Good afternoon and welcome.

On behalf of the faculty of the School of Theology and Religious Studies of the Catholic University of America, it gives me great pleasure today to present the Quasten Award to the Very Rev. Dr. John Erickson. He is the emeritus Peter M. Gramowich Professor of Church History at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York. His dedicated years of service include five years (2002-2007) as the Dean of St Vladimir's and many years of ecumenical dialogue. He is widely known as a fine scholar and as a learned, subtle, and unflappable ecumenist of keen wit and great good humor, who always manifests charity and patience.

Professor Erickson, a native of northern Minnesota, entered the Orthodox Church in America in 1964, two years before his graduation from Harvard College. He earned an M.Phil at Yale in 1970, and joined the faculty at St. Vladimir's in 1973.

For many years, our honoree has been a distinguished scholar of church history, canon law, and the structure of the church. Equipped with the languages, tenacity, and perspicuity necessary for minute examination of historical documents, he has published exacting studies of manuscripts, of evolving church discipline and practice, of church order and sacramental life, and accounts of the history of Orthodoxy in both the old world and the new.

In addition to his numerous learned articles, Professor Erickson has written and edited major studies crucial for an understanding of the Orthodox and Eastern Churches: *Orthodox America, 1794-1976* (1975); *The Challenge of Our Past: Essays in Orthodox Church History and Canon Law* (1990); *The Quest for Unity: Orthodox and Catholics in Dialogue* (1996); and *Orthodox Christians in America* (1999). He edited and translated Vladimir Lossky’s *In the Image and Likeness of God* (1976), and he has also co-edited five volumes of Orthodox liturgical music.

Those who have worked with Professor Erickson on the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, of which he has been a member since 1976, know him as a tireless and generous researcher, a rigorous yet charitable scholar and commentator on church history, and as a good-humored and collegial dialogue partner, with a wise and patient outlook on the lengthy process of reconciliation and mutual rapprochement. Those involved in discussions here in the US between the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches and within the ambit of the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches will attest to the same qualities, which steadily help to pave the way for the unity of Christians for which Christ prayed and for which we all hope.

Professor Erickson is a man of tremendous energy. Although retired now from St. Vladimir’s, he continues to work on the history and monuments of the Orthodox missions in Alaska.

In grateful recognition of his exemplary scholarship over nearly fifty years and his outstanding dedication to the work of education and ecumenism, the School of Theology and Religious Studies is proud to confer its highest honor, the Quasten Medal, on Fr John Erickson. Please join me in congratulating him.