



THE LAWYERS GUILD

OF THE CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Linda Corcoran, Catholic Community Foundation

Phone: (216) 696-6525 ext. 1042

Email: lcorcoran@catholiccommunity.org

For Immediate Release

The Catholic Lawyers Guild to Honor Judge Melody J. Stewart and Bishop William M. Cosgrove Center at Annual Red Mass

The Lawyers Guild of the Diocese of Cleveland will be hosting its annual Red Mass for all members of the legal profession at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, 1007 Superior Ave., Cleveland, on Friday, October 1, 2021, at 10:30 A.M. After the Mass, a luncheon will follow at Cleveland Marriott Downtown at Key Center, 127 Public Square.



During the luncheon, the Cleveland Lawyers Guild will present the prestigious St. Thomas More Award to Justice Melody Stewart, who was sworn in as a justice of the Ohio Supreme Court on January 31, 2019, becoming the first African –American woman elected to the state's highest court.

Before joining the Supreme Court, Justice Stewart served on the Eighth District Court of Appeals. She has over 30 years of combined administrative, legal, and academic experience, working as a healthcare management administrator, a music teacher, a civil defense litigator, and a law school administrator and professor.

Justice Stewart attended Beaumont High School, which she credits with honing her leadership skills and embracing servant leadership taught to her by the Ursuline Sisters. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati; her law degree as a Patricia Roberts Harris Fellow from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Cleveland State University; and her Ph.D. as a Mandel Leadership Fellow at Case Western Reserve University's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. She was also awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Cleveland State University.

After practicing law as an assistant law director for the cities of Cleveland and East Cleveland, Justice Stewart worked as a lecturer, an adjunct instructor, and an assistant dean at Cleveland-Marshall before

joining the full-time faculty. Additionally, she taught at the University of Toledo College of Law and Ursuline College. She was director of student services at Case Western Reserve University's School of Law.

Justice Stewart has served on many boards and committees, including the Ohio Criminal Justice Recodification Committee, the Ohio Supreme Court's Judicial College board, was chair of the Ohio Capital Case Attorney Fee Council, and served as a commissioner and chair of the Board of Planning and Zoning for the city of Euclid.

A lifelong Catholic, Justice Stewart is a parishioner of St. Agnes – Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Cleveland's Hough neighborhood.

The Cleveland Lawyers Guild will also present a Special Recognition Award to the Bishop William M. Cosgrove Center for their work in human services, which amplified during the height of the pandemic. Commonly referred to as "Cosgrove," this Catholic Charities Center is one of the largest day drop-in centers in the Greater Cleveland area. The facility, located at East 18th Street and Superior Avenue, also serves as a hunger center for the homeless and hungry of Cleveland. Breakfast and lunch are served Mondays through Fridays by a dedicated staff and volunteers. In 2019, more than 83,000 hot meals and 27,000 pantry meals were served. Executive Director, Eric Milke, will receive the Special Recognition Award on behalf of Catholic Charities and Cosgrove Center staff and volunteers.

The final presentation at the luncheon will be the Martin T. Galvin Memorial Scholarship to St. Ignatius High School sophomore, Jack Geffert, son of John and Alexandra Geffert. The annual scholarship was established in 2018 in memory of the late Galvin, a Reminger partner and past president of the Cleveland Lawyers Guild, who had passed away earlier that year. It is designed to assist families of the legal community who desire a Catholic education for their children.

Tickets for the Red Mass and reception can be purchased online at www.CatholicCommunity.org/RedMass, or by contacting Colleen Rigo at 216-696-6525 x4080, crigo@catholiccommunity.org.

The Lawyers Guild of The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland serves Ashland, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Summit, and Wayne Counties. The Guild fosters spiritual growth and fellowship within the legal community, encourages observance of high ethical standards, and calls attention to legal and societal issues that affect morality, justice, and faith. Past recipients of the St. Thomas More Award include Justice Terrence O'Donnell, The Honorable Judges Patricia Gaughan, John V. Corrigan, Richard McMonagle, and Leo M. Spellacy, Bishop James A. Quinn, as well as Attorneys Mario C. Ciano, Frank R. DeSantis, Kathleen Burke, Peter Carfagna, Larry Dolan, Michael J. Frantz, Robert E. Glazer, Catherine M. Kilbane, Robert Maynard, Patrick F. McCartan, Geoffrey Mearns, Janet L. Miller, and GERALYN M. Presti, among others.