



# NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CARDINAL KEELER TO BE HONORED BY AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL**

WASHINGTON -- The American Muslim Council (AMC) will honor Cardinal William H. Keeler for his work in interfaith relations at the Interfaith Heritage Banquet in Washington on December 8.

Cardinal Keeler, the Archbishop of Baltimore and out-going President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference, will receive the Mahmoud Abu Saud Excellence Award for 1995. The AMC cited Cardinal Keeler's interfaith work which it said "has proven him to be a true friend to the American Muslim community."

In August, Cardinal Keeler organized a meeting between Muslim and Catholic leaders to facilitate a better understanding between the communities. During Pope John Paul II's visit to Baltimore last month, Cardinal Keeler invited Muslim leaders to attend a service at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen to meet the Holy Father and to hear him speak on the legacy of religious freedom. He arranged a similar meeting between Muslim leaders and the Pope in 1993 during World Youth Day in Denver.

Previously, Cardinal Keeler served as Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (BCEIA), a role which "helped to establish friendly,

more. . .

respectful relations between our communities," according to the American Muslim Council. In 1986, as the Chairman of BCEIA, then-Bishop Keeler successfully proposed that the NCCB approve funding for additional staff so the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs could develop, among other things, a large scale and consistent pattern of relations with Muslims.

The American Muslim Council is a non-profit socio-political organization established in 1990 to serve the interests of the Muslim community in the United States. It is comprised of Muslim community leaders from around the country who work against discrimination by promoting cross-cultural cooperation. Mahmoud Abu-Saud, for whom the award is named, was the founding president of the American Muslim Council's Board of Directors.

Previous award winners include Jamal M. Al-Barzinji, the Director of the International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT), for his philanthropic work; and Ghaleb Begg, the Director of the American Muslim Alliance, for his political activism.

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