



**Media Release  
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**Sir William and Lady Deane awarded Papal Honours**

Former Governor-General Sir William Deane and Lady Helen Deane have been awarded high Papal Honours in recognition of their exemplary Catholic lives and their contribution to public life.

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference President, Archbishop Francis Carroll of Canberra-Goulburn announced the awards today and said he was delighted that Sir William and Lady Deane had been honoured by Pope John Paul II in such a way.

"Sir William and Lady Helen have lived exemplary Catholic lives and continue to do so," he said.

"Their lifestyle and values are deeply rooted in the Gospel and they have given great witness to Christian marriage."

Archbishop Carroll said Sir William's commitment to justice for Australia's indigenous peoples and his compassionate concern for the disadvantaged in our society, challenged and inspired the national conscience.

Sir William has been made a Knight Commander con Placca of the Order of St Gregory the Great while Lady Helen has been named a Dame Commander con Placca of the Order of St Gregory the Great.

"During Sir William's term as Governor-General, Lady Helen dedicated herself completely to supporting him in that office," Archbishop Carroll said.

"That constant support, acknowledged by Sir William himself, was immensely important to him.

"In many ways, the mutuality of their relationship meant that the Governor-General's outstanding contribution to the life of the nation was largely given as a partnership."

Archbishop Carroll said the Australian Bishops, meeting in their plenary session this week, had expressed their support and congratulations to Sir William and Lady Deane.

Sir William said that he and his wife, Helen, were greatly honoured by the Awards. He added that they believed that the Awards were, among other things, an acknowledgement of Lady Deane's and his commitment to the Christian ecumenical movement and to interfaith dialogue between the Universal Christian Church and the world's other great religions.