2010 BOSTON CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Speakers, Schedule & Other Details

Updated: February 20, 2010

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1. Conference Details

- **Date:** Saturday February 27, 2010. (Rain date: Saturday March 6, 2010)
- **Time:** 9am to 5:30pm.
- **Location:** Cathedral of the Holy Cross. 1400 Washington Street, Boston MA 02118.
- **Theme:** *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* (Phil. 4:13)
- **Speakers:** Patti Mansfield, Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle, Leah Darrow and Sr. Olga of the Eucharist.
- **Other program elements:** Confession, Adoration, Music, Gathering with other Catholic women, and Mass with Cardinal Seán.
- **Ticket prices:** $20 (or $30 with lunch)

2. Women's Conference Speakers

PATTI MANSFIELD

Patti Gallagher Mansfield was a participant in the February 1967 "Duquesne Weekend" which marked the beginning of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. From the earliest days of the Renewal she has served as a leader through teaching, writing and pastoral ministry. Patti's testimony has been widely published and she has been a speaker at conferences and retreats for laity and priests in the United States and around the world. She is a frequent guest on Ralph Martin's television program: The Choices We Face.

Patti has authored several books including: Proclaim His Marvelous Deeds, As By A New Pentecost: The Dramatic Beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with a Foreword by Cardinal Suenens and Magnificat: A Mother's Reflections on Mary. She also has manyteaching CDs.
Patti is married to Al Mansfield, Coordinator of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of New Orleans, Louisiana, and they have four adult children and four grandchildren. She and Al serve together in pastoral leadership of a weekly prayer meeting and an annual Catholic Charismatic Conference. The Mansfields are Liaisons to the Archbishop of New Orleans for the Charismatic Renewal and are recipients of the Papal Medal, Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice (For the Church and the Pope).

Patti was asked by the Pontifical Council for the Laity to thank Pope Benedict XVI on behalf of all the ecclesial movements and new communities before a crowd of 400,000 people in St. Peter's Square on the vigil of Pentecost, 2006. She has also ministered at the International Retreat for Priests in Ars, France during the Year for Priests sponsored by the Congregation for the Clergy.

DONNA-MARIE COOPER O'BOYLE

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle is known to millions as the friendly face and soothing voice of Catholic motherhood. Her frequent appearances on radio and television, her many books, and her speaking engagements are the public face of a life devoted to seeking holiness in the context of a happy Catholic family.

She grew up in a in a large, close-knit Catholic family, married, and is raising five children, the youngest now entering college. Family life has always been her first vocation.

But in addition to her work as a mother, Donna-Marie has found opportunities to serve God both close to home and throughout the world. She has been a catechist for over twenty years at her parish and a Eucharistic minister to the sick, as well as a world-renowned journalist and author.

Donna-Marie's decade-long friendship with Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta led to a long correspondence and meetings around the world. Following in the footsteps of Blessed Teresa, Donna-Marie became a lay Missionary of Charity and founded a branch of the lay Missionaries of Charity. Today, Donna-Marie is passionate about encouraging others to follow in the footsteps of her blessed friend, caring for the poorest of the poor.

It was Mother Teresa who constantly encouraged Donna-Marie to keep writing for mothers, women, and families, and she wrote the foreword to Donna-Marie's book Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-To-Be, as well as back-cover endorsements for her other books. Donna-Marie was also blessed with the spiritual guidance and friendship of the late world-renowned theologian, Rev. John A. Hardon S. J.

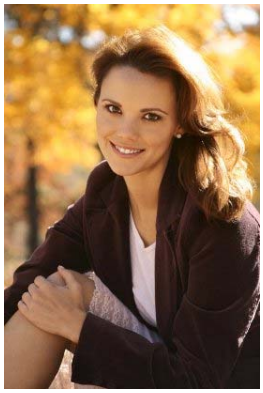
Remembering Jesus' request in the Gospel of Matthew that we should care for Him in others, Donna-Marie founded the "Friends of Veronica," an outreach to the seniors, the sick, and the lonely in nursing homes and hospitals. Their goal is to bring love and comfort in imitation of St. Veronica, who lovingly gave her veil to wipe Jesus' forehead as He walked to Calvary. Donna-Marie has founded several other apostolates and organizations.

Donna-Marie was invited by Cardinal Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity to participate in an International Congress for women at the Vatican in early 2008 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem penned by Pope John Paul II.

Donna-Marie has been a frequent guest on EWTN television and discusses Catholic and family and parenting issues on a regular Ave Maria Radio segment called "Mom's Corner" at "Catholic Connection" with radio host Teresa Tomeo.

She is also an EWTN TV host. Look for Donna-Marie in upcoming EWTN television segments called "Everyday Blessings for Catholic Moms."

LEAH DARROW



I am the poster child for the "Prodigal daughter" … "I've been there, done that and am NOT going back" said Leah Darrow.

"Satan's has had his fun with me for too long, I have been blinded by ignorance and corrupted by vanity and pride, I take back from satan what is Yours and I give my entire self to You…Dear Lord, make me new again in You." -- A private entry in Leah's journal.

On the feast day of St. John the Baptist, in the year 1979, Leah entered into this world. The oldest of six children, Leah was born and raised on a small farm in Norman, Oklahoma, and quickly realized the value of her faith. With the tragic murder of her grandfather, Leah saw her family turn to God for support. It was then, at the tender age of 12, she became aware that it was God alone that would mend any problem – even death.

Leah attended private Catholic school up through her freshman year in high school in Oklahoma when in 1994 her father's job transferred their family to St. Louis, Missouri. She went on to attend and graduate from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. At UM-St. Louis Leah earned a B.A. degree in Psychology, receiving every possible award from her department and served two consecutive terms as the Chapter President of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology, and still being able to graduate with Magna Cum Laude Honors.

Not too long after college, Leah made her TV debut on Season 3 of the hit reality TV Show, America's Next Top Model. Having modeled briefly before Leah became swept away by the Fashion industry and soon came to realize its dark depths and the suggestive nature of where her new career was trying to take her. Leah's "prodigal daughter" experience happened in the abyss of New York City, in the midst of the madness, the craziness, and the lonely; she found her way back to Christ.

At a very young age, Leah was drawn to fashion and as God would have it, He led her to Brenda Sharman, National Director of Pure Fashion.

"I briefly saw a story for Pure Fashion on EWTN and wondered why those cute girls and adorable outfits were being showcased on the 'catholic channel'. I immediately found out more information on Pure Fashion's website and decided to write Brenda an email thanking her for putting together the program. Little did I know what one small email can do; Brenda called me personally and we talked for what seemed to be only 20 minutes when in actuality hours had passed."

With Pure Fashion up and running, Brenda helped Leah link up with Chicago's Pure Fashion Team and Leah has since helped put together the first St. Louis Pure Fashion team as well. Leah loves sharing her personal testimony as well as her new strategy to modeling, "I bring each modeling opportunity to Our Blessed Mother, if I feel that I can participate in it with Her by my side, then I know Jesus will be happy with it too," said Leah.

Leah's wonderful and what some might call "stubborn" faith in God has brought her to many crossroads in her young life. After much reflection Leah realized that her journey has not been in vain. She, like many, has reformed …. better yet, repented and is willing to allow the Holy Spirit to guide her as He takes her on another journey of sharing her life's events with others.

Some of Leah's speeches cover topics such as modesty, chastity, the pro-life message (including the death penalty), "catholic" fashion, conversion from sin, and living your life for Christ.

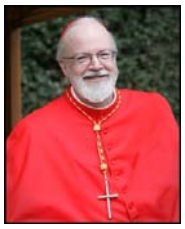
SR. OLGA OF THE EUCHARIST

Sr. Olga Yaqob was born and raised in Iraq. When she was 13 years old a war between her native Iraq and Iran began. It was the horrific conditions of that war that she witnessed, that shaped her decision to become a nun. With her great love and devotion to Jesus,

Sr. Olga joined the order of The Missionaries of the Virgin Mary. Sometime after becoming a nun in 1995, Yaqob received permission from the Assyrian Catholic Church to start her own order in Baghdad, where she was already leading a service-oriented religious outreach called Love Thy Neighbor. She is known as the "The Mother Teresa of Baghdad".

Coming to the United States in 2001, she studied at Boston University and finished her Masters degree in Ministry and Spirituality at Boston College. She currently volunteers as Chaplain for Boston University and is a widely desired speaker and retreat leader.

CARDINAL SEÁN O'MALLEY, O.F.M. CAP.



- Mass celebrant and homilist at 2010 Boston Catholic Women's Conference.
- Archbishop of Boston since July 2003. Previously the Bishop of the dioceses of Fall River, Palm Beach and St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands.
- 1st Cardinal to have a weekly blog: www.CardinalSeansBlog.org and to have a weekly email to all Catholic faithful.
- Inspired and encouraged the founding of the Boston Catholic Men's and Women's Conferences.

3. Women's Conference Theme and Speaker Themes

Conference Theme:	***"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Phil 4:13)***
Key Points:	o Speakers will help conference attendees to rediscover the gift of faith in the midst of their daily lives. o Speakers will help attendees to understand that their lives can be enriched and fulfilled by developing a deeper relationship with God, Jesus, and Mary. o Speakers will show attendees, through the example of their own life experiences, that Christ is our strength and help in time of need.

Keynote Speaker:	**Leah Darrow**
Talk Theme:	***"The Lord is my Strength"***, ***Living My Life for Christ.***
Talk Time:	9:15 to 10:00 AM
Key Points:	o Today's society poses daily challenges to women of all ages who are seeking to live a life of faith. The key to overcoming these challenges is turning to God in all circumstances. o Once we turn to him, we begin to understand what it means to trust. Trust then leads to prayer, and prayer leads to an awareness of God's presence. Once we become aware of God, it is hard to turn away from Him, although we are constantly tempted to do so o Leah will provide a personal testimony on how her awareness of God's presence in her life has allowed her to live a life of faith. o She will provide an encouragement to all conference attendees that they to can live a life of peace in the midst of this chaotic world, if they turn to Christ.

Keynote Speaker:	**Patti Mansfield**
Talk Theme:	***"We belong to Mary"***, ***Understanding her role as Mother; following her example of faith."***
Talk Time:	10:30 to 11:30 AM
Key Points:	o Speaker to share the importance of discovering a renewed relationship with Jesus, through Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit . o Ask conference attendees: "What does it mean to say "yes" to God? as Mary did at the Annunciation?" o Speaker to give a personal testimony on what it means to have an intimate relationship with Mary our heavenly Mother. (with the Holy Spirit dwelling within her.) o Speaker will help attendees to enter into a new relationship with Mary, through her sharing and personal stories.

Keynote Speaker:	**Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle**
Talk Theme:	**"*Taking Our Faith to the Streets: Mother Teresa's Lessons of Love"***
Talk Time:	1:30 to 2:30 PM
Key Points:	o Speaker will provide a personal account of her own journey with God as a wife, mother and lay person serving the Church. o She will share important life lessons learned from Mother Teresa, a long time personal friend. o She will share personal stories throughout her talk which will help to encourage and inspire attendees to turn to God for strength in all situations. o She will end her talk with a general session of questions from the audience.

Keynote Speaker:	**Sr. Olga of the Eucharist**
Talk Theme:	***"From Baghdad to Boston at the School of Mary: Journey of Trust and Obedience"***
Talk Time:	2:45 to 3:45PM

Key Points:	o A personal account of one women's spiritual journey from Iraq to America. Including a reflection on the following scripture: The Lord said to Abram (Abraham): Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. Abram went as the Lord directed him.(Genesis 12:1-5)
	o Encouragement to attendees that we must depend on the Lord to meet all our needs, that with Christ as our strength, we have no need for worry or anxiety, no matter the circumstance.
	  o *"As we walk along the many paths which make up the journey of our lives, we often desire to know what comes next. We want to experience the destination before we've even finished getting there. However, when we trust that God is leading us we should surrender ourselves totally to His will. No matter what the destination is, God has great things in store for us. This has certainly been the case in my life. Over the past decade I have seen my life radically transformed. Part of that transformation included moving halfway across the globe."*
	o Speaker to share on the significance of the Blessed Mother in her life.
	  o *"Very often people ask me what the turning point was in my spiritual life. The turning point was not a what, but a who. My answer has always been: the Blessed Mother. She has been the mother of my faith, my vocation, and my ministry.*

4. Women's Conference Schedule (Draft)

8:00-9:00	Check-in, visit exhibitors. Music begins at 8:45.
9:00-9:15	Opening Remarks
9:15 – 10:00	**Leah Darrow**: *"The Lord in my Strength", Living My Life for Christ.*
10:00 – 10:30	Music & Break
10:30 – 11:30	**Patti Mansfield:** "*We belong to Mary", Understanding her role as Mother; following her example of faith.*
11:30 – 12:00	Eucharistic Procession/Adoration followed by Preparation for midday program
12:00-1:30	Midday Program: Lunch – Confession – Adoration – Reflection
1:30 – 2:30	**Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle:** *"Taking Our Faith to the Streets: Mother Teresa's Lessons of Love."*
2:30 – 2:45	Break
2:45 – 3:45	**Sr. Olga of the Eucharist**: *"From Baghdad to Boston at the School of Mary: Journey of Trust and Obedience"*
3:45 – 4:15	Break, Worship Music and preparation for Mass
4:15	Mass with Cardinal Seán O'Malley
5:30	End of Conference

5. Parish Captains

- Parish Captains are extremely critical for inviting their Catholic brothers and sisters to attend the Conferences. Thank you to everyone that has served as a parish captain in the past. We hope you can serve in is role again!
- Cardinal Sean and the Conference organizing team is hopeful that the Conferences can help welcome back many of our fellow Catholics to regular participation in our Catholic faith.
- Bob Gohn and Andreas Widmer will be the contacts for all parish captains.
- To signup to be a parish captain, please click on the "Be a Parish Captain" link on www.CatholicBoston.com.

Promotional materials are available on www.CatholicBoston.com from a Parish Captain breakfast. We ask everyone to invite others to experience the Conferences.

6. Conference Volunteers

- We are blessed with hundreds of dedicated volunteers to help bring hospitality to the thousands of attendees. Many previous volunteers have already expressed interest in serving again. Thank you! We encourage you to join them. We particularly need men to help at the women's conference, and women to help at the men's conference – this enables our volunteers to fully participate in one of the conferences.
- Irene Moschetto and Colette Crowley will serve as contacts for our volunteers again this year.
- To signup to be a volunteer, please click on the "Volunteer" link on www.CatholicBoston.com.

7. Exhibitors

- **Exhibitor Requirements**
  - All exhibit tables are $150/table in 2010 (for each conference).
  - Exhibitors must fully complete an application and be approved to be an exhibitor [see below].
  - Advertising and sponsorship opportunities exist for Exhibitors that have interest. Please see www.CatholicBoston.com for more information.
  - Archdiocesan Pastoral Center agencies seeking a complimentary table should apply on a separate form on the Exhibitor's page on the conference website.

- **Exhibitor Notes**
  - To apply to be an exhibitor, please click on the "Exhibitors" link on www.CatholicBoston.com.
  - The "Exhibitor" page can also provide additional information about exhibiting at the Conferences.

- **Where will the exhibitor tables be?**
  - Exhibitor tables will be in the Cathedral High gymnasium.
  - Because the main restrooms will be in the gymnasium and we will distribute lunches there, we expect that every attendee will have a few opportunities to visit with the great exhibitors that we will have.

8. Priest Confessors

- We hope to provide the thousands of attendees the opportunity to experience Christ's forgiving love through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- We are grateful to the hundreds of priests that have attended the Conferences and spent many hours hearing confessions.
- We launched the sign-up form for priests who are willing to hear confessions live on our website, www.CatholicBoston.com, on December 17, 2009.
- Thank you to the dedicated priests that serve us in local dioceses and religious communities.

9. Donations & Prayers

- The Conferences are produced by a team of volunteers. We rely on ticket revenue to cover most of our Conference costs but we rely on donations to close the gap between ticket revenue and total costs. We also rely on the prayers of many individuals and religious communities.
- We are grateful for any support you can provide. Thank you.
- To donate, please go to www.CatholicBoston.com to may a contribution via paypal. Contributions can also be mailed to Boston Catholic Conferences, 350 Massachusetts Avenue #145, Arlington, MA 02474-6713.
- All gifts to Boston Catholic Conferences, Inc. are tax deductible.

10. What is the Conference seating like at the Cathedral?

- There are 1735 seats in the pews at the Cathedral.
  - This does not include portable seats added up front or seats in the choir loft.
  - This also assumes comfortable spacing in the pews.
  - Pews are wooden, so conference attendees want to bring seat cushions/pads if they prefer.
- We likely will add additional seats for priests and other guests in the side areas of the sanctuary and on the sides.
- We expect a total attendance of about 2000 (but we will sell only 1735 tickets)
- See the attached seating chart.

11. Are the seats reserved or general admission?

- All the seats are **reserved** this year.
- Attendees will be assigned a row and a seat number on their ticket.
- Attendees can trade seats to facilitate groups sitting together at their discretion.
- The earlier someone purchases a ticket, the better the seat will be, so we encourage people to order early and buy enough tickets for their group to assure that the group can sit together.

12. Is the Cathedral handicap accessible?

- Yes. There is a handicap ramp along the Union Park Street side (left side) of the Cathedral that leads to the basement. In the basement there is a new elevator that will bring attendees to the main floor of the Cathedral.
- We encourage attendees to bring their own wheelchairs if they can. We have a few wheelchairs owned by the Conference that can be used to transport attendees but since we only have a few, we will need them to transport others.
- Handicap seating will be up the front of the Cathedral, on the side.

13. Directions – how do we get to the Cathedral?

- We encourage you to visit our website: www.CatholicBoston.com and click on directions for full information.
- There is also a Silver Line stop (Union Park Street) in front of the Cathedral.

14. Where do we park?

- Parking is 710 Albany Street (1,000 spots) and 600 Albany Street for $5. It is also available on the streets (meters). These lots are a 5-7 minute walk from the Cathedral.
- **There will be a courtesy shuttle from Albany Street to the Cathedral.**

15. Is there an opportunity for bus drop-off and pickup?

- Yes.
- Buses can drop off attendees at 1400 Washington Street (the main entrance for the Cathedral)
- Pickup will be on Union Park Street (which we hope to block off for the conference if we can obtain a permit).

16. What are the restroom facilities like?

- Plentiful restroom facilities will be available in the Cathedral high school less 100 feet from the Cathedral, in addition to handicap and limited facilities in the Cathedral
- The main Cathedral has four single bathrooms on the lower level.
    - 2 are modern, 2 are older. The two modern bathrooms are handicap accessible, next to the elevator.
- We will likely add a few portapotties on Union Park street for the convenience of attendees at the Men's Conference and possibly at the Women's Conference too (depending on the weather).

17. Is there lunch and breakfast available?

- We will purchase boxed/bagged lunches for **everyone that pre-orders them**.
- If you don't pre-order lunch, we encourage you to bring your lunch. Additionally, there are some restaurants in the South End.
- We are striving to make arrangements for a breakfast cart with pastries, bagels and coffee/juice. We anticipate having these for a reasonable price.

18. Is there a place to eat lunch?

- Like previous conferences, we will encourage attendees to eat lunch in small groups throughout all the venues.
- We are working with the Cathedral High School to utilize their large cafeteria for anyone that would like to each lunch there.

19. Name Badges

- All attendees need a namebadge during the Conferences. To make check-in easier, we suggest that attendees pre-print their namebadges. Group leaders can also do this for their entire group.
- Tickets are still needed in addition to the namebadge for entrance.
- Please see www.CatholicBoston.com for the link to print namebadges. It is on the left menu "Print Namebadges".

BOSTON CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE	BOSTON CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
MR. JOHN SMITH	**MS. JANE SMITH**
Faithville: St. Dominic Parish	**Faithville: St. Dominic Parish**

20. Seating Chart

- See the "Cathedral Seating" link on the left menu of www.CatholicBoston.com.

21. Parking Map

- See the "Directions" link on the left menu of www.CatholicBoston.com.

Cathedral of the Holy Cross

Sanctuary

Union Park St. Entrance

Msgr. Reynolds Way Entrance

General Seating

SECTION A	SECTION B	SECTION C	SECTION D	SECTION E	SECTION F	SECTION G	SECTION H
	221					222	332
Handicap	223	Could add 7 rows of seats here		Could add 7 rows of seats here		224	334
Seating	225	69=1 row of 9, 6 rows of 10.		69=1 row of 9, 6 rows of 10.		226	336
Here	227					228	338
	229					230	340
	231					232	342
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1 2 3 4 5 6 349	239	129 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 19		20 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 130		240	350
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	253	143 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 33		34 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 144		254	
	255	145 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 35		36 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 146		256	
	257	147 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 37		38 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 148		258	
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	317	207 ■ 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 97		98 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 ■ 208		318	
	319	209 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 99		100 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 210		320	
	321	211 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 101		102 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 212		322	
	323	213 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 103		104 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 214		324	
	325	215 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 105		106 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 216		326	
	327	217 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 107		108 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 218		328	
	329	219 ■ ■ 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 6 109		110 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 ■ ■ 220		330	

Rear of Church

Washington Street Entrance

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Pews	5	54	47	47	47	47	54	11	312
Seats	6	6	5	6	6	5	6	7	
Lost	2	0	20	6	0	20	0	7	55
Total	**28**	**324**	**215**	**276**	**282**	**215**	**324**	**70**	**1734**

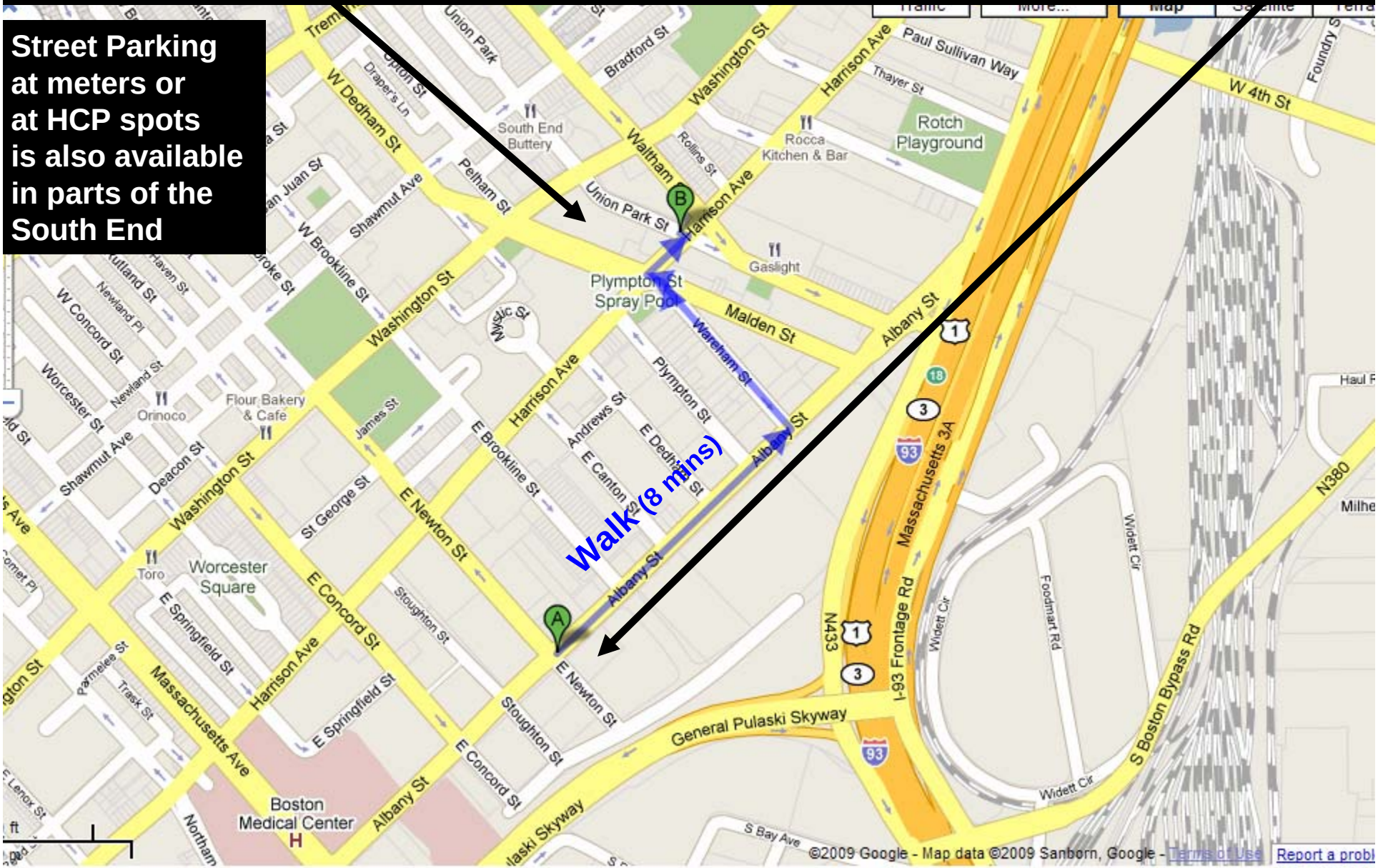
The above total doesn't include the seating in the sanctuary or in the choir.

Parking for 2010 Men's & Women's Confs.

Cathedral of the Holy Cross
1400 Washington St., Boston MA 02118

Parking $5 all day. 2 lots (total of 1,250 spots)
710 Albany St. (1000) & 600 Albany St. (250)

Street Parking at meters or at HCP spots is also available in parts of the South End



Former ‘Top Model’ contestant to speak at Women’s Conference

TheBostonPilot.com

Christopher Harding, Special to the Pilot
Pilot, February 19, 2010

Leah Darrow, a former contestant on ‘America’s Next Top Model’ and a leader of the ‘Pure Fashion’ movement will speak at the Feb. 27 Boston Catholic Women’s Conference.

She went from “America’s Next Top Model” to role model. She’s a reality TV star who now points to the real Truth.

“For years my faith took a back seat until it all came to a soulful boiling point during a high power photo shoot, where I turned back to God and my faith,” confesses nationally known Catholic speaker Leah Darrow.

“Ever heard that prodigal son story? I’m his sister,” she said.

Darrow will describe the importance of living a life rooted in God, not the world. Her story will include how she abandoned the world of New York modeling to become a leader in the “Pure Fashion” movement, which encourages young women to become confident, competent leaders who live the virtues of modesty and purity. She also shares her story throughout the country at gatherings of women, often with young adults and teens. Darrow will be one of the featured speakers at the upcoming 5th annual Boston Catholic Women’s Conference (BCWC) on Feb. 27 at Boston’s Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

Darrow has continued with modeling engagements, but with a different approach. “I bring each modeling opportunity to Our Blessed Mother; if I feel that I can participate in it with her by my side, then I know Jesus will be happy with it,” she said.

Like many young adults, Darrow witnesses to her faith in many ways. “With my Facebook page, my tweets on Twitter, and my blog, all through my iphone -- I am always connecting with people. It is almost a necessity in Western culture to use social media, but it is not the only way. In contrast, nothing compares to sitting with someone, having her share her story of ‘been there, done that’ and hearing firsthand that changing your life is possible. Women need to know that ‘real people’ exist who have made it back from the other side and are talking about it.”

Jennifer Schiller, coordinator of the Women’s Conference, said, “We are thrilled that Leah will share her story at the conference. Today’s society poses daily challenges to women of all ages who are seeking to live a life of faith. The key to overcoming these challenges is turning to God in all circumstances. Once we turn to him, we begin to understand what it means to trust. Trust then leads to prayer, and prayer leads to an awareness of God’s presence.”

“Leah’s personal testimony will describe how awareness of God’s presence in her life has allowed her to live a life of faith. She will provide an encouragement to all conference attendees that they to can live a life of peace in the midst of this chaotic world, if they turn to Christ,” she added.

Along with Darrow, the 2010 BCWC boasts three other inspiring women of faith as keynotes.

Author/EWTN host Donna-Marie Cooper O’Boyle will share the life lessons learned from her 10 year friendship with Blessed Mother Teresa. Patti Mansfield, a pioneer in the American Catholic Charismatic movement, will be welcomed back to the BCWC podium by popular demand. Also returning to this year’s conference is Iraqi-born Sister Olga of the Eucharist, who founded her own order before joining the chaplaincy at Boston University.

The BCWC will also offer live music, adoration, reconciliation, a gymnasium full of Catholic exhibitors, and a concluding Mass celebrated by Cardinal Seán O’Malley.

Only a few hundred tickets remain for the Women’s Conference on Feb. 27 and about 1,000 are left for the Boston Catholic Men’s Conference on April 17. To purchase tickets for either conference and for more information, visit www.CatholicBoston.com or call 617-444-9950.

I can do all things

TheBostonPilot.com

Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

Pilot, February 5, 2010

Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

I love the Cathedral, and I love the Boston Catholic Women's Conference. So, from my perspective, it would be hard to find a better way to spend a Lenten Saturday than at the Cathedral attending this year's Catholic Women's Conference. On the last Saturday in February, the Conference comes just as Lent hits full-swing. Perhaps that is why the theme of the event is particularly appropriate, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

I think that Bible verse should be a personal motto for every woman. The first part of it, at least, already is. We live in a time and culture where we're taught that that we can, in fact, have all things, be all things, and do all things. We women can have a career, a family, hobbies, pets, nice cars, and vacations. We can be corporate-forces-to-be-reckoned-with in the morning, soccer moms in the afternoon, and completely fulfilled wives in the evening. Our homes can be clean, and our offices efficient. Our children, inordinately beautiful, can graduate with both honors and friends. The hitch is that when we try to do "all things" on our own power, we throw the breakers, burn the fuses, and end up in the dark.

Most women are expert at burning the candle at both ends. We are, after all, the mothers of all multi-tasking. That is why we need a day to recharge not only ourselves, but our souls.

Like most of us, I can't afford the time or the money to really get away on vacation or retreat. But a one day conference is something I can—and should—do. Why? Because I for one, could really use a day where I am reminded that who I am is far more important in the eyes of God than what I can or cannot do. I need a day filled with feminine voices raised in prayer and in song; a day where conversations are all about the things that really matter in life. I long to be in place where I can look around and know that just about everyone I see shares my values, and my faith. I'd love to spend a day in a church large enough to hold all my sisters, at least the ones that live nearby. All that, before any of the speakers say a word, or I finally get myself to Confession, or spend time with the Eucharist.

As a Conference Team member, my job is to coordinate Eucharistic Adoration for both the women's and men's conferences. Bringing the women of this Archdiocese into the Real Presence of Jesus Christ is pure pleasure. Seeing them gaze at Him with love written all over their faces, it is easier to find that love again myself.

I'm certain that Patti Mansfield, Donna Marie Cooper-O'Boyle, Leah Darrow, and Sr. Olga of the Eucharist will say some things I'll never forget. The witness each one of them has to offer is powerful and uplifting. I'm sure the Eucharistic procession will be spellbinding, and that Mass with Cardinal Seán will be lively even though it is Lent. But for me, the day will be more than worth the effort simply because of the hundreds and hundreds of women who gather there for it.

The Holy Spirit never declines an invitation. That is why you and I shouldn't either. God is everywhere. But I know that on February 27th His Spirit will be at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross to reassure the women of Boston that we can do all things, if we only do all things through Christ.

For information and tickets go to www.catholicboston.com.

Women's Conference Speaker to Reflect on Being Mentored by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcultta

TheBostonPilot.com

Christopher Harding, Special to the Pilot

For Pilot, January 29, 2010

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle will speak at the 2010 Boston Catholic Women's Conference on February 27, 2010.

"What struck me the most about Mother Teresa when I saw her for the first time was her diminutive size," recalls nationally known speaker and author Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle. "There stood the world renowned peacemaker, lover of the world's poor and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient — a giant — but in the body of someone not much taller than my young daughter!"

O'Boyle will describe her decade-long relationship with the most admired woman of the 20th century at the upcoming 5th annual Boston Catholic Women's Conference (BCWC), scheduled for Saturday, February 27 at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston.

O'Boyle's presentation will draw from her latest book, "Mother Teresa and Me: Ten Years of Friendship." The humble nun always encouraged O'Boyle to keep writing, speaking and taping TV spots about mothers, women, and families. She wrote the foreword to O'Boyle's book "Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-To-Be" as well as back-cover endorsements for her other works.

While Mother Teresa was alive the two women communicated through the telephone, letters and personal meetings, but even after her mentor's passing, O'Boyle senses that they're still connected. "I do feel that Mother Teresa is watching over me and my family and that we are in communication with each other. Our Church tells us that we should invoke the saints for intercession, and I certainly invoke Mother Teresa many times a day."

Among the "lessons of love," Mother Teresa taught O'Boyle was that "we should view each person put in our lives, whether in our own families or those we meet as 'Jesus in the distressing disguise of the poorest of the poor." Each person that we minister to in any way becomes our focus. Mother Teresa didn't seek to reach the masses of people, even though her love made it all around the globe. She loved one person at a time, whoever was within her reach."

Just as her blessed friend inspired her to found a lay branch of the Missionaries of Charity, O'Boyle hopes to inspire and empower other women by her appearances at events like the Catholic Women's Conference.

"Women benefit immensely from taking the time to pause from their overly packed busy lives to rest a while and nourish their hearts and souls at events such as the Boston Catholic Women's Conference. There they can get that pat on the back and the shot in the arm they absolutely need to strengthen them for the journey ahead. Women can be an amazing and transforming light to this darkened world when they offer their lives to God and ask to be His instrument."

Jennifer Schiller, co-founder and organizer of the BCWC, thinks attendees will be moved by O'Boyle witness, in sharing "personal stories which will encourage us to turn to God for strength in every situation."

Rafaela Sanchez of Blessed Mother Teresa Parish in Dorchester is among those looking forward to O'Boyle's talk: "My friends and I are very curious to hear the details of Donna-Marie's friendship with the patroness of our parish. We're always seeking ways to grow in our faith. What better way than worshiping with thousands of other women, through Adoration, Reconciliation and especially the Mass that Cardinal O'Malley celebrates!"

Along with O'Boyle, the 2010 BCWC will feature three other extraordinary women of faith as keynoters.

Leah Darrow, a self-proclaimed "prodigal daughter" will share lessons from her journey from contestant on "America's Next Top Model" to a tireless advocate of chastity, modesty and pro-life issues with "Pure Fashion." Patti Mansfield, one of the foremost figures in the American Catholic Charismatic movement, returns to the BCWC podium. Back too is Iraqi-born Sister Olga of the Eucharist, whose work as a chaplain at Boston University endows her with practical insights into the faith struggles of young people.

Only 1,750 tickets are being sold for the Women's Conference on February 27, and the same number for the Boston Catholic Men's Conference on April 17, 2010. To purchase tickets for either Conference and for more information, visit www.CatholicBoston.com or call 617-444-9950.

Men's, Women's Conferences will have separate dates, new venue

TheBostonPilot.com

Pilot Staff
January 8, 2010

Attendees listen to a speaker at the first Boston Catholic Women's Conference held at Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.
George Martell photo

Over the last six years, more than 20,000 attendees have taken part in the Boston Catholic Men's and Women's Conferences, which feature nationally recognized Catholic speakers and breakout sessions as well as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, adoration and Mass.

"We've set up these conferences to be great one-day retreats in our annual faith life," said conference organizer Jennifer Schiller. "In 2010, we are making many exciting changes."

For the first time, the Men's and Women's Conferences will be held several weeks apart rather than on the same weekend. This year, the Women's Conference will be on Saturday Feb. 27 while the Men's Conference will be held on Saturday April 17.

The separate dates are made possible by the conferences' new venue: the Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

"The cathedral is the mother church of the Archdiocese of Boston and the surrounding dioceses. It is one of the largest and most beautiful churches in the United States," said organizer Scot Landry.

"Both Cardinal Seán O'Malley and Father Kevin O'Leary, the rector of the Cathedral, are proud of the recent renovations made to the cathedral and thrilled that conference attendees will be able to gather and pray there," he added.

According to Landry, the cathedral also will have significantly lower setup costs than recent venues such as the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and Boston College's Conte Forum, which required significant audio and video equipment rental and installation.

"We are grateful to Boston College for all they've done to host the Conferences the past few years. They were tremendous to us. But given the economy, we wanted to lower the conference costs so that we can lower our ticket prices for the attendees," he said.

All tickets to the Men's and Women's Conferences will now be $20 ($30 if an attendee purchases lunch). Organizers expect that the 1,750 tickets for each Conference will sell out.

Speakers at the Feb. 27 Women's Conference are scheduled to include:

- Patti Mansfield, an international Catholic speaker and author who spoke at the 2007 conference,
- Leah Darrow, a professional model who turned away from the traditional modeling world and partnered with the "Pure Fashion" ministry to teach young women about authentic Catholic fashion and the importance of developing a strong relationship with God,
- Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle, a Catholic author and speaker who was transformed by a decade-long friendship with Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta and formed a branch of the lay Missionaries of Charity, and
- Sister Olga of the Eucharist, a religious sister from Iraq, who ministers on the campus of Boston University.

The theme of the 2010 Women's Conference is "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." "Women of all ages and faith backgrounds are encouraged to attend," said Schiller. "There will be wonderful opportunities to be renewed in faith through the speakers, program, reconciliation and Mass."

The Men's Conference will occur two weeks after Easter on Saturday April 17 and feature the team from EWTN's "Crossing the Goal" men's program. The team's members are:

- Danny Abramowicz, a former professional football player, and author of "Spiritual Workout of a Former Saint,"

- Curtis Martin, founder of FOCUS campus ministries, author of “Made for More” and a popular speaker at the 2008 conference,

- Peter Herbeck, board member of the National Fellowship of Catholic Men and the author of “When the Spirit Comes in Power,” and

- Brian Patrick, host of a national Catholic morning radio show.

Conference promotion activities are beginning on Jan. 9 with an annual gathering of parish captains and volunteers at the archdiocese’s Pastoral Center in Braintree.

According to Landry, “these volunteers are the backbone of our conference outreach at all of the parishes. They serve as personal inviters to their fellow parishioners, friends and family members. Most attendees come because of their invitation.” Organizers would welcome additional parish captains this year.

For tickets and more information for the 2010 Boston Catholic Men’s and Women’s conferences, visit www.CatholicBoston.com, call 617-444-9950 or email info@CatholicBoston.com.

lowellsun.com
Lowell Massachusetts

Schedule change, move to cathedral aimed at making it easier to attend Boston Catholic Women's Conference

By Debbie Hovanasian, Sun Correspondent
Updated: 02/06/2010 10:07:23 AM EST
http://www.lowellsun.com/religion/ci_14348001

BILLERICA -- The Boston Catholic Women's Conference, the annual gathering of Catholic women now in its fifth year, is on the move -- both in time and place.

The venue will change from an expansive convention center to an environment that is a bit more spiritual -- the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston's South End, the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

For the first time, the women's conference will also take place on a different weekend than the Boston Catholic Men's Conference, which was founded in 2005 by Lowell native Scot Landry.

The women's conference -- whose theme is "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me" -- is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 27, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with a snow date of March 6. The men's conference is scheduled for Saturday, April 17, from 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., also at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

The move to the cathedral, which has recently undergone renovations, will mean fewer available seats than at its former venues -- Boston College Conte Forum and the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. For February's event, 1,735 tickets will be sold. In 2006, 3,300 women attended the inaugural women's conference. Last year, 2,800 women attended.

Organizers say that lower set-up costs at the cathedral mean lower ticket prices. All tickets this year are $20 per person, or $30 with lunch.

Another bonus is that the women's conference can now be held on Saturday, instead of Sunday or Friday night, as in previous years when the men's and women's conferences were booked back to back.

That's a big plus, according to St. Andrew Parish's Fran Gulia, parish co-captain of the women's conference. She's the mother of five children 10 years old and under. Arranging child care will now be easier for her and her husband, Riccardo, who attends the men's conference.

"Having it the same weekend as the men's conference made it difficult for married couples, especially those who have to work out child care for the entire weekend," said Gulia. "Also, many of the women teach religious education on Sundays, so they had to make the choice between teaching their class or going to the conference."

Gulia considers the historic cathedral, dedicated in 1875 by Archbishop John J. Williams, Boston's first archbishop, another draw. Among its beautiful interior, stained glass and expansive altar is a Hook and Hastings pipe organ widely considered one of the finest of its type in the country.

"Many of the women in our group have never been to the cathedral, so this is a great chance to see it," Gulia said.

Gulia's co-captain, Dawn King, is among those who will be visiting the cathedral for the first time.

"I'm really excited to go there," King said. "I think it will really add to the conference spiritually, versus a convention hall. It will have a different feel to it this time."

King and Gulia are looking forward to the exhibitions, time for reflection, a Mass celebrated by Cardinal Sean O'Malley, confession, adoration and especially the inspirational speakers, whom Gulia describes as having "such enthusiasm and a love for God."

Speakers this year include Patti Mansfield, who also spoke at the 2007 conference; Leah Darrow, a professional model who partnered with "Pure Fashion" ministry to teach young women about authentic Catholic fashion; Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle, an author and speaker who was transformed by a decade-long friendship with Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta; and Sister Olga of the Eucharist, a sister from Iraq, who ministers on the campus of Boston University.

"They (the organizers) have tried to make sure that there is a draw for all age groups by including speakers of all different generations," said Gulia, who calls Darrow a "good role model" for the younger generation.

She hopes that "more women would come with us. It's such a great day, with a good variety of activities. If you want prayerful, you have that. If you want speakers or exhibitors, you have that. If you want adoration, you have that, too. You can go from a quiet place to pray to lots of noise and activity."

King lauds the fellowship with women and sees it as a "day you commit to yourself, allowing you to share faith with other women who are the same. I always go in with an open mind and no expectations, and every time I go, I learn something new."

For more information, visit www.catholicboston.com.

Send comments or faith story ideas to Debbie Hovanasian at sunfaith@comcast.net.