For Immediate Release

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Vicki Kennedy Statement

(Boston, MA)-- The following is a statement released by Mrs. Vicki Kennedy:

"Bishop McManus has objected to my appearance at the graduation ceremonies of Anna Maria College where I had accepted an invitation to be the commencement speaker and to receive an honorary degree. As a consequence, the college has withdrawn its invitation to me. I know the President and Board of Trustees extended their initial invitation to me with the most sincere intentions, and I regret the position in which they have been placed. I have great respect and admiration for Anna Maria College and the Class of 2012 and would not want my presence to hurt the school or detract from the graduates' special day in any way.

Nevertheless, I am disheartened by this entire turn of events. I am a lifelong Catholic and my faith is very important to me. I am not a public official. I hold no public office nor am I a candidate for public office. I have not met Bishop McManus nor has he been willing to meet with me to discuss his objections. He has not consulted with my pastor to learn more about me or my faith. Yet by objecting to my appearance at Anna Maria College he has made a judgment about my worthiness as a Catholic. This is a sad day for me and an even sadder one for the Church I love.

I thank President Jack Calareso and Anna Maria College for the courtesy and sensitivity with which they have handled this unfortunate situation. I congratulate the Class of 2012 on their accomplishments and wish them Godspeed as they embark on the next phase of life's journey. "