

## **Papal Knighthood awarded to ACU Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven**

Pope Francis has awarded Australian Catholic University (ACU) Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven one of the Vatican's highest honors. Professor Craven was appointed to the Pontifical Equestrian Order of St Gregory the Great for services to the Catholic Church in Australia in a ceremony in Sydney.

Professor Craven was appointed to the highest grade of the Order, as a Knight Grand Cross. Only six other Australians have received this honour.

In an investiture ceremony attended by family and colleagues of Professor Craven on 6 December, the Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher installed Professor Craven in this ancient Order of Knighthood of the Holy See.

In his speech, Archbishop Fisher spoke of the many years of dedicated and faithful service that Professor Craven has given, not only to the advancement of Catholic higher education in Australia through his work, firstly at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle and more recently at ACU, but also to the many and varied ways that he has leant his wisdom and intellect to the Church more generally through service on numerous advisory boards and committees, including the National Catholic Education Commission and the Truth, Justice and Healing Council.

Archbishop Fisher said Professor Craven encapsulated the true spirit of the Second Vatican Council and its call for greater lay collaboration in the mission of the Church. He noted that it was no coincidence that Professor Craven was awarded his Papal Knighthood in the same week that *Gaudium et spes* (the seminal Vatican II document on lay collaboration) celebrated its 50th anniversary.

"Greg Craven is an immensely gifted man, a man of faith, a loyal son of Christ; a distinguished exemplar of Vatican II's teaching about role of Catholic laity in the world," Archbishop Fisher said.

Receiving the award was both a great honour and a humbling experience, said Professor Craven.

"I was astonished, humbled and grateful to receive the award," Professor Craven said.

"The thing that pleases me most is that the award really marks not anything I personally have done but the emergence of ACU in its 25th year as one of the leading Catholic universities in the world."

Pope Gregory XVI established the Order of St Gregory the Great in 1831. It is bestowed upon Catholic men and women in recognition of their personal service to the Holy See and to the Catholic Church through their work, their support of the Holy See, and their exemplary faith in action in their communities.

In 2015 Australian Catholic University is celebrating 25 years of people, learning, and achievements that continue to bring about real change for communities.