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**Pope Francis Bestows Knighthood of St. Gregory the Great Upon Thomas S. Dolan for
Exceptional Service to The Northern Nevada and Catholic Ministries**

Reno, NV, April 26, 2024 — Thomas S. Dolan, founder and owner of Dolan Auto Group in Reno, Nevada, was recently recognized by the eminent Pope Francis for his decades of philanthropic service to Northern Nevada and various Catholic ministries. The Holy Father bestowed upon Mr. Dolan the honor of Knighthood of St. Gregory the Great. The order of St. Gregory the Great is one of five papal honors and is reserved for contributions of exceptional service for designees to their communities and churches to persons who also demonstrate an example of extraordinary philanthropic leadership. Mr. Dolan’s leadership is exemplified through visible contributions to the community, rooted in his deep involvement and passion for the Catholic Church.

Originally from Minnesota, Tom was raised in Southern California and then graduated from the University of Nevada with a degree in social psychology. Beginning in sales, he progressed to executive roles, and then seized his opportunity to purchase his first dealership - known as Reno Toyota. Today the Dolan Auto Group has grown from 27 employees to over 600 and comprises of ten franchises and eight award-winning dealerships, while maintaining a family-oriented culture with the now-famous tagline of “Get in...and join the family!” As a successful businessman, Tom contributes to the welfare of others by living the mantra of “Giving back”.

Tom's brother, Monsignor Neal Dolan from the Diocese of San Diego, played a critical role in guiding him in his faith journey. This led to a long history of generous contributions to Northern Nevada Catholic ministries, both financially and through volunteering. Most recently, Tom is leading the complex restoration and expansion of the largest parish in the diocese, St. Peter Canisius in Sun Valley, Nevada. His passion and ingenuity has resulted in the project not only becoming a feasible aspiration for the approximate 5,000 parishioners that need the church, but he asserts his leadership through his daily involvement in the project overcoming financial and physical hurdles daily. Upon completion Tom will have contributed more than \$2M to the project and further donated the use of a commercial building he owns for parishioners to attend Mass and faith formation programs, while the church is under construction. Father Edgar Villanueva, Pastor of St. Peter Canisius Parish states, "Without Mr. Dolan, this church would not be built, period! It is his service and leadership that has facilitated fundraising and project planning through execution,".

This recent example of Tom's contributions is only a fraction of what he has given to the Northern Nevada and Catholic ministries. In 2016, he established the Thomas S. Dolan Endowment for Seminarians for the Diocese of Reno with a lead gift of \$1M.

Tom contributed to the expansion of St. Therese the Little Flower Catholic School with \$1.7M in funds towards the project. The new multipurpose-facility will be named the Dolan Family Center in honor of Tom Dolan and his family. "Tom's contribution to the project created the opportunity to build a place where children and families can be celebrated," said Father Paul McCollum, Pastor of St. Therese of the Little Flower Parish.

A major turning point in his life was in 2015 when Tom was diagnosed with an incurable lung disease. After undergoing both a single lung transplant and double bypass surgery outside of Reno, he realized a need for this medical care locally, and helped to establish the Thomas S. Dolan Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center at Renown South Meadows Medical Center by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR).

Tom is a leading advocate of Northern Nevada educational programs. Each year the Dolan Auto Group hosts the Dolan Class Project initiative. Participating schools are encouraged to apply and, through an online voting competition and over \$100,000 is donated across area schools. As an-alumnus of University of Nevada, Reno, Tom is a visible supporter of the university and his beloved Wolf Pack! He received the honor as a Distinguished Nevadan Award in 2020, which is the most prestigious award to receive, and is conferred by the Board of Regents by the University of Nevada. During the annual “Bobby Dolan Baseball Dinner” named after Tom’s brother, this past January, the newly funded “Tom Dolan Locker Room” was announced and will be completed by Fall 2024.

Tom has continued philanthropic efforts through Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada. He has been a benefactor to many initiatives there and has served as a board member for over twenty years. Catholic Charities is close to his heart and he views the organization as a part of his extended family. “Tom's deep commitment to elevating the most vulnerable through his generosity and philanthropic leadership has allowed Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada to support thousands of our neighbors in need. From purchasing thousands of Thanksgiving turkeys to supporting our work to help seniors, families and those struggling to make ends meet, we are blessed to have him as part of our Catholic Charities family,” said Marie Baxter, CEO, Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada.

Among the many honors and designations Tom has received throughout the course of his career, he is also a recipient of the SIR Award for the Associated Contractors of Nevada. The SIR Award is given in honor of the men, women, and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the quality of life in the northern Nevada construction industry. An active civic leader as well, he is an Honorary Chief Deputy of the Washoe County Deputy Association. He’s been a supporting member for over 20 years.

Tom is a devoted father and family man of three adult children. He is a mentor and community leader who has contributed millions of dollars and thousands of hours of his time towards the progress of the Northern Nevada community and Catholic ministries, impacting thousands of lives. His legacy reaches beyond him as he’s

raised a family who value philanthropy in following their father's footsteps. They now serve, along with their dad, as leaders in the community.

Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg said, "Tom is a man who witnesses his priority values of faith, family and community in everything he says and does. It has been an honor to get to know him this past couple of years and to experience the passion that underlies his generosity."

There are only two other designees in Nevada who have received this honorable papal designation, with the most recent being in the Archdiocese of Las Vegas in 2023. Mr. Dolan's honor will be only the third ever in the state. Mr. Dolan's papal honor will be announced at the annual "Diocese of Reno Volunteer Appreciation Banquet" on April 26, 2024, where he will be formally recognized amongst the Catholic community he serves. His formal investiture as a Knight of St. Gregory the Great will take place on June 15, 2024, at 4:30PM at St. Thomas of Aquinas Cathedral in Reno, Nevada. During this ceremony, Mr. Dolan will be presented with both a medal and sword to commemorate his papal knighthood.

Background Regarding the Order of Saint Gregory the Great

The Order of Saint Gregory the Great, one of the five pontifical knightly orders, was founded by Pope Gregory XVI in 1831 to honor his great sixth century predecessor. Over the course of nearly two centuries, it has been awarded to philanthropists, diplomats, military and business leaders, artists, scientists, and interfaith leaders who have shown, by their service, extraordinary love for Jesus Christ and his Church. With the exception of Catholic heads of state, diplomats assigned to Vatican City State, and others of international standing, the Order of St. Gregory the Great is the highest honor granted by the Holy Father to laypersons.

Diocese of Reno

The Diocese of Reno was erected in 1931 by Pope Pius XI. In 1995, Pope John Paul II created the divided the Diocese of Reno-Las Vegas into Reno and what is now the Archdiocese of Las Vegas from the five southern counties. The Diocese of Reno is comprised of the 12 northern counties of Nevada. It is a mission diocese serving 90,000 Catholics who reside within its 70,852 square mile boundary. The diocese has 28 parishes, six missions,

four elementary schools and one high school. 36 active priests and 36 permanent deacons serve the diocese. Eleven retired priests and two retired bishops reside in the Diocese of Reno. In May 2023, the Diocese of Reno joined the Ecclesiastical Province of the Archdiocese of Las Vegas- which includes the Archdiocese of Las Vegas, the Diocese of Salt Lake City and Diocese of Reno.

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