

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Veronica S. Laurel
Friends of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Foundation
210.704.3645 office; 210.722-5325 mobile

**FOURTH ANNUAL NATIONAL SPEAKERS LUNCHEON HONORED ROSEMARY
KOWALSKI AND FEATURED FATHER GREGORY BOYLE**

Proceeds from the Luncheon benefit the Friends of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Foundation

SAN ANTONIO – (October 28, 2014) Today, the Friends of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Foundation held its Fourth Annual National Speakers Luncheon to honor Rosemary Kowalski with the Beacon Award for her passionate service to the community and the event featured Father Gregory Boyle as the keynote speaker. Proceeds from the event will benefit programs supported by the Friends Foundation.

The National Speakers Luncheon celebrated the contributions of Kowalski by honoring her with the Beacon Award. Kowalski is the chairman emeritus of the RK Group and was recognized for her philanthropic efforts in San Antonio's cultural, human services and educational organizations. A San Antonio native, Kowalski founded Catering by Rosemary in 1961, which later became the RK Group. She is a board member for numerous organizations and sits on several advisory boards. She has enriched the lives of thousands through her generosity and dedication to her beloved city.

The Beacon Award tradition was started in 2011 at the first National Speakers Luncheon and is given to an individual who actively participates in charitable and civic activities in our community. The board of directors of the Friends of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Foundation carefully chooses the recipient from a select group of candidates based on professional endeavors, civic commitment and community involvement. Past Beacon Award honorees are Charlie Amato, Maj. Gen. Joe Robles and Tom C. Frost, Jr.

Keynote speaker for this year's event was Father Gregory Boyle, a nationally renowned speaker and acknowledged expert on gangs and intervention approaches. He founded "Jobs for a Future" in 1988 in an effort to address the escalating problems and unmet needs of gang-involved youth in Los Angeles. He launched Homeboy Bakery in 1992, with a mission to create an environment that provided training, work experience, and above all, the opportunity for rival gang members to work side-by-side. His first book, "Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion" was released in March 2010 and was named as one of the best books of 2010 by Publisher's Weekly.

Proceeds from the National Speakers Luncheon will benefit programs supported by the Friends of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Foundation. The Friends Foundation was formed in 1997 to lead fundraising efforts on behalf of the adult health care services at CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospitals. Through the efforts of the Friends Foundation, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa has been able to enhance programs, provide new equipment and support outreach efforts that uphold the healing ministry of this Catholic, non-profit, health care organization.

The Fourth Annual National Speakers Luncheon was held at the Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade, 9821 Colonnade Boulevard, on Tuesday, October 28, 2014.

###