



**(FANM), Inc. /Haitian Women of Miami to give its inaugural “FANM Lifetime Achievement Award” to Archbishop Thomas Wenski and to honor 7 Community Leaders**

**Miami, March 1** - On March 5th, 2016, FANM/Haitian Women of Miami will hold its annual Spirit of Justice Award under the theme: "Upholding the Promise: The Immigrants "R" Us! During this auspicious celebration, FANM will award its inaugural "Lifetime Leadership Award" to Archbishop Thomas Wenski. Born in West Palm Beach on October 18, 1950, Archbishop Wenski grew up in Lake Worth, Florida; however, his father was a Polish immigrant and his mother was Polish-American. As a son immigrants, he understands the plight of refugees and immigrants, forced to leave their native land to make the dangerous, sometimes fatal voyage to the United States. Said Marleine Bastien, Executive Director of FANM/Haitian Women of Miami: "During this intense political process, when the anti-immigrant discourse has reached a dangerous peak, the voice of Archbishop Thomas Wenski's is loud and strong, reminding candidates that as a country of immigrants, we must open our hearts and our minds to our brothers and sisters who come to our shores in search of safe haven". Added Randy McGrothy, Executive Director of Catholic Legal Charities: "Archbishop Thomas Wenski's contributions to the Haitian community is legendary. I'm impressed by how at the very beginning, he immersed himself in the Haitian culture, learned Creole to communicate and serve his congregants better. For him, it is a matter of respect for the Creole language and the people of Haiti. When he speaks Creole, his entire demeanor changes. He becomes more eloquent and animated". Father Regional Jean-Marie, an excellent orator, and the pastor who spearheaded the construction of the new beautiful Notre Dame church uses one of Archbishop Wenski's quote often: "to serve is not a burden but a gift". This quote could easily be one of our honorees' who dedicated their lives to serve and empower others.

FANM will also honor the following distinguished individuals who have made tremendous contributions to the social, economic, health, and political landscape of our community: Mayor Dr. Smith Joseph, Dr. Michel Dodard, Rodney Baltimore, Carla and Marlon Hill, Marilyn Rousseau, and Solange Aurelien.

The Gala will be held on Saturday, March 5th at 7:00 p.m., Notre Dame D'Haiti Parish Hall located at 130 NE 62nd Street, Miami, FL 33138. Admission is \$100 per person, table of 10: \$1,000. You can purchase your tickets at FANM: 181 N.E. 82 Street, Suite 101, Miami, Florida 33138; or log-on to our website [www.fanm.org](http://www.fanm.org). If you're unable to attend, please send your tax-deductible contributions to FANM, Inc.

Call [\(305\)756-8050](tel:3057568050) for information or email : [communications@fanm.org](mailto:communications@fanm.org)

**About FANM, Inc.**

FANM works in three main areas that focus on the transitional and cultural adjustment needs of immigrant families: Family Intervention and Empowerment, Immigration and Citizenship Services, and Community Economic Development. Services include: case management, crisis intervention, mental health counseling, domestic violence intervention, parenting classes, breast cancer prevention, after school programs, Tae Kwondo classes, adult literacy and computer training, technical assistance, immigration, financial literacy and business training. In addition to providing core services to strengthen low income families, strong families = strong communities. FANM gives its members the tools and a voice to advocate for positive changes that leverage the balance of power.