

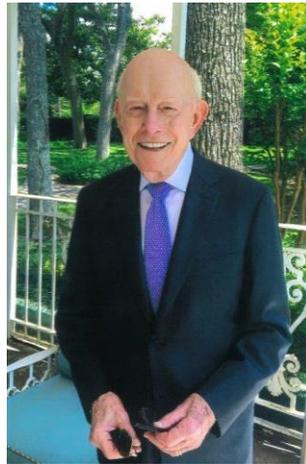
T H E  
**CATHOLIC**  
F O U N D A T I O N

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**Jack Pratt to Receive 2023 Catholic Foundation Award**

*Entrepreneurial mind, servant's heart and memories of the Great Depression steer philanthropic path for Foundation's 40<sup>th</sup> honoree to be celebrated at February dinner*



**DALLAS** – Jack E. Pratt, Sr., founder and retired chairman and CEO of Hollywood Casino Corporation and the developer of multiple successful hotels, casinos, commercial and residential buildings and restaurant chains in the U.S., Mexico, South America, Australia and the Caribbean, has been named the 40<sup>th</sup> Catholic Foundation Award honoree.

Pratt will be recognized on February 4, 2023, during The Catholic Foundation Award Dinner at the Hilton Anatole Hotel, for his Christian example and enormous philanthropic impact made throughout the Dallas area.

For 40 years, The Catholic Foundation Award has recognized an individual, couple or family for their distinguished service and support to further the religious, charitable and educational needs throughout the local Catholic community.

“Like many who personally endured the challenges of the Great Depression, Jack humbly minimizes the later success he experienced in the business world,” said Matt Kramer, president and CEO of The Catholic Foundation.

“Jack has devoted considerable time to philanthropic pursuits as founder and director of the Aileen and Jack Pratt Foundation, serving eight years on the St. Monica Catholic Church finance council, 12 years on the Investment Committee of the Diocese of Dallas and on the Bishop’s Finance Council of the Diocese of Dallas. He’s a legendary leader and his generosity toward the community runs deep,” Kramer added.

A native of Joplin, Mo., Pratt also served as a member of the Leadership Council “Innovation in Medicine” campaign for Southwestern Medical University, the committee for Advanced Gifts - capital campaign fund for Ursuline Academy, the founding committee of John Paul II High School in Plano and the Leadership Committee for the “Our Faith Our Future” capital campaign for the Diocese of Dallas.

In addition, he was the initial investor for the now nationwide Young Catholic Professionals, a nonprofit that brings together young business professionals in a variety of events to foster Catholic identity, and was the founder and advisor to the San Juan Diego Catholic Church in northwest Dallas.

Pratt and his wife, Aileen, currently serving as chair of The Catholic Foundation board of trustees, are parishioners at Christ the King Catholic Church and have four children, nine grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Jack served as a master sergeant in the U.S. Army’s Inspector General’s office during the Korean War and handled parts logistics that aided helicopter pilots in Korea while based at Fort Wolters in Mineral Wells, Texas.

“I always believed the good Lord was number one in my life,” Pratt said while reflecting on his life as a young sidewalk salesman of daily newspapers, flowers and puppies at the age of seven to support his family through the Great Depression of 1929-1939. “I always asked God for advice going into a new business. There were no safety nets in the Great Depression so if you needed help, the place you turned was the church.

“I told myself as a six-year-old that I would do everything possible to work hard, help my family out of poverty, be a good Christian and give back to the community. It never left my mind,” said Pratt. “Never in my wildest dreams did I think a little kid from Joplin who sold newspapers on the street at the age of seven would receive this tremendous award.”

One of his favorite philanthropic projects began after witnessing a Mass celebrated in the rain with people kneeling on soggy ground and a priest holding an umbrella above his head.

That sober vision, and the desire to find a growing community of people a proper church led to numerous hours over several years spent identifying real estate, negotiating deals with building owners, renovating facilities to meet the needs of a growing Hispanic Catholic community in northwest Dallas, selecting contractors to work on the project, financially contributing to and ultimately establishing San Juan Diego Catholic Church near the intersection of Webb Chapel and Royal Lane.

Professionally, Pratt achieved success in a wide variety of ventures including T.G.I. Fridays, and as one of the nation's largest developers and owners of the Holiday Inn franchises, with more than 40 hotel properties including Hiltons, Crowne Plaza and Sheraton Hotels in the U.S., Mexico and Caribbean.

As business grew, he never forgot his Missouri roots. He subscribes to the notion, "To whom much is given, much will be required" that stems from the Gospel of Luke.

"You don't earn money to keep it for yourself. You can't take it with you." Pratt said. "It was not a desire that I needed the money. I lived decently, and it was always in my thought that there were many other people that needed support and so I helped.

"Given how my life started, I feel so blessed," said Pratt. "The good Lord has answered a lot of my prayers and I've had the ability to give back and spend most of my time on church work."

Table and individual reservations for the 2023 Catholic Foundation Award Dinner can be made later this year. In the interim, visit [www.catholicfoundation.com](http://www.catholicfoundation.com), call 972-661-9792 or email [lscheets@catholicfoundation.com](mailto:lscheets@catholicfoundation.com) for more information.

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### **About the Catholic Foundation**

The Catholic Foundation is a trusted giving vehicle for the Catholic community. Chartered in 1955, the Foundation was founded by a group of dedicated Catholic laymen with a vision that extended far beyond the charitable needs of the moment. The Foundation has spent decades building a strong community, helping donors fulfill their charitable goals, and preserving the founders' vision and philanthropic legacy. Over time, the Foundation has provided more than \$247 million in grants to religious, charitable and educational organizations. Today, it manages approximately \$300 million in assets and houses more than 500 charitable funds and trusts. For additional information about The Catholic Foundation, call 972-661-9792 or visit [www.catholicfoundation.com](http://www.catholicfoundation.com).