

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject – Crofton, Nebraska Farmer and Journalist Releases First Book

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CROFTON, Neb. – It is cliché to say that someone is living out their lifelong dreams, but for Crofton, Nebraska farmer, Curt Arens, it is probably true. Arens grew up on his family’s farm along West Bow Creek south of Crofton, hoping to one day be able to raise a family of his own on the fourth generation Arens farmstead.

Also growing up, giving 4-H and FFA speeches, editing the high school yearbook, and writing for the local newspaper, the *Crofton Journal*, he secretly aspired to be a published author. Now, both of those dreams have come to reality.

Arens farms with his wife, Donna and their three children on the land of his ancestors. And his first book, *Down to Earth: Celebrating a Blessed Life on the Land*, was released in January by Catholic and Christian publisher, ACTA Publications in Skokie, IL.

A veteran free lance journalist, Arens has enjoyed regular credits in recent years in national and regional publications like *Successful Farming*, *Nebraska Farmer*, *Nebraska Life*, *American Profile*, *Norfolk Daily News* and *Living Here*. He founded “Farm to Family Connection,” a Yankton, SD-based weekly radio program promoting local family farms and communities. Arens writes a weekly column, “Farm to Family,” for the six newspapers owned by the Northeast Nebraska News Agency in Hartington, Neb. He was also a 2003-2005 Food and Society Policy Fellow, a member of a national agriculture communications fellowship aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture and locally raised food.

“When I was in high school, I dreamed about someday having my own book in print,” Arens said. “But I thought it would be a biography of some historical figure, or maybe a farm book of some kind. Those would have been easier to write.”

Down to Earth is part of ACTA Publication’s “American Catholic Experience” series, a grouping of select books written by ordinary Catholics about how they view their lives, their occupations, their communities and their families through the lens of faith.

“I am not a terribly assertive person, so I have always viewed faith as a private matter,” said Arens. “So revealing how I think about faith in my own life as a husband, father and farmer, was one of the most difficult writing opportunities that I have taken on.”

Arens tells about growing up on the family farm near Crofton, imparting his personal stories about the intimate details of farm life, of being a good steward, experiencing college and eventually marrying and taking over the family farm from his parents, all with faith at the base of each story.

From the book's foreword, publisher Gregory Pierce of ACTA Publications, wrote, "Those of you who are looking for a political polemic on the issues facing modern agriculture or a theological treatise on Church doctrines or practices are going to have to look elsewhere. Curt Arens is just going to tell his story."

"The book is a tribute to the sacredness of rural life, particularly those hardworking, generous people in my own community," says Arens. "It is about the faith and farm lessons I've learned from my parents and grandparents, from my wife, children and in-laws, and from my neighbors and friends."

"Family farming is often maligned these days, particularly by youth who pass farming up as a career choice because they think of it only as a lifestyle that is too difficult and too prone to poverty," says Arens. "It is difficult, and a lot less romantic than most urban dwellers think, but the rewards of living on the land, witnessing God and caring for creation close-up, and raising a family within the warmth of a small town and close-knit faith community, far outweigh the financial challenges."

Pierce agrees, "*Down to Earth* is about the harvest of blessings that come from trying to help bring about the kingdom of God on earth, as it is in heaven." He writes, "In that sense, it is for all of us, no matter where or how we find ourselves living and working in this world. It is about every farmer, and it is about you and about me."

For more information – check out ACTA Publications online at www.actapublications.com or amazon.com.

For more about the author – check out www.downtoearthbooks.com

"Down to Earth" is available at:

Crofton – Corps of Discovery Welcome Center (along Highway 81 – Scenic Overlook)

- Peoples Grocery

Hartington – Cedar County News Office

Norfolk – The Abbey

- Hastings Books, Music and Videos

Yankton – The Vineyard

Lincoln – Lee Booksellers

- Gloria Deo

Omaha – Parables

– Gloria Deo

LaVista – Divine Truth Christian Store

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