

# BOSTON CATHOLIC MEN

Organizers of the Boston Catholic Men's Conference



## About Us

### 1. Contact Information

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### 2. How We Started

In the fall of 2004, during a small Catholic Men's Group meeting at Saint Paul Parish in Cambridge MA, one of the participants asked "How can this group help Archbishop Sean rebuild the Church in Boston?"

We all remembered the call from the Archbishop at his Installation Mass for all Catholics in the Archdiocese to join him and help the Church move forward from the terrible pain experienced during the previous few years. But, we wondered, what was our role?

Another participant asked the question – what has helped each of us move forward individually from the difficulties of the past few years. To a man, each of us said that our men's group meetings every other Friday morning was making a huge difference. Other men said the highlight of the past year for them as Catholic Men was attending the Worcester Catholic Men's Conference. One attendee commented that "seeing over 1,000 men choose to come together to help and challenge each other to grow as Catholic men was a huge boost to me."

Despite being early on a Friday morning, one of the men in our group connected the dots and asked whether the best way we could contribute to the rebuilding of the Church in Boston was to plan a Men's Conference and suggest the formation of small men's groups at the local level – "if it has helped us, a Men's Group and Men's Conference might also help other men."

Quickly, the rest of us started listing all the reasons why we couldn't be the right team. What did any of us know about planning events for hundreds of people? None of us were "experts" in men's ministry (not even close!). None of us were "qualified" – surely there were other men better suited to leading this type of effort! But then one of our group said "Guys – the Red Sox were just down 3-0 to the Yankees and they came back! Remember their T-shirts that said 'Why not us?' Well, why not us? Despite our limitations, we can learn from Men who have put on Men's Conferences and from other event organizers and put something together. What do you think?"

We still had our concerns and fears but we agreed that we would approach Archbishop O'Malley. We all agreed to pray that Archbishop Sean would be enthusiastic if we were meant to do it and redirect us (or simply say no) if God thought we would do more harm than good with our efforts. Thanks be to God that Archbishop Sean was more than enthusiastic, blessing our efforts as one step in the recovery process of the Archdiocese. He was pleased that a group of laymen with, up until that point, little involvement in the Church would step forward.

We thought that we might have 500 men (if lucky!) from the region come to a Men's Conference on short notice (we only had 5 months to plan the event). In selecting speakers to invite, we decided to be bold and try to invite speakers we really wanted to hear (not just speakers we thought we could get on such short notice). It had to be that the Holy Spirit really wanted this Men's Conference to happen, because we were amazed that Jim Caviezel (Passion of the Christ), Jim Towey (Office of Faith Based Initiatives, Counsel to Mother Teresa), Tom Monaghan (Domino's Pizza, Legatus, Ave Maria University), Fr. Larry Richards (National expert on Men's Ministry and Confession) and Fr. Philip Merdinger (Chaplain to National Fellowship of Catholic Men and Spiritual Director at St. John's Seminary) were not only available but excited to come and speak. With the powerful speakers lineup and the many men in local parishes willing to help spread the word locally about the Conference, it soon looked like we would surpass 500 – we thought that maybe we'd top 1,000!

On March 19, 2005 (feast of St. Joseph), our first Boston Catholic Men's Conference took place at Boston College High School. Over 2,200 men attended – exceeding all of our expectations. More than 1,200 experienced the Sacrament of Confession (many for the first time in decades) from the more than 90 priests that attended. Feedback from attendees showed how many men were touched by the reception of the Sacraments and the words of our speakers – many in different and unexpected ways.

### 3. 2006 Conference

As we started planning for the 2nd Boston Catholic Men's Conference, we were again thrilled that the first 3 speakers we invited all said yes! Father Raniero Cantalamessa (Preacher of retreats to the Pope and Vatican Cardinals for 25 years!), Father John Corapi (one of the most followed Catholic preachers in the US) and Scott Hahn (Catholic Convert and one of the Church's most followed authors and teachers) were all speakers that individually attract conferences of more than 1,000. That all three said yes suggested that the 2nd Conference would be special. On March 4, 2006, we were thrilled that 5,200 men attended to hear these wonderful speakers, experience a powerful Mass celebrated by Archbishop Sean and experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation from the 200 priests that attended. [We were also thrilled that our team was able to assist a group of laywomen that brought the 1st Boston Catholic Women's Conference to Boston on March 3, 2006 – with over 3,300 women attending!].

### 4. 2007 Conference

After a relatively mild Boston winter, the largest snowstorm of the year came on Friday March 16 – the day prior to the 3rd Boston Catholic Men's Conference on Saint Patrick's Day. Most of the Boston area got more than 20 inches of snow that lasted into the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup>. Despite having to dig out their cars, more than 3,100 men showed up to hear a revised lineup of speakers including Cardinal Peter Turkson from Ghana, Supreme Knight Carl A. Andersen, Father Roger & Scot Landry & Andreas Widmer.

### 5. 2008 Conference – Archdiocesan Bicentennial

We encourage all Catholic Men to consider attending our fourth conference on April 19, 2008 and inviting brothers, fathers, sons, work colleagues, parishioners, and even drinking buddies to attend.

We are always in need of additional volunteers and parish captains who want to join with us. Please see the links in the upper right for signup forms.

### 6. Our Logo

The Boston Catholic Men logo has the following elements:

- **Christ is in the Center** – We strive to center our lives on Jesus.
- **Cathedral of the Holy Cross** – In the upper right, the logo pictures the central church of the Archdiocese of Boston
- **Zakim Memorial Bridge** – In the lower left, the Zakim Memorial Bridge is Boston's famous new landmark. We think the bridge is also symbolic of the bridge we hope Boston Catholic Men can be for men who seek Catholic men's fellowship.
- **Father with his son/daughter** – In the upper left, this icon is intended to illustrate the critical role of Fathers in educating their children and passing on the faith.
- **Men Experiencing Fellowship** – In the lower right, we symbolize the Catholic Men's fellowship we hope results from our efforts.
- **The Shield** – We recognize that our efforts to bring about a Culture of Life and facilitate Catholic Men's Fellowship will not be without its difficulties and little battles.



We are grateful to the great folks at [iT-DesignGroup](#) who designed our logo for us. If you or your business has graphical art needs, please give them a look.

We also encourage all Catholic Men to consider joining (or even starting!) a local Catholic Men's Group. Please see the Men's Group link on the left.

We welcome your prayers for the Conference attendees, speakers, priests, volunteers and exhibitors.

Thank you for visiting our website. God bless you.

Peace of Christ,  
Boston Catholic Men