becoming its lead donor, is a big step toward enabling Catholic Textbook Project to satisfy the requests of many Catholic school teachers and principals who eagerly await the production of our history textbooks for younger elementary school students.”

The history textbook series published by Catholic Textbook Project has attracted the attention of more than foundations and K-12 Catholic educators. University history professors give the series high marks as well.

“Other middle and high-school history textbooks lack the qualities that Catholic Textbook Project’s offer,” says Jeffrey Burton Russell, Professor of History, Emeritus, University of California, Santa Barbara. “These books present all the main themes along with plenty of detail to flesh them out. They are beautifully and clearly presented. Without proselytizing, and without pressing any worldview other than the importance of understanding the past...

“Teachers and students who use the Catholic Textbook Project series,” the professor continues, “will be happy to know that in college its readers will know more about history than many of their professors as well as most of their classmates.”

“This carefully researched, beautifully written, and elegantly designed textbook series at long last gives full weight to the contribution of Roman Catholics across five centuries of North American exploration and settlement,” notes Kevin Starr, a professor of history at the University of Southern California (USC), as well as a California State Librarian Emeritus, a 2005 USC Medallion winner, a National Humanities Medalist in 2006, and a Centennial Medalist at GSAS Harvard University in 2006. Dr. Starr underscores not only the textbooks’ historical accuracy,

but also the inclusion of Catholic lay men and women, saints and sinners throughout more than 2,000 years.

The currently published five-volume series includes *From Sea to Shining Sea: The Story of America*, *All Ye Lands: World Cultures and Geography*, *Light to the Nations I: The History of Christian Civilization*, *Light to the Nations II: The Making of the Modern World*, and *Lands of Hope and Promise: A History of North America*. Highly praised teacher manuals and student workbooks are available for each volume. Development of four additional volumes, suitable for grades 1-4, is set to begin as soon as funding is complete.

For more information about the Catholic Textbook Project history textbooks, or to consider underwriting production of the grades 1-4 textbooks, go to www.CatholicTextbookProject.com or call 1.888.610.3354.

About Catholic Textbook Project. Founded by a headmaster who was unable to find good history/social studies textbooks for his students, and unable to convince existing Catholic publishers to produce such textbooks, Michael Van Hecke, M.Ed., culled a select group of scholars, professors, educators, editors and book designers and launched Catholic Textbook Project (a 501c3 nonprofit). These history/social studies textbooks are the first to be published for Catholic schools in more than 50 years. For more information or to explore the textbooks, go to www.CatholicTextbookProject.com.

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