

REPORT ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2005 SOCIETY OF
CATHOLIC SOCIAL SCIENTISTS' BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM
AWARD FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTION TO KARL KEATING

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[N.b. This is an edited version of Dr. Hendershott's remarks]

On November 15, 2005, in Southern California, the Society of Catholic Social Scientists presented the Blessed Frederic Ozanam Award for Catholic Social Action to Karl Keating, founder and President of Catholic Answers, the country's largest apologetics and evangelization organization. Author of the best-selling book, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism* (Ignatius Press, 1995), as well as *What Catholics Really Believe; Nothing But the Truth; The Usual Suspects: Answering Anti-Catholic Fundamentalists*; and *Controversies: High Level Catholic Apologetics*, Keating serves as the Editor of *The Rock*, the monthly magazine of Catholic Answers and is a weekly guest on *Catholic Answers Live*, an hour-long, daily, call-in radio program which features discussions on doctrinal controversies, family concerns, political and social issues, evangelization, ethics and other issues of importance to Catholics.

A graduate of the University of California at San Diego, and the University of San Diego Law School, Keating practiced law until the early 1980s. His life changed in 1979 when he was leaving Mass on a Sunday morning and found anti-Catholic tracts on his car windshield. Instead of simply discarding the offensive materials, Keating chose to write a reply—in a similar tract form—and distributed his tract at the fundamentalist church responsible for the anti-Catholic missive. This was the start of Catholic Answers.

Karl Keating is indeed an ideal recipient of the SCSS Blessed Frederic Ozanam Award. Like Keating, Ozanam courageously fought against attacks on the Faith. As a student in Paris, when the Sorbonne was characterized by a fashionable atheism, Ozanam was described by one biographer as: "Standing almost alone, to offer refutation—courageously, graciously, persuasively. He dreamed the magnificent dreams of a young idealist. He set for himself the task of demonstrating from the history of all antiquity and the ages both the validity and the virility of Christianity."

Like Keating, Ozanam's "genius of mind" was matched by his capacity for work—and at the age of 31 he became the youngest full-time professor at the Sorbonne. His love and concern for others would never waiver. In 1833, he founded the Society of St. Vincent DePaul to advocate for the rights and dignity of every individual—and this legacy continues today in the wonderful work of this charitable organization. We were most honored that Karl Keating accepted our Society's Award for Catholic Social Action because he truly represents the spirit of Blessed Frederic Ozanam.