

Deepening one's Faith at the 2009 Catholic Men's and Women's Conferences

By Pilot Staff

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BRAINTREE -- Now in its 5th year, the Boston Catholic Men's and Women's Conferences are expected to inspire Catholics to deepen their faith.

"If you have attended one of the previous conferences, you have experienced the power of gathering with thousands of other Catholics who choose to come to deepen their faith," said Scot Landry, one of the conferences' principal organizers.

This year's conferences, on April 18 and 19 at Boston College's Conte Forum, promise great strength in numbers as well as great speakers, according to Landry.

"The lineup of speakers is the best ever," he said. "The conferences have been blessed with great speakers in the past, yet so many attendees remark that this year's roster has topped them all."

The April 18 Men's Conference speakers will include Jim Caviezel, the actor who performed the role of Jesus of Nazareth in "The Passion of the Christ."

"Caviezel's address at the 2005 Men's Conference was one of the most powerful talks I've ever heard," commented Bob Allard, a parishioner at St. Michael's in Andover who attended the first Mens' Conference in 2005 and is also expected to attend this year's gathering.

"Caviezel shared powerful stories about what he learned about Christ and also how much he and the other actors suffered during the filming," Allard said.

"More powerful than the stories is Jim's ability to tell them in a way that you'll never forget. Everyone that attended that first conference is bringing a bunch of guys with them this year," he added.

Other Men's Conference speakers include: Jerry York, the NCAA's second all-time winningest hockey coach, who will share "7 Lessons from Sports for Catholic Men of Faith;" Jim Stenson, a worldwide expert and author on Catholic leadership and parenting, who will speak on "Successful Fathers in the Eyes of God;" and Curtis Martin, founder of the successful FOCUS Campus Ministry programs, who will inspire men with an address entitled "A Time for Action in a World of Trouble."

The theme for the Men's Conference on April 18 is "In the Footsteps of Christ."

The April 19 Women's Conference will be headlined by Caviezel and his wife Kerri, who will discuss together the need to stand up for our Catholic faith in hostile environments. Other speakers will be Johnnette Benkovic, an EWTN host and organizer of many events for Catholic women, who will speak on "God's Mercy is for All;" Sister Nancy Keller, a worldwide teacher of the faith and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, who will encourage women to "Put Your Life in His Hands: Surrender Leads to Hope;" and Dr. Mary Healy, a Scripture Scholar, who will share lessons from Scripture on "Becoming Women of Peace."

The theme for the Women's Conference on April 19 is "Trust in the Lord with All Your Heart."

In addition to the keynote speakers, each conference will feature four mid-day breakout sessions, confessions, adoration, and opportunities to visit in the exhibit hall with about 100 Catholic organizations and ministries.

Mary Jo Kriz, coordinator of the Confession room, said "seeing Catholic men and women reconciled to God is one of the best aspects of the conferences. Many Catholics return to this great sacrament of mercy during the conferences and it's great that this year's conferences fall on the feast of Divine Mercy. We are blessed to have more than 100 priests that come to make this sacrament available."

Anyone seeking to explore or deepen his or her faith is invited to attend. Tickets and detailed information can be found by visiting www.CatholicBoston.com or by calling 617-977-0916.



Jim Caviezel speaks at the 2005 Boston Catholic Men's Conference. Caviezel is scheduled to return to speak at the 2009 Men's and Women's Conferences.

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