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Contact: Kristen Andree

313-496-1701

Kristen.Andree@steannedetroit.org

**Cardinal Simoni to Celebrate Mass on July 23 in Honor of the Albanian Community
Beloved Living Saint of Albania to Participate in the Novena to Ste. Anne**

DETROIT, July 19, 2019 – Cardinal Ernest Simoni will preside at the Mass honoring the Albanian community during the annual Novena at Ste. Anne Church de Detroit on Tuesday, July 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. Fr. Marko Djonovic, an Albanian priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, will deliver the homily. The Mass is being offered for Emilijan Ukaj, a recently deceased Detroit Albanian seminarian.

Cardinal Simoni, born in 1928, is considered a living saint among the Albanian people for surviving 28 years of imprisonment. The Cardinal was jailed in 1963 by the Communist regime for celebrating a memorial Mass for President John F. Kennedy after his assassination.

Pope Francis met then Fr. Simoni during his apostolic journey to Albania in 2014. Pope Francis wept as the humble priest told his story.

In 2016 Pope Francis named Simoni a Cardinal about a week before his 87th birthday. Pope Francis has followed the custom of his predecessors of naming priests and bishops as Cardinals for their heroic witness to the Christian faith.

Mass will be followed by refreshments in the plaza provided by the Albanian community.

Ste. Anne is the patroness of the Archdiocese of Detroit. The annual novena, a nine-day devotion, has been celebrated at the Church of Ste. Anne de Detroit for over 100 years.

The Albanian people also revere Mary Teresa Bojaxhiu (1910-1997), an Albanian nun known as Mother Teresa of Calcutta and founder of the Missionaries of Charity. Mother Teresa was canonized a saint by Pope Francis in 2016.

Ste. Anne Church de Detroit is located at 1000 Ste. Anne Street in Detroit.

For more information please go to steannedetroit.org

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