



Media Release
Tuesday, December 19, 2006

**Papal Medal for Elisabeth Cowie in recognition of 25 years
dedication to clergy**

Long serving Australian Catholic Bishops Conference employee, Elisabeth Cowie, has been recognised for her dedication to Australia's clergy with the awarding of a Papal Medal.

Elisabeth received the "*Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*" Papal Medal at a special dinner in Canberra on Sunday night.

It was awarded in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Catholic Clergy of Australia over the past 25 years.

Elisabeth worked at the St Peter Centre from May 1981, the Ministry to Priests Program from 1985, and the National Commission for Clergy Life and Ministry from 1993.

Chairman of the Bishops Commission for Church Ministry, Bishop Michael Malone, presented Elisabeth with her medal, saying that as secretary and office manager to each of those bodies, she had applied her undoubted skills and talents in an exemplary and professional manner.

"Elisabeth has cared for the well-being of literally hundreds of priests, bishops and deacons with a great warmth and affection over those years and I know that she is held in the highest esteem by all of those with whom she has had contact," Bishop Malone said.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President, Archbishop Philip Wilson also wrote a letter of congratulations and thanks to Elisabeth.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that priests, bishops and deacons from every corner of the country continue to speak of you with great fondness and respect," he wrote.

"I join with the Holy Father, the Bishops, and so many others in congratulating you – a most worthy recipient. You have been a great grace and blessing for the ordained ministers of the Church. I thank you most sincerely and pray that God will continue to bless you in the years ahead."

After 25 years dedicated service, Elisabeth will retire at the end of this year.

Media Contact: Debra Vermeer at the ACBC on 0414 880 475.

