



PRWeb: Religion





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New Children's Book About One of Jesus' Miracles

New book about the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000 as heard by a children's bible study class.

(Vocus) July 4, 2009 -- The stories of [Jesus' miracles](#) come alive in the class room of Miss Patricia Diane's bible study class. Miss Patricia Diane chooses a story for her bible study class every time they meet, and she reads that story to the children. The story she chooses for that day, in the book, is the miracle of when Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish.

The children of that class watched with their imagination as the story unfurled before their eyes. They saw the miracle when Jesus kept breaking the bread and the fish until everyone had food. There was even some extra food left! One of the children was inspired to give his food to Jesus.

Melanie C. Christmas was inspired to write this story because of her young daughter. Her daughter loved to hear the miracles of Jesus, so every day Melanie would tell her a new story. This gave Melanie a great idea for a children's book series. She began writing "A Picnic with Jesus" as the first book in her series called "Miss Patricia Diane's Bible Study Class."

"My life has been filled with many obstacles to overcome. However, I always thought of them as challenges and that if God brought me to it he would bring me through it. "- Melanie C. Christmas

For more information visit www.apicnicwithjesus.com or contact Melanie Christmas at melaniechristmas@yahoo.com

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Is The Current U.S. Crisis A Sin? Bill Moyers To Mix Biz With Theology On July 3 Program

Bill Moyers will moderate this panel and look at the issues - economic, political and cultural - facing the U.S., but through a lens of progressive Christianity, with what are considered more "traditional" themes that frame the collapse of the market as sinful and outlining economic policies that take into account our moral obligations to each other. This panel was part of a very successful iTunes accessible class presented by the Union Theological Seminary. Union Theological Seminary's President Serene Jones, Gary Dorrien and Cornel West share insights on American politics, policy and the economic crisis.

New York (Vocus) July 3, 2009 -- On Friday, July 3, 2009, [PBS's Bill Moyers](#) Journal will feature Union Theological Seminary President Serene Jones, Professor Gary Dorrien of Union Theological Seminary and Professor Cornel West of Princeton University. The program will take a close look at what our nation's religious traditions and values say about the challenges of balancing capitalism and democracy in America.

Jones, Dorrien and West, whom Moyers characterizes as "leading public thinkers," will share insights from the unique course they taught this past spring at Union. "Christianity and the U.S. Crisis," which featured several guest speakers, including Benjamin Barber, Farah Griffin, Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Wynton Marsalis, focused on the edges and contours of the current U.S. crisis and attempted to chart Christian responses to it. Throughout the course, professors presented strong positive critiques of the Obama administration's current bailout and restructuring plan, and called for real alternatives to the crumbling "religion of the market."

"This is a society that has stoked and celebrated greed virtually to the point of self-destruction," says Dorrien. "We can't just go on saying, 'Well, if we can just patch this thing up and get back to where we were,' that things will be all right. And none of us believe that, so we also have to talk about what was wrong with the system to begin with, that had outcomes that you can't really justify morally."

The course was also unique in its use of new media: all lectures were available on iTunes University, reaching hundreds of virtual students. Elements of the course were released as video on YouTube and disseminated via social networking sites.

Dr. Gary Dorrien is the Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary and Professor of Religion at Columbia University. He is also is also a Union alumnus and an Episcopal priest. Rev. Dr. Serene Jones is the sixteenth president of Union Theological Seminary, and the Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology. Dr. Cornel West, who has taught at Union, Harvard, and Yale, is currently the Class of 1943 Professor at Princeton University.

Union Theological Seminary, founded in 1836, is an independent, ecumenical graduate school of theology with the mission to educate men and women for ministries in the Christian faith, service in contemporary society, and study of the great issues of our time. The Seminary believes that New York City remains a critical training ground for facing such issues.



Bill Moyers returned to public television with the weekly public affairs series Bill Moyers Journal in 2007. Each week the series provides the high quality public service journalism for which Moyers and his colleagues have been identified for almost four decades. The weekly one-hour broadcast features produced analysis of vital issues, strong interviews with unique voices on politics, the arts and letters, science, religion, and the media, as well as debates on public issues and documentary specials.

For a preview clip see: <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07032009/>

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Online Counseling 4 the Instnt Msg Generation

Nationally known marital/premarital counselor Dr. Kim Kimberling is among the pioneers of state-of-the-art online marital counseling. This type of counseling is a very effective option for couples who are separated by distance (i.e. military couples) or for those who simply prefer the convenience. Online counseling is a growing trend and is proving very effective, since couples tend to be more honest in online sessions than they are when face to face with a counselor. Dr. Kimberling's programs are used in churches around the world, and couples who take his course and marry have only a 5 percent divorce rate.

Oklahoma City, OK (PRWEB) July 3, 2009 -- Couples who are separated by jobs, military service, or other life situations now have a state-of-the-art counseling option that can address their specific marital or premarital concerns.

Online counseling is a growing trend, with webcasting technology being used to connect couples and their counselor live. Kim Kimberling, Ph.D., author of two books on marriage and a professional counselor for more than 20 years, is one of the pioneers of this new trend. His programs, "Preparing for the Marriage of a Lifetime" and "Living the Marriage of a Lifetime," are used by churches worldwide and now offered via the Internet as well.

"Preparation for marriage and working to ensure your relationship stays strong takes work, and obviously it is harder for couples who are separated geographically for any length of time to participate in programs aimed at building and maintaining strong marriages," Kimberling said. "Online counseling gives them a positive step they can take right away to preserve their relationship. Another important element is that couples in these online sessions are often more open and honest in discussing sensitive subjects than they are in face-to-face counseling."

A distance of more than 1,650 miles didn't stop engaged couple David Nash and Tiffany Girard from participating in a marriage preparation class together thanks to Kimberling and the Internet. Although he was living in Texas and she in Connecticut, they were able participate in Kimberling's online course and now are happily married.

"I was racking my brain to figure out how we were going to do a premarital class," Nash said.

"It just blows my mind how well all the pieces fell into place for us. Being able to participate online was wonderful. In fact, it was better in some ways," said Girard. "This (online) format sort of forces people to be completely honest, which is great for gaining a deeper understanding of each other."

The 11 topics covered in Kimberling's online marriage classes are the same as those discussed in the ones he offers in person, covering communication skills, compatibility, conflict resolution, financial management, sexuality and spirituality.

Participants watch the sessions online when most convenient for them. Then they have an opportunity to visit with Kimberling in personal online sessions. Kimberling said he was pleasantly surprised at how frank couples



are in these online sessions, openly discussing relationship issues.

During the sessions Kimberling shares important tools for couples as they prepare for marriage or seek to improve their existing marital relationship. He also shares personal perspectives and examples from his own 35-year marriage.

"This online course allows us to reach so many couples we might never get a chance to help otherwise," Kimberling said. "Couples can take the class wherever they live. We also have many couples taking the course who aren't separated geographically but like the convenience of doing the sessions online."

For more information about Kimberling's programs and books, or to register for an online class, visit www.prepformarriage.com.

Editor: Numerous examples of Dr. Kimberling's television and print interviews can be seen at www.prepformarriage.com. We also have couples available to interview who have taken the online counseling course. The following links provide some examples of Kim's interview style: Keeping Your Marriage Strong, 4 Financial Tips During a Struggling Economy, Questions for Every Couple Before Marriage.

For more information,
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Performer Honors Late Pope during Year for Priests

Jeremy Stanbary Stars in One-Man Drama about Pope John Paul II

Minneapolis, Minn. (Vocus) July 2, 2009 -- Pope Benedict XVI opened the [Year for Priests](#) in St. Peter's Square on Friday, June 19. He called for the special year to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, who was famed for his priestly ministry. The year hopes to celebrate the life, mission and vocation of priests, the Church's spiritual fathers.

Jeremy Stanbary has found a unique way to celebrate the Year for Priests. Stanbary, founder and executive director of the Minneapolis-based [Epiphany Studio Productions](#), is performing his one-man play called "Lolek." The drama is a stirring portrayal of Karol Wojtyla, the man who later became Pope John Paul II. Known as "Lolek" to his closest friends, Wojtyla was ordained to the priesthood on November 1, 1946 and elected Pope on October 16, 1978.

Stanbary says "Lolek" is one of the most popular plays in his repertoire. "'Lolek' looks at the young adulthood of Pope John Paul II, his discernment and calling to the priesthood," said Stanbary. "The play recounts his heroic vocational journey amidst great adversity and ends with a moving depiction of his ordination."

Set in occupied Poland, "Lolek" is a riveting drama that provides insight into the experiences and influences that formed one of the most intriguing and beloved figures of all time.

Like the late pope an actor and playwright himself, Stanbary has combined his love of acting with his passion for working with youth and his love of the Catholic Faith. He hopes his performances will entertain, educate and inspire audiences. Stanbary has performed at World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany and Sydney, Australia.

Stanbary will be performing "Lolek" in Chicago from October 1-5. In November, "Lolek" is being performed at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin for the Diocese of La Crosse Youth Conference. For more information about these and other performances by Stanbary, please visit www.EpiphanyStudio.com.

To schedule an interview with Stanbary, please contact Christine Schicker with The Maximus Group at 404-610-8871.

If your church or organization would like to book Stanbary for a performance of "Lolek," please contact Tina Remmert with The Maximus Group at 386-763-9127.

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Empire Kosher Poultry Expands Antibiotic Free and Organic Poultry Lines

Empire Kosher Poultry Expands Antibiotic Free and Organic Poultry Lines - Producer to Offer Traditional Kosher, Kosher ABF and Kosher Organic Poultry

Mifflintown, PA (PRWEB) July 3, 2009 -- Empire Kosher Poultry today announced the expansion of its line of Kosher chicken and turkey products to include Organic and Antibiotic Free ("ABF") poultry, along with its regular offerings.

Empire's production facility in Mifflintown, PA received USDA Organic certification last year and has been testing both ABF and Organic feeds and growing protocols for the past 18 months. With the completion of its extensive testing and test marketing, Empire is now rolling out these lines nationally.

Empire Kosher's CEO Greg Rosenbaum stated, "As the nation's largest producer of Kosher poultry, Empire wants to offer its customers greater choice. As we've seen demand for ABF and Organic products grow in the non-Kosher world, we decided to enter these markets with Kosher products. In this way, we provide a one-stop shop for supermarkets and Kosher butchers who need to provide their consumers with the wide range of poultry choices available today. As with all our products, these new products are being produced with consistently high standards of Kashrus, food safety, animal welfare, worker safety and great taste."

Empire's ABF products will be, in the parlance of the trade, "never, ever", meaning the birds will be fed all vegetarian diets and will never be injected with antibiotics or hormones. Empire's Organic chicken will be fed only certified, Organically grown vegetarian diets. All of Empire's poultry products are raised on family owned farms within 75 miles of the Empire plant and are free roaming, allowing the birds to grow naturally.

Being the nation's only fully integrated producer of Kosher chicken and turkey, Empire has the ability and flexibility to produce regular Kosher, Kosher ABF and Kosher Organic. Empire has its own breeder hens, hatches its own chicken eggs, grows turkeys from day-old poults and owns its own feed mill, thereby allowing it to vary feeds and growing conditions to meet the rigorous standards of regular Kosher and Kosher ABF designations. At the present time, Empire supplements its feeds with specially contracted Organic formulations to meet the standards of the Kosher Organic designation.

Empire has dedicated two growing houses, with a capacity of almost 60,000 chickens per week, to its ABF product line and another growing house, with a capacity of almost 30,000 chickens per week, to its Organic line. This volume accounts for between one third and one half of Empire's current weekly production.

Empire is also dedicating two-thirds of its non-holiday turkey production to ABF turkeys, or approximately 20,000 per week. For major Jewish holidays and Thanksgiving, Empire will significantly ramp up its ABF turkey production to respond to customer needs.

Kosher consumers in some areas of the country will find Empire Organic poultry on their grocers' shelves now, while the roll out of ABF product will start now and be complete by Rosh Hashanah. Consumers can let their grocers and butchers know if they want regular Kosher, Kosher Organic or Kosher ABF products.



About Empire Kosher Poultry, Inc.

Empire Kosher Poultry, Inc. is the largest Kosher poultry producer in the United States. With facilities in central Pennsylvania, Empire produces Kosher chickens and Kosher turkeys for the North American market through a fully integrated process, including breeder farms, egg hatcheries, feed mill, grow out houses and processing facilities. Through this fully vertically integrated approach Empire continues to deliver the highest quality poultry products available anywhere. Empire products have won numerous national and international poultry taste-test competitions, and are available in supermarkets, warehouse clubs and butcher shops. For more information visit www.empirekosher.com.

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A New Jersey Charity Seeks Serious Inquiries for Historic 35mm Film Print of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" Music Video

Eva's Village, (<http://www.EvasVillage.org>), the Paterson, New Jersey Anti-Poverty Charity, Seeks Buyers for 35mm Michael Jackson Film Print of "Thriller" Music Video.

Paterson, NJ (PRWEB) July 3, 2009 -- Eva's Village (<http://www.EvasVillage.org>), a non-profit New Jersey anti-poverty charity, seeks serious inquiries only for historic 35mm film print of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" music video.

For information about this item, call: (973) 906-2283.

For more information about Eva's Village, visit: www.evasvillage.org.

In 1985, Eva's Village, a highly respected anti-poverty charity located in Paterson, New Jersey, received a generous donation from Walter Yetnikoff, former president of CBS Records and author of "Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess". Mr. Yetnikoff's donation was a movie release quality 35mm film print of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" music video that had been personally presented to him by Michael Jackson.

The 1982 album "Thriller" sold a record-breaking estimated 50 million records worldwide and the now legendary video that accompanied the "Thriller" album became a music industry landmark. It is likely that Mr. Jackson was most appreciate, since at the time, Walter Yetnikoff, then president of CBS Records was widely reported as saying to MTV and other music video outlets, "We believe in this guy and you're going to play his videos or we're going to pull all our videos".

When Eva's Village received Walter Yetnikoff's donation, interest from auction houses in Michael Jackson memorabilia was low, as Mr. Jackson was just starting to become the focus of what was to be many years of negative media attention. Despite a growing need for funding in their many anti-poverty programs serving the urban poor of New Jersey, Eva's Village opted to hold the "Thriller" film rather than part with it at that time.

Since the death of Michael Jackson on June 25, interest in Michael Jackson memorabilia has soared, and Eva's Village feels that it is time to put Mr. Yetnikoff's gift to it's intended use. Sister Gloria Perez, Executive Director of Eva's Village, says, "If this amazing piece of Michael Jackson memorabilia is able to serve the poor while also making a Michael Jackson fan happy with their purchase, I think Mr. Jackson's legacy is very well-served."

Eva's Village, located in the heart of Paterson, at 393 Main Street, has been a source of food, shelter, recovery services and healthcare for the homeless in Paterson New Jersey for more than 25 years.

Recently, the unemployment rate in America was reported to be 8.9% for most, but 15.4% when counting the higher numbers for the chronically poor. At Eva's Kitchen, the daily hot lunch for the New Jersey homeless and working poor has increased from 260 servings per day to more than 400, far more than planned for in 2009. Eva's



Kitchen provides more than 1,000 meals daily among all Eva's Village programs, including [Eva's Kitchen](#), Eva's shelters, recovery centers and Hope Residence of St. Frances for Mothers and Children.

As the need grows, model [anti-poverty charities](#) like faith-based Eva's Village don't shy away from the challenge. They simply do more, so they need to ask for more help from their donors. The aggressive anti-poverty mission of Eva's Village is to [feed the hungry](#), [shelter the homeless](#), [treat the addicted](#) and provides [free medical and dental care to the poor](#), with respect for the human dignity of each individual. Yet, in today's difficult economy, who hasn't thought to themselves, "I'm lucky if I can spare \$20 let alone make a big donation to a charity". That's why Eva's Village is offering new ways for small donors to help the poor, including a new walk/run called Journey of Hope scheduled for September 26, 2009. Donna Fico, Chief Marketing Officer at Eva's Village says, "We have many active volunteers who would like to do even more, so it's up to us to give them a way to help."

Consider what \$20 can do at Eva's Village:

- \$20.00 will provide a hot lunch for FOUR hungry people
- \$20.00 will provide a winter hat and gloves for TWO very cold homeless people
- \$40.00 will provide fruit and vegetables for TWENTY families living in the Hope Residence of St. Frances at Eva's Village
- \$40.00 will provide a week's worth of diapers for TEN infants living in the Hope Residence
- \$60.00 will provide a cup of coffee for more than TWO THOUSAND homeless men and women
- \$100.00 will provide 3 days of complete meals for TWENTY homeless women

Sister Gloria Perez says, "We have all been witness to the power of a random act of kindness, how something small can make a big impact. Every single day, Eva's Village is fueled by the kindness and generosity of others. By supporting our anti-poverty programs at Eva's Village, you can personally improve the lives of people in your own community by giving them the resources they need to achieve self-sufficiency."

To bid on this item, visit: http://donations.ebay.com/charity/charity.jsp?NP_ID=32696.

For information about this 35mm film print of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" music video, call: (973) 906-2283.

For more information about Eva's Village, or to donate, visit: www.evasvillage.org.

Eva's Village feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, treats the addicted and provides free medical and dental care to the poor, with respect for the human dignity of each individual. Founded in 1982, Eva's Village is a 501(c) (3) non-profit and one of the largest, most comprehensive and respected anti-poverty programs in the state of New Jersey and has helped hundreds of men, women and families find new purpose in life.

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News Image



Coalition Supports Quinn's Veto Pledge

No vacation for lawmakers until they pass 12-month budget that is morally and fiscally responsible, group says.

Springfield, IL (Vocus) July 1, 2009 -- A coalition of 50 organizations representing millions of Illinoisans applauded Governor Quinn today for demanding that lawmakers fulfill their shared responsibility to craft a 12-month budget that fully funds vital community-based programs throughout the state.

The coalition warns that a Democratic "Doomsday Lite" proposal to cut funding by 30% for programs ranging from domestic violence and child abuse prevention to care for seniors and people with disabilities would be devastating. A proposal floated by Republicans to pass a temporary budget based on FY '08 spending would not only lead to harmful cuts in services, but would do nothing to alleviate the anxieties of caregivers or the families they serve.

The coalition is urging all 177 lawmakers and Governor Quinn to remain in Springfield for as long as it takes to reach a bipartisan agreement on a full, 12-month budget that cuts non-essential services and revenue to close the budget gap.

"The families of the people we serve aren't making vacation plans, they're canceling them, and trying to figure out what they're going to do about child care, about health care, and who is going to have to quit their job to take care of an aging parent or disabled family member that the state is poised to dump out on the street," said the Reverend Dr. Denver Bitner, head of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). "Lawmakers shouldn't be making any vacation plans either, until they pass a budget that is not only fiscally balanced, but also morally balanced."

The coalition says they have seen signs of progress. Under mounting pressure in recent weeks, Democrats and Republicans have publicly acknowledged that the state has a moral responsibility to fully fund community-based programs, and they have recognized that the proposed cuts are creating anxiety for families that are directly impacted. Privately, rank-and-file lawmakers from both parties have admitted that a tax increase will be needed as part of the budget solution.

But coalition members say that Democratic leaders are pushing a "Doomsday Lite" budget that would still have devastating consequences, including:

- 15,600 seniors will lose community care programs that enable them to remain in their homes and out of nursing homes, and another 35,000 seniors will see those services reduced;
- 88,585 children will lose day care services, threatening their parents' ability to work;
- 12,900 women will lose life-saving breast cancer screenings, and 45,000 men will lose prostate cancer screening and prevention services;
- 12,000 teens and adults will lose treatment for drug and alcohol addiction;
- 60,000 pre-school children will lose their early childhood education;

- 11,000 cases of elder abuse will go uninvestigated;
- Half of the state's child abuse investigators will be eliminated, raising caseloads to 20 to 1;
- Nearly 14,000 rape and child sex abuse victims will be denied crisis services;

The coalition also says a plan floated by Republican leaders to delay passage of a 12-month budget for 30 to 60 days would only prolong anxieties for families impacted by the cuts and for the 100,000 caregivers across the state that stand to lose their jobs. The coalition predicts that without an agreement in place between lawmakers from both parties and the governor on both cuts and new revenue, lawmakers aren't likely to meet a new deadline, and would only insist on another extension. The coalition also points out that even the possibility of cuts has forced many local service providers to lay-off employees and close programs already. Those cutbacks would still continue even with a temporary spending plan, and the uncertainty would create greater instability in the state's infrastructure of community-based service providers.

"Governor Edgar warned that it would be irresponsible of our state to implement a temporary budget, and he's absolutely right," said Nancy Ronquillo, head of Children's Home + Aid, one of the state's largest and oldest providers of care for abused and neglected children. "We've been forced to issue notices of potential lay-offs to over 700 employees throughout Illinois. We have nearly 800 abused and neglected children that we have to worry about and workers who deserve 30 days notice before they are laid off. No agency can go through that every month without creating total chaos."

"These cuts aren't just morally irresponsible, they are fiscally irresponsible, because every dollar we cut from preventative programs ends up costing taxpayers \$6 to \$8 down the road," warns budget expert Ralph Martire, head of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability. "When we turn our back on abused children, people with mental illness, our seniors and disabled, they don't just magically disappear. They turn up again in our special education classes, prisons, emergency rooms and nursing homes, but at much greater cost to the taxpayer."

The coalition says they will continue to press lawmakers from both parties to live up to their shared responsibility to invest in vital programs that promote the common good. More public protests are being planned following a rally two weeks ago that drew 5,000 protesters to the State Capitol and candlelight vigils held this week across Illinois. Opponents of the cuts are also being urged to visit www.IllinoisCommonGood.org to e-mail lawmakers as well as call toll-free at 888-616-3322 to speak to their lawmakers in support of a responsible budget.

Coalition members include:

Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc.
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
A Safe Haven
Campaign for Better Health Care
Casa Central
Center for Economic Progress
Center for Tax and Budget Accountability
Chestnut Health Systems
Chicago Child Care Society



Chicago Christian Industrial League
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network
Children's Home + Aid
Chicago Jobs Council
ChildServ
Corazón Community Services
Deborah's Place
Don Moss & Associates
Emergency Fund
Gads Hill Center
Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights
Housing Action Illinois
Illinois Action for Children
Illinois Center for Violence Prevention
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition
Inner Voice
Jane Addams Hull House Association
Kids Hope United
Lutheran Advocacy--Illinois
Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
Mid Central Community Action, Inc.
Neumann Association
New Foundation Center
Project Oz
Protestants for the Common Good
Rosecrance Health Network
Safer Foundation.
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
SEIU Healthcare Illinois
Southeastern Illinois Counseling Centers, Inc
Spannaus Consulting
Supportive Housing Providers Association
The Baby Fold
United Cerebral Palsy of Illinois
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

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You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Michael Youssef Says President Obama Denies the Truth of American Christian History

International Christian leader expresses concern regarding young president's understanding of American history

Atlanta, GA (PRWEB) July 2, 2009 -- Speaking at The Church of The Apostles in Atlanta, Michael Youssef delivered a powerful message on America's Christian foundation and why it is critical to a free society. This timely and relevant sermon points out America's Christian history and the basis for America's values and ideals.

Watch it here: http://www.leadingtheway.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sto_default.

About Michael Youssef:

Dr. Youssef is the Founder and President of Leading the Way with Dr. Michael Youssef, a worldwide ministry that leads the way for people living in spiritual darkness to discover the light of Christ through the creative use of media and on-the-ground ministry teams (www.leadingtheway.org). His weekly television programs and daily radio programs are broadcast in 20 languages and seen in more than 200 countries - airing 3,300 times per week. He is also the founding pastor of The Church of The Apostles in Atlanta, Ga.

Dr. Youssef was born in Egypt and lived in Lebanon and Australia before coming to the United States. In 1984, he fulfilled a childhood dream of becoming an American citizen. He holds degrees from Moore College in Sydney, Australia, and from Fuller Theological Seminary in California. In 1984, he earned a Ph.D. in social anthropology from Emory University. He has authored more than 20 books, including the most recent - You Want Me To Do What? He and his wife reside in Atlanta and have four grown children.

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Leading The Way with Dr. Michael Youssef

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You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Gododdin Publishing Releases Michael de Angelo's "Viking, Killing the Young"

Gododdin Publishing announces the release of Michael de Angelo's second novel, "Viking, Killing the Young." - An allegory of violence and redemption for modern times set in Viking Norway.

San Francisco, California (PRWEB) July 1, 2009 -- Gododdin Publishing announced today the release of Michael de Angelo's second novel, "Viking, Killing the Young." An allegory for modern times set in tenth-century Viking Norway, "Viking" tells the story of a young warrior who must conquer violence within himself, even as he fights to save his family, in order to discover a new and better world.

This is the saga of Gundar, a young man returning home after years of sea raids, hoping to live in peace with his young family. When his home is invaded by an unknown enemy, he sets out on a harrowing and nightmarish quest for vengeance, a journey at once moving and profound.

Reached for comment in Rome, author Michael de Angelo said, "We live with violence. It is everywhere, within and without, in ourselves and others. This is the story of one man's battle to not let it possess his soul."

While a riveting and fast-moving adventure story, "Viking" is also one man's journey of discovery. Not a work of myth or fantasy, the novel seeks to faithfully recreate the worldview of a tenth-century character struggling to save his family in a world ruled by the sword. The main character, seeking desperately to save his daughter, races and battles his way through Kongerikit Norge (early Norway), encountering one remote village that has suffered the cruel ravages of early Christianity, and another that has embraced the hope of its teachings. In the end, his journey of vengeance and hatred becomes at last one of hope and redemption.

Michael de Angelo is a novelist, screenwriter, and poet. He is the author of "Cyr Myrddin, The Coming of Age of Merlin," the story of young Merlin in search of his destiny, and "Chronicles of the King, the Coming of the Bear," an epic war poem told from within the mind of King Arthur.

This work is available through Amazon, web outlets, and bookstores for \$12.95. For more information, please visit <http://www.gododdinpublishing.com> .

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Contact Information

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

New Book About a Young Donkey's Journey

A shy donkey foal goes on an adventurous journey and overcomes obstacles.

(Vocus) June 30, 2009 -- The story of Triumphal Entry comes alive in the view of a young donkey's journey. This [children's book](#) has colorful and vivid pictures as well as a good story. "Anthony's Amazing Journey" provides an easy to read [story straight from the bible](#).

Anthony is a young donkey who is very shy. He doesn't play with the other donkeys and certainly never goes near the people unless he has to. The only person he feels comfortable with is his mother. Anthony wishes he could get over being so timid so that people would ride on his back. He would always be so proud of his mother when someone rode on her back, but he shied away from people whenever they came near.

Then one day some men come to take Anthony and his mother away for a journey. Little did they know who they would be traveling with. Shy little Anthony soon got over his fears when he met Jesus. Jesus needed Anthony to carry him to Jerusalem. Despite the crowds of people watching him, Anthony carries Jesus to Jerusalem without being scared of the crowds that surrounded him.

Bert Ballou wrote this book as the first of his children's books series. The second one, "Anthony's Amazing Garden," is to be released in the fall of 2009. Bert hopes that these books will be an inspiration to writers that even a small story can encourage others.

For more information contact Bert Ballou at ballou6970 (at) aol (dot) com or visit www.anthonysamazingjourney.com

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Contact Information

Bert Ballou

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918-394-2665

Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Novelist S. J. Day Continues the Marked Urban Fantasy Series with the June 30, 2009 Release of *Eve of Chaos* (Tor Books)

The author of "Eve of Darkness" and "Eve of Destruction" continues the adventures of demon-hunter Evangeline Hollis in the third installment of the popular Marked series.

New York, New York (PRWEB) June 29, 2009 -- S. J. Day's Marked series continues with the release of the third volume, *Eve of Chaos* (A Tor Urban Fantasy Mass Market Original, \$6.99; On Sale June 30, 2009). Cursed with the Mark of Cain, formerly agnostic Evangeline Hollis must survive demons, celestial politics, and the rival attentions of Cain and Abel in present-day Orange County, California.

Released on an accelerated schedule, the launch books of the series have been published over three consecutive months to wide acclaim. The author's use of the Old Testament tale of Cain and Abel in a modern milieu has sparked spirited discussions on blogs and among reading groups. "S.J. Day has obviously done her research into the lore she is using," writes Kelly Lasiter of FantasyLiterature in her review of the first installment, *Eve of Darkness*.

"We know Cain was branded with the Mark of Cain and cursed to wander," Day says, "but we also know that he later married, fathered children, and established a city. Clearly something changed, but what exactly happened is a mystery. There is a lot left to the fertile imagination of a fiction writer."

While the premise of the series is based on the tale of Cain and Abel, and the two brothers are prominent secondary characters, the main protagonist is Evangeline Hollis. Eve, a first-generation Japanese American, has been lauded by Publishers Weekly as "impressive" and "dynamic and vibrant." An agnostic when the series begins, Eve's acclimation to becoming a bounty hunter for God grounds the fantastical and sometimes humorous storylines. "If you like Patricia Briggs or are a fan of the Sookie Stackhouse series by Charlaine Harris," says a reviewer on Goodreads.com, "you will be a fan of this series as well."

In her review of *Eve of Darkness*, Denise Dutton of Greenman Review writes, "Charlaine Harris, Katie Macalister, Kim Harrison . . . S.J. Day? There's a new chick in Urban Fantasy town, and ...she makes a provocative, compelling arrival. Here's hoping Eve doesn't work off her Mark anytime soon."

Eve of Chaos was preceded by *Eve of Darkness* (May 09) and *Eve of Destruction* (June 09).

Publication Data:

Eve of Chaos
A Tor Mass Market Original
By S. J. Day
ISBN-13: 978-0-7653-6043-4
384 pgs / \$6.99



On sale date: June 30, 2009

Author Appearances:

2009 "Readers for Life" Literacy Autographing
July 15, 2009 at 5:30-7:30 PM
Marriott Wardman Park Hotel - Exhibit Hall
2660 Woodley Road, NW
Washington, District Of Columbia

July 23, 2009 at 1:30-2:30 PM
Avatars, Icons, and Anti-Heroes Panel (followed by autographing session)
Comic-Con
San Diego Convention Center - Room 7AB
111 W. Harbor Drive
San Diego, California

September 27, 2009 at 1:00-4:00 PM
Lora Leigh's 2009 Readers Appreciation Public Autographing
Pullman Plaza Hotel - Mezzanine
1001 Third Avenue
Huntington, West Virginia

About the Author:

S. J. Day's resume includes a variety of odd jobs ranging from amusement park employee to Russian linguist/interrogator for the U.S. Army Military Intelligence. She's presently a full-time writer. A native Southern Californian, S. J. thinks there's no place like home, but she loves to travel. Her adventures have taken her to Japan, Holland, Germany, France, Mexico, Jamaica, and all over the United States. She's now hard at work on her next book. For more information about Ms. Day please visit sjday.net

About the Publisher:

Tor Books, an imprint of Tom Doherty Associates, LLC, is a New York-based publisher of hardcover and softcover books, founded in 1980 and committed (although not limited) to SF and fantasy literature. Between an extensive hardcover and trade paperback line, the Orb backlist program, and a stronghold in mass-market paperback, Tor annually publishes what is arguably the largest and most diverse line of science fiction and fantasy ever produced by a single English-language publisher. Books from Tor have won every major award in the SF and fantasy fields and Tor has been named Best Publisher in the Locus Poll, the largest consumer poll in SF, for twenty consecutive years. For more information, visit Tor-Forge.com

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Contact Information

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools Selects Pearson's PowerSchool® Premier as New Student Information System

Pearson today announced that the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools has selected Pearson's PowerSchool® Premier as its new web-based student information system (SIS).

Chicago, IL (PRWEB) June 29, 2009 -- [Pearson](#) today announced that the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools has selected Pearson's [PowerSchool® Premier](#) as its new web-based student information system (SIS).

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, with over 90,000 students and more than 6,000 teachers and staff, play a critical role in the life of the community by instilling values, teaching discipline, and achieving strong, consistent academic results for students of many races, faiths, and backgrounds in the 218 elementary and 40 secondary schools in Cook and Lake counties.

The Archdiocese of Chicago selected Pearson's PowerSchool Premier as its comprehensive SIS based on PowerSchool's successful track record of working with Catholic dioceses. PowerSchool will supply the Archdiocese of Chicago with the tools to easily create the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) report, which is an annual data export of aggregate student and staff data as specified by NCEA. The NCEA report data collection process has historically required months of effort from many individuals in the Archdiocese; however, with PowerSchool, the NCEA report will now only require one person to run an instant data query.

"While many of our schools have implemented on-line grading and parent communication systems, we feel [that PowerSchool will be robust enough for system-wide expansion," said Sr. M. Paul McCaughey, OP, Superintendent of Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools. "In addition to the value added for parents, it gives us the tools to document academic excellence across the Archdiocese."

Historically, the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools has not had real-time access to centralized student information. For the first time, the Archdiocese of Chicago will be able to view accurate, live, student information enabling them to effectively measure student performance data over a period of time.

"With the addition of the Archdiocese of Chicago as a Pearson customer, Pearson now serves the SIS needs for 84% of schools in the Chicago area," said Paul Fletcher, President of the School Systems group of Pearson. "We have a long-time partnership with Chicago Public Schools using Pearson's Chancery SMS, and by selecting PowerSchool, the Archdiocese of Chicago will also create an open, integrated solution that enables the Archdiocese to adapt to the ever-evolving education technology landscape."

PowerSchool will serve as the information backbone for the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools. Through its robust set of communications tools, PowerSchool will provide access to secure, real-time student information through a web browser, effectively creating an interactive dialogue between parents, students, and teachers. Additional benefits, such as master scheduling and standardized grade cards, will lend substantial efficiencies to the district.



The Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools will begin the implementation of PowerSchool in June 2009. For more information about Pearson and PowerSchool Premier, please visit www.PearsonSchoolSystems.com.

About Pearson

Pearson (NYSE: PSO), the global leader in education and education technology, reaches and engages today's digital natives with effective and personalized learning, as well as dedicated professional development for their teachers. This commitment is demonstrated in the company's investment in innovative print and digital education materials for preK through college, student information systems and learning management systems, teacher professional development, career certification programs, and testing and assessment products that set the standard for the industry. The company's respected brands include Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, Addison Wesley, Benjamin Cummings, PEMSolutions, Stanford 10, SuccessNet, MyLabs, PowerSchool, SuccessMaker, and many others. Pearson's comprehensive offerings help inform targeted instruction and intervention so that success is within reach of every student at every level of education. Pearson's commitment to education for all is supported by the global philanthropic initiatives of the Pearson Foundation. Pearson's other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

New Book is a Crash Course for Cancer Caregivers and Fighters

In October of 1999, Angela Peterson's mother was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer. She was given three days to live and yet emerged cancer-free in April of 2000. "Healed: A Crash Course in What to Do Spiritually and Practically," reveals the strategies Angela's mother and her caregivers followed to experience [victory over a serious illness](#).

(Vocus) June 29, 2009 -- In October of 1999, a team of medical specialists diagnosed Angela Peterson's mother, Judy Butler, with stage 4 colon cancer - the very last stage of one of the deadliest forms of cancer. Doctors said the first priority was emergency surgery to try to stop the massive hemorrhaging. If this was not successful, she had only two to three days to live. Even if she survived the surgery, the cancer itself could never be operated on because it was too large and had entwined itself around some major organs of her body.

The doctor's only hope, medically, was to aggressively treat her with a colostomy, chemotherapy and radiation in hopes that it would slow down the cancerous growth enough to give Judy more time--maybe two months--to live. The best of medical science could only prolong her death sentence. God had a different plan! She was declared medically cancer-free on April 17, 2000!

"Healed: A Crash Course in What to Do Spiritually and Practically," reveals the strategies Angelas mother and her caregivers followed to experience victory over a serious illness.

From the Author:

"This book is all from life experience. This could happen to any family, any person, at any time. It is the most frightening and lonely time when one has no idea if the next day will hold life or death. Day after day after day. Mom prayed and asked God if it was her time to die or to keep fighting, and He told her to keep fighting for her life. This book is a [crash course in what to do spiritually and practically for anyone going through a serious illness](#), or caring for a person with a serious or life-threatening illness or injury. It is a compilation of what Dad and I learned from the challenges faced during this journey of keeping Mom as strong as possible spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally- as well as keeping her comfortable- while getting her back to health. The many scriptures we used to keep ourselves and Mom encouraged in our faith are in the book, and are the primary reason for her miraculous healing."

The book is available at www.CaregiverStrength.com and everywhere books are sold.

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918-394-2665

Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

New Book Takes In-Depth Look at What Hollywood Believes and How It Affects Culture

What do celebrities really believe, and does it line up with what the Bible teaches? Bestselling pop-culture apologist Richard Abanes answers these questions and more as he examines everything from Scientology to New Age to Kabbalah to Mormonism. Appealing to those curious about the religions of the rich and famous, Abanes holds celebrities' beliefs up to the light of the Gospel, showing how each religion falls short of the Truth.

Minneapolis, MN (PRWEB) June 28, 2009 -- Oprah Winfrey, Tom Cruise, and Madonna all promote their own brand of spirituality. Richard Gere, Marie Osmond, and Ashton Kutcher embrace beliefs of yet other religions. In a culture obsessed and saturated with celebrity, people can't help but be inundated with the spiritual practices of the rich and famous.

Whether athletes or actors or talk show hosts or even reality TV stars, these people have become role models--even spiritual guides--for children, teens, and adults alike. Yet just because someone has a light shining on them does not mean they are reflecting the True Light. Most are pushing their own agendas and beliefs.

What do these celebrities really believe? Does it line up with what the Bible teaches? Bestselling pop-culture apologist Richard Abanes answers these questions and more as he examines everything from Scientology to New Age to Kabbalah to Mormonism. Appealing to those curious about the religions of the rich and famous, Abanes holds celebrities' beliefs up to the light of the Gospel, showing how each religion falls short of the Truth.

Concerned parents will also gain insight into how today's Hollywood spirituality affects the movies and television programs they see, as well as how their children might be influenced by the way these religions are portrayed in the media.

"My purpose isn't to tear down any religion or spirituality, nor is it my desire to mock, belittle, or degrade anyone's views...my approach, therefore, will not be negative, per se, but informational--i.e., based on clear explanations of each belief system, coupled with thoughtful observations of those systems from an evangelical Christian perspective." --Richard Abanes

About the Author:

Richard Abanes--former Broadway performer and television/film actor--is a bestselling and award-winning author of twenty-one books, specializing in the area of cults, the occult, world religions, and pop culture. His most popular titles include *A New Earth*, *An Old Deception* and *The Truth Behind the Da Vinci Code*. In 1997, he received The Myers Center Award for the Study of Human Rights in North America for his "outstanding work on intolerance."

Richard has a wealth of experience in the world of show business, including having appeared in numerous TV specials, as a lead actor in a major motion picture and in a PBS special hosted by Bill Moyers. He also had roles in the hit Broadway musicals *Dreamgirls* and *A Chorus Line*. He has been interviewed on hundreds of radio and TV programs including MSNBC, FoxNews, and CNN. He lives in Southern California.



[Religions of the Stars: What Hollywood Believes and How it Affects You](#)

by Richard Abanes

978-0-7642-0648-1

Trade Paper; \$14.99; 224 pp.

Release Date: July 2009

Review copies, excerpts, and interviews with Richard Abanes are available.

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Contact Information

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



MyChristianSupply.com Announces Re-Launch & New Blog

Originally debuting in the fall of 2008, My Christian Supply has been re-launched recently with a new design and a new blog. The web store's founder sat down to talk about his faith in God and its relation to commerce.

Grand Junction, CO (PRWEB) June 28, 2009 -- Originally debuting in the fall of 2008, My Christian Supply has been re-launched recently with a new design and a new blog. The web store's founder sat down to talk about his faith in God and its relation to commerce.

"My two big passions are Christianity and fly fishing," laughed Larry Ball. "I may not be a preacher, but I can try to help other Christians."

Ball is the proprietor of www.MyChristianSupply.com, a website that began as a supply store that featured religious-themed gifts and Bibles. Ball got the idea to start the web store when a Christian supply store in his town went out of business.

The site originally launched in September 2008 and has recently undergone a facelift.

Ball's rehash of the website has allowed for a user-friendly interface. While building up his new catalog, Ball has started with the essentials such as various types of Bibles (including the King James and New American Standard versions), and several Christian and Jewish gifts.

Along with the My Christian Supply's re-launch, Ball is currently looking to build his catalog further, he's also added links for sites that specialize in family-friendly Christian movies.

With the changes Ball has in store for his web venture, he's also planning on donating profits from the site to his church.

Additionally, Ball has added a new informational blog to accompany his site.

"It's a great way to communicate with other people," Ball said of www.ChristianStoreBlog.com.

As the site continues to rebuild itself and gain traction, Ball wants to share his love of the Lord with others.

"I really like studying the Bible and the word of God," he said. "I'm now in my twilight years and I want to do something that is helpful and fulfilling. I think that this is a good place to start."

About the Company:

MyChristianSupply.com is a part of LBJ Marketing and is owned and operated by Larry Ball.

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iePlexus, Inc.
www.iePlexus.com

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Contact Information

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

Relationship Expert Offers Hope to King of Pop, Four Days Before His Death

Nationally-known television evangelist interrupts Sunday morning worship service with a prophetic message to king of pop, "...He's greater than the hole in your heart..."

Hoffman Estates, IL (PRWEB) June 28, 2009 -- Gregory Dickow, Pastor of Life Changers International Church outside Chicago, baffled worshippers when, at the end of this past Sunday's Father's Day service, he looked into the television camera and stated, "I announce to the king of pop, today, my (Heavenly) Father is greater than all that was done to you and all that you've done and is greater than the hole in your heart and He will fill it to overflowing." Afterward, Dickow simply ended the service. Only a few days later would the world learn how prophetic, and stunning, his statement was when reports surfaced that the 'king of pop' was dead. Jackson was pronounced dead at UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles on Thursday afternoon, when attempts to revive him from full cardiac arrest were unsuccessful.

When asked if he knew of any health problems the pop star was suffering with, Dickow stated, "I've never met Michael Jackson and knew nothing about his health. There's no way I could have known that within just a few days we'd be watching reports of his (Jackson's) death on national TV". Dickow continued "Certainly, I pray that Michael Jackson knew God and that his family will find peace during this time of mourning."

In addition to heading up the large Chicago suburban mega church, Dickow also appears daily on the Changing Your Life television program on stations across the world as well as hosting the popular live radio show, Ask the Pastor.

"I may never know if the message God gave me for Michael actually reached him. But it's the same message I'll continue to give folks everywhere I go", Dickow said.

Videotape of the sermon will be shown on an upcoming broadcast. Until then, the excerpt can be seen on YouTube, Facebook and other social media sites worldwide.

Known by thousands across the country as a relationship expert, Dickow also authored the new book, The Power to Change Today, a book that guides its readers through steps toward a fulfilled life.

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Contact Information

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You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

Michael Jackson's Heart Attack Hints at Deeper Issues

On June 25, 2009, Michael Jackson died of a massive heart attack. Cultural expert and ordained interfaith minister [Laine Cunningham](#) says that according to traditional beliefs in native cultures, the heart attack was caused by the struggles in his life. To honor his many efforts to help others, she's offering a free daily guide to living from the heart.

Hillsborough, NC (Vocus) June 27, 2009 -- Michael Jackson's death has resulted in an outpouring of grief matched only by the passing of great entertainers like Elvis Presley and John Lennon. Although known for supporting more charities than any other celebrity, the King of Pop's life was far from trouble-free. Cultural expert and ordained interfaith minister [Laine Cunningham](#) says that according to native traditions, Jackson's heart attack was a sign that he longed to be loved.

Jackson's early rise to fame had a lot to do with his issues later in life. Audiences have long known that performers who achieved fame while young struggle with problems for decades afterward. River Phoenix died of a drug overdose when he was 23. Drew Barrymore didn't even wait to grow up before she entered rehab at the age of 13.

Jackson, though, had an even tougher time. He suffered physical and emotional abuse from his father, Joseph. Since Joseph was also the driving force behind the family band, he loomed especially large in Michael's life. The Journal of Personality Assessment found that when the parents of child celebrities also served as their managers, the parents were perceived as overly controlling and less caring. The parent-child relationship is also impacted by problems stemming from money management, a lack of peer support, and professional issues.

"It takes a superhuman effort to overcome all those issues without the additional problems Jackson faced later in life," Cunningham says. "Much of what he did with his life--the charities, co-writing We Are the World, his support of AIDS research when it was unpopular--was a way to cushion his heart against everything he'd suffered."

Cunningham, who has been certified as a Master Shaman, says native cultures can provide important insight into Jackson's life. For example, Native Americans say that the heart is the place where the soul lives. The heart line, a common symbol drawn on figures, represents the breath of life going into the heart. "Every breath we take, every action we make, determines what we feed our souls," she says. "Jackson's focus on helping others was a way to feed his own soul with love and joy."

Australian Aborigines believe that all illness is caused by issues with the patient's life or issues in the larger society. If Michael never really dealt with the abuse he suffered growing up, his heart never would have healed. In his case, the problem was also in the larger society. Cunningham says, "The cult of celebrity grinds up children and creates adults who struggle to create normal lives."

Hawaiian beliefs reveals why Jackson's heart gave out. The core of the aloha spirit requires that the mind and the



soul work together. If someone's heart can't spiritually support the actions their hands take, they can't feel the joy of giving and receiving love. "Although Jackson worked hard to create good things for people afflicted by illness and poverty, he was unable to heal his heart," Cunningham says.

To honor the passing of this beloved entertainer, Cunningham has written *Living in Love: A Daily Guide to the Heart*. To receive a free copy, contact her through her [website](http://www.lainecunningham.com) at www.lainecunningham.com. The easy, step-by-step instructions will generate heartfelt joy in even the busiest lives.

This fall, Cunningham will launch a series of nonfiction books based on native perspectives. The first, *Seven Sisters*, pairs Australian Aboriginal stories with essays that outline the solutions each story offers for modern problems. Cunningham is also available as a keynote speaker. She has developed seminars and workshops that help people integrate the spiritual lessons offered by native cultures. She has presented keynotes and workshops on White Earth Reservation and for cities, churches, art and cultural organizations and colleges across the nation.

Media appearances include MSNBC's *The Well-Mannered Traveler*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *USA Today*, *Awareness* magazine, and regional radio and TV shows. She is available on short notice and can be reached at 336-267-6572. For more information, visit her [website](http://www.lainecunningham.com) at www.lainecunningham.com.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



World Religious Travel Expo Debuts Theme: Make 2010 Your Best Year Ever

The World Religious Travel Association (WRTA) has announced "Make 2010 Your Best Year Ever" as its official theme for this fall's World Religious Travel Expo. The newly chosen motto will serve as the guiding principle and overall purpose of the three-day event.

Lexington, Ky. (PRWEB) June 27, 2009 -- The World Religious Travel Association (WRTA) has announced "Make 2010 Your Best Year Ever" as its official theme for this fall's World Religious Travel Expo. The newly chosen motto will serve as the guiding principle and overall purpose of the three-day event.

"Our theme serves as an invitation to tap into the flourishing religious travel and hospitality industry," said WRTA president, Kevin J. Wright. "We all know this is a very trying time for many companies. However, as faith tourism provides new market and revenue possibilities, the World Religious Travel Expo provides organizations with a renewed opportunity to experience their best year yet."

Faith-based travel and hospitality has become an important new market segment for many tour operators, travel agents, destinations and suppliers in the industry. In the past year alone, the religious market has taken on even greater significance, due to its recession-proof and groups-dominated attributes. An estimated 75% of faith-based travelers prefer to travel in group settings while 80% would like to repeat their religious travel experience. Challenging times only serve to bring people of faith together in greater numbers for travel or convention purposes; providing a much needed "stimulus" to the industry.

WRTA recently opened registrations for the World Religious Travel Expo & Educational Conference 2009, which will be held November 14-16, 2009, at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno, Nevada (USA). Serving as the most important meeting and tradeshow in the religious travel and hospitality industry, the event is expected to draw tourism organizations and travel professionals from 30-plus countries.

A new highlight for the Expo includes co-locating with the National Tour Association Annual Convention, offering members of both associations unprecedented opportunities for business growth, networking, and access to new market opportunities.

For more information about attending or exhibiting at the World Religious Travel Expo, contact the World Religious Travel Association at 888-255-WRTA (9782) or +1-859-219-3529 or by email headquarters@WRTAreligioustravel.com. For more information about WRTA and the Expo, visit www.WRTAreligioustravel.com and www.WRTAexpo.com respectively.

World Religious Travel Association (WRTA):

WRTA is the leading global network for the \$18 billion faith tourism industry. WRTA's primary purpose is to guide, enrich, and expand religious travel and hospitality around the globe via the trade, consumer, and media. Its membership is comprised of accommodations, attractions, tour operators, travel agents, tourism offices, transportation services, media and other key players in the tourism industry.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Budget Cuts Endanger Nearly 10,000 Illinoisans Served by Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

225,000 Lutherans mobilized in support of tax increase

Chicago (Vocus) -- One of Illinois' largest providers of community-based services is warning that state budget cuts will force it to turn away nearly 10,000 people in Illinois if lawmakers from both sides of the aisle don't find common ground to resolve the state's budget impasse. Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI), an agency of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), warns that cuts in services including child abuse prevention, mental health services, and care for the elderly and developmentally disabled are not only morally irresponsible, but also fiscally irresponsible, because investing in preventative community-based programs prevents much bigger costs to taxpayers down the road.

"No matter what their faith, people in Illinois share a set of values, including our recognition that strong families are the building block of strong communities," said Bishop Warren Freiheit of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the ELCA. "Most people are horrified when they learn that lawmakers are cutting programs that families depend on, including care for the sick and disabled, victims of abuse, and our seniors and children."

Approximately 2,500 children and their families served by LSSI will be impacted by cuts in programs ranging from counseling for sexually abused children to safe homes for children at risk for abuse and neglect. Supportive services for abused and neglected children in foster care will be slashed by 70 percent, and funding for their food, shelter and other basic necessities will be cut in half. Of the 2,500 children and families affected, 700 families will lose wrap-around (supportive) services including sexual abuse counseling, family preservation, post-adoption services, and emergency shelter for displaced foster children. Studies show one in six children in Illinois are at risk for abuse or neglect, and one in three girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.

In addition, 1,630 seniors served by LSSI will be impacted by cuts in basic human care programs that help them remain in their homes and independent for as long as possible; 730 elderly will lose supportive home care services and another 700 will have their hours of care reduced. Cutting these basic services will force many seniors into nursing homes or require family members to quit their jobs to care for them. Another 140 seniors will lose adult day care services, and 60 seniors will lose supportive housing, forcing many into nursing homes.

One of the most fragile populations served by LSSI will also be impacted by these cuts and left with nowhere to turn. Several living facilities that offer a home and support services to almost 80 people with developmental disabilities will no longer be viable and may be shuttered.

Additionally, 4,900 children, teens and adults served by LSSI will lose mental health services, including life-saving treatment for depression, eating disorders, and alcohol and drug addiction. Studies show that one in eleven Illinois teens ages 12 - 17 have used illegal drugs in the last month, and the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University recently reported that Illinois' current failure to provide sufficient treatment for drug and alcohol addiction costs state taxpayers \$4 billion a year. The costs of untreated addiction



account for 80 percent of the state's criminal justice budget and 12 percent of our public school budget, primarily to meet the special education needs of young drug victims. LSSI warns that plans to eliminate more than \$50 million in funding for addiction prevention and treatment programs across the state could cost taxpayers an additional \$350 million in the long run.

Freiheit added, "Every dollar we invest in preventative community programs saves taxpayers an average of \$6 to \$8 down the road. These cuts aren't just morally irresponsible, they are fiscally irresponsible," Freiheit warns. "If we turn our back on abused children, people with mental illness, our seniors and disabled, they don't just magically disappear. They turn up again in our special education classes, our prisons, our emergency rooms and nursing homes, but at much greater cost to the taxpayer."

In response to the proposed cuts, LSSI is launching a statewide effort to educate 225,000 members of the ELCA in 500 congregations across all 102 Illinois counties. Most ELCA leaders have backed an increase in the personal income tax that eliminates the state's structural budget deficit, and congregation members are being urged to tell their lawmakers it's time for a balanced budget that combines cuts in non-essential programs with a modest tax increase that ensures Illinois' infrastructure of vital programs is well-maintained. The effort began this past weekend in churches across the state and e-mails to supporters at www.LutheranAdvocacy.org. Leaders say that the effort will continue until lawmakers from both sides of the aisle fulfill their shared responsibility to protect the common good.

"Our faith teaches us that we are our brother's and sister's keeper, and that we are only strong when our communities and the families who live there are strong," Freiheit said. "We understand lawmakers fear voting for a tax increase, but we believe that faith is much stronger than fear. We are calling on them to have courage and do the right thing for the people and communities of this state."

About Lutheran Social Services of Illinois:

Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is a statewide, not-for-profit agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). LSSI serves 72,583 people through an array of services at 83 program sites and 59 counties across Illinois. For more information, call 847/635-4600 or visit www.LSSI.org.

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Online Web 2.0 VersionYou can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



New Book Provides Devotionals for 21 Day Fast

For each day of fasting there is a little 'Nugget' to encourage the reader.

(Vocus) June 26, 2009 -- Fasting is a time honored tradition of most Christians. Some do it because they are told to, some do it for prayer, and some do it to simply glorify God. Whatever the reason for it, April Dishon has supplied the encouragement to do it honorably and faithfully.

For every [day of fasting](#), the book contains a 'Nugget.' These 'Nuggets' are a combination of scripture, devotion, and there is even a page for the reader to write their own thoughts and prayers. This book is for any person that needs help, or encouragement with their fasting. This devotional and faithful book provides a way of getting closer to God.

At the age of 29, April Dishon hopes to encourage people of her generation to fast, and devote themselves to God. In "Nuggets for the 21 Day Fast" she desires to bring people closer to Christ and build a strong relationship with Him. April is also writing another book called "Nuggets for the New Believer" in which born-again Christians can follow her guide to building their [new relationship with Christ](#).

April Dishon is a young woman with a heart for Christ and a passion for others. She is the proud wife of her college sweetheart Marco and mother of their four children. She is published in several magazines. She has a B.A. in Communications and plans to become a librarian. When not writing, she enjoys reading, singing, and quilting.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

National 'Faith in Action Sunday' Set for Oct. 11

Churches across America to Close Doors on Sunday to Serve Communities during Tough Economic Times Web Site Launched to Support Expanding Movement

Vista, Calif. (PRWEB) June 26, 2009 -- The third annual "Faith In Action Sunday" -- which challenges churches to literally close their doors on a Sunday morning and go out and serve their communities -- will take place on Oct. 11 this year.

"Faith in Action" was developed by World Vision, Zondervan and Outreach, Inc. in 2007 to encourage churches, ministries and small groups to serve and meet practical needs in their local communities.

The "Faith in Action" movement is quickly becoming a viral online community of service-minded churches, collecting photos, videos and testimonies via RSS feeds from other popular sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. A new web site -- www.putyourfaithinaction.org - has been developed to support this growing movement.

"Faith in Action" also utilizes an online social network to connect churches with one another's stories and successes. Participants can find more resources to equip their congregations for service at www.putyourfaithinaction.org/interact.

John Ortberg, best-selling author and pastor, is the national spokesman for "Faith in Action." He called the initiative "a dynamic program that galvanizes your congregation to be the hands and feet of Jesus in meeting real needs in your local community."

Richard Stearns, president for World Vision, agreed. "Faith in Action' is a powerful way to demonstrate the love of Jesus to our neighbors," he said.

"Churches all over the U.S. - even churches that are financially stressed themselves - have made a genuine difference to their struggling and hurting neighbors with the 'Faith in Action' program," said Eric Abel, vice president of marketing for Outreach, Inc.

Churches have organized food drives and helped the elderly and needy with home repairs. Some groups cleaned and landscaped public areas or private homes. Some maintained women's or homeless shelters. And one church adopted a school and committed to performing regular clean-up and gardening tasks.

The "Faith in Action" program includes an awareness building campaign that educates the church on the power of "loving our neighbors." The program also helps church members invite people in their community to join in serving. Small group materials are also available in Spanish.

"Pastors are raving about the results, saying it really made a difference in their communities. Their members



can't wait to do it again," said Abel.

More than 800 churches have signed up for "Faith in Action Sunday" to date, although some have chosen alternative dates for the event. Some are joining together to do community-wide and even city-wide events.

The theme for this year's "Faith in Action Sunday" is "Don't go to church. Be the church," said Abel.

"First Lady Michele Obama recently went on national television asking Americans to volunteer in their local communities. 'Faith in Action' is a great way to show the world that service is not just a one-time initiative, but for followers of Jesus Christ, is a way of life," he said.

"I recommend 'Faith in Action' to any church that wants to mobilize for greater community outreach," said John O'Neal, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Wash., one of the churches that participated in "Faith in Action Sunday" in 2008.

Eric Marsh, pastor of Long Beach Grace Brethren Church, in California, said, "'Faith in Action' is a way to kick-start a church's focus on external service. It's not just the one-day thing."

World Vision (www.worldvision.org) is the world's largest Christian humanitarian relief organization. Outreach, Inc. (www.outreach.com) is a leading provider of outreach and evangelistic material for churches.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

80-Year-Old Radio Program Releases iPhone Application

Voice Of Prophecy, the 2nd oldest running gospel radio broadcast, releases the first dedicated iPhone application. Listeners can find this FREE application thru the Apple "App Store". Current, and past broadcasts are available on-demand.

Simi Valley, CA (PRWEB) June 26, 2009 -- The first dedicated iPhone application for a Christian inspirational program has been released for [Voice of Prophecy](#), founded in 1929 and now the second-oldest gospel radio broadcast still on the air.

The VOP Radio application has an easy-to-use user interface that offers two formats. Users can listen to recent broadcasts in a streaming format 24/7, or they may select from a list of specific programs and listen on-demand.

The application runs on both the iPhone and on the second-generation iPod Touch. For iPhone users, the application is at the "App Store" (search for VOP).

The Voice of Prophecy already offers Bible studies formatted for cell phones.

Voice of Prophecy speaker Fred Kinsey says, "I'm really excited about using all kinds of new technology to make the gospel available to people anytime, anywhere. It's still the same tried and true message, but the method of delivery is constantly being updated."

Voice of Prophecy is heard on hundreds of radio stations around the world, and now it is available to millions of iPhone and iPod owners whenever they wish.

The application was developed by Kyle Borg, president and co-founder of BiggyTV, who also created the platforms for The Adventist Channel for online video distribution, and for SDALink, an online social networking site for the [Seventh-day Adventist](#) global church.

More information about Voice of Prophecy may be found at www.vop.com.

Founded by Seventh-day Adventist pastor [H.M.S. Richards, Sr.](#) in October 1929 as America's Great Depression was beginning, Voice of Prophecy pioneered the use of radio to deliver the message of the gospel. Eighty years later, it continues to use contemporary technology to touch the lives of many around the world. The Voice of Prophecy radio program, Bible school, and evangelistic ministry has its international headquarters at the Adventist Media Center in Simi Valley, California.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



NFCYM and MyCatholicVoice Launch Virtual Pilgrimage for NCYC 2009

• New for NCYC 2009, the MyCatholicVoice Virtual Pilgrimage utilizes multimedia content online to help youth, youth ministers, and parents prepare, deepen and sustain their event experience. • Online participation and communication via Virtual Pilgrimage, Twitter, and Facebook extends the excitement and teachings of NCYC to attendees and virtual event participants.

Washington, D.C. and Lenexa, Kansas (PRWEB) June 26, 2009 -- The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and MyCatholicVoice (www.mycatholicvoice.com), the premier online Catholic resource combining social networking and digital multimedia content, today announced the launch of the MyCatholicVoice Virtual Pilgrimage™ for NCYC 2009 (Nov. 19-21 in Kansas City, MO).

As the official online resource for the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) 2009, the MyCatholicVoice Virtual Pilgrimage utilizes multimedia content online to help youth, youth ministers, and parents to prepare, deepen and sustain their experience. MyCatholicVoice is working with the leading innovators in ministry, new media, and Internet technologies to deliver meaningful content in the areas of Evangelization, Catechesis, Prayer and Community through the Virtual Pilgrimage.

"Appropriately reflected in this year's NCYC theme, 'Christ Reigns: In Us, Among Us, Through Us,' Catholicism is meant to bring people together in community, for Christ is found in and through community. Today, community is online as well as offline, and the Church is challenged to find new ways to be community and a sacramental presence," said Fred Fosnacht, CEO, MyCatholicVoice. "Through the Virtual Pilgrimage, MyCatholicVoice and NCYC have the opportunity to engage participants to connect, explore and share in these new ways."

"Extending the energy and spirit of NCYC 2009 beyond the physical event, the MyCatholicVoice Virtual Pilgrimage provides multimedia content and interactive ways which enable youth, ministers and parents to prepare, deepen and sustain their NCYC 2009 experience," said Dr. Robert J. McCarty, executive director, NFCYM. "Today, using online outreach through the Virtual Pilgrimage, Twitter, and Facebook, we're able to communicate interactively with youth in ways that resonate with them, and help them share their faith, beliefs and experiences."

NCYC invites everyone - youth, youth ministers, parents, both attendees and virtual pilgrims alike -- to join the MyCatholicVoice Virtual Pilgrimage TODAY to begin preparing for NCYC 2009. Visit www.mycatholicvoice.com/ncyc today to join this free online group.

Follow NCYC on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ncyc2009, and become an "Official NCYC 2009 - Kansas City" fan on www.facebook.com.

About NCYC

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is an exciting, biennial three-day experience of prayer, community and empowerment for Catholic teenagers and their adult chaperones. The schedule includes general



sessions, workshops addressing a wide variety of topics including Catholic spirituality and prayer, social justice issues, sexuality and leadership. There are also opportunities for reconciliation, daily liturgy, and special activities such as concerts, a dance, and comedy club. The thematic park is a unique venue incorporating traditional exhibits with interactive educational and recreational activities and vendors.

About NFCYM

Located in Washington, DC, and staffed by a team of energetic and creative individuals, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) is a membership organization working on behalf of youth and diocesan youth ministry leadership across the country and on U.S. military bases. Members include ninety-four percent of all U.S. Catholic dioceses, the National Catholic Committee on Girl Scouts and Camp Fire and more than fifty youth-serving organizations.

About MyCatholicVoice

Launched in February 2008, MyCatholicVoice is the premier online Catholic resource for personal inspiration and community ministry. The site's mission is to capture, organize and share the tradition of the Catholic Church for the next millennium. MyCatholicVoice offers innovative capabilities for exploring and sharing the tradition of the Catholic faith, using the latest Internet and mobile technologies. The site provides easy access to a broad range of current and historical material, including published and user-generated content. For more information, visit www.MyCatholicVoice.com.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Texas Marketing Expert To Celebrate Mormon Pioneer Day With A 24-Hour Marketing Consulting Marathon For Charity

Join Rich Harshaw in celebrating Mormon Pioneer Day with a 24-hour marketing consulting marathon for charity. Normally charging \$1,500 an hour for his consulting services, Harshaw is giving away the equivalent of \$36,000 in consultations to raise money for a charity or charities participants can recommend. Requested donations of \$50 or more are not required for a consultation.

Grapevine, TX (PRWEB) June 26, 2009 -- Pioneer Day might not be one of the most anticipated holidays on your calendar; in fact, chances are good you've never even heard of it. But this year, if you own a business and are interested in getting \$750 worth of free marketing advice from a top expert, you've got a good reason to take notice and participate in the annual July 24th celebration of Mormon pioneer heritage.

That's because marketing expert Rich Harshaw--a Mormon himself--is holding a 24-hour marketing consultation marathon to mark the occasion. Harshaw, who normally charges as much as \$1,500 an hour for his consulting services, says he's giving away the equivalent of \$36,000 in consultations to raise money for charities. Any person who owns a business or is responsible for marketing in their company is eligible to participate in a 30 minute session. Donations of \$50 or more are requested but not required.

The inspiration for the project came a year ago when Harshaw and his wife participated in a pioneer reenactment in their home state of Texas. They dressed in authentic pioneer clothing and acted as a "Ma & Pa" for 8 local youth as they pushed, pulled, and cajoled a 500-pound handcart through the Texas heat for 2 ½ days. Says Harshaw, "We traveled about 15 miles in 2 days in 100 degree heat; the actual pioneers (in the 1850s) traveled over 1,300 miles for over 100 days straight in unimaginable conditions. It was a humbling, eye-opening experience to say the least."

This year, Harshaw decided to tackle a different sort of endurance test--24 straight hours of marketing consultations. He also decided to make his efforts pay off--in memory of the early pioneer struggles--for people struggling with difficult circumstances today. Harshaw requests that each participating company contribute at least \$50 to his company, which in turn, he'll donate to a worthy cause. However, unlike other charity drives, Harshaw has no particular target in mind yet. "I'll take suggestions from those who participate in the consultations as to the charities we ultimately support. If you know of a person or group of people in need, we'll consider donating."

How does Harshaw think he'll hold up to 24 straight hours of consulting, which will start at 6 pm on Thursday, July 23rd, and finish at the same time on Friday, July 24th? "I'm sure I'll be exhausted, and I'll be questioning the sanity of the project by about 3 am. But like the pioneers, I'll just push on. It will be a fun challenge." During the marathon, anyone can dial in to listen to the calls via conference bridge at any time, for free, by dialing (404) 920-6663, access code 124535# or online at www.MYMonline.com.

Pioneer Day is celebrated by people of the Mormon faith every July 24th to commemorate Brigham Young's first arrival into the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, and to honor the commitment, courage, and sacrifice of the



early pioneers who followed him there.

Rich Harshaw is founder and author of Monopolize Your Marketplace located near Dallas, Texas. He helps business improve their sales and profits through innovative thinking and superior marketing strategies.

To read more about the event, or to find out how to participate, please visit <http://www.mymonline.com/pioneerdaymarathon> or call (817) 416-4333.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

Charity Gives Multimillion Dollar House Away for \$10

When looking for a Multimillion Dollar Home who would have thought to buy a raffle ticket. That's the case in Ft Lauderdale, FL, where a couple has teamed up with a local charity to raffle off their \$3 Million Waterfront Estate for \$10 a ticket.

Ft. Lauderdale, FL (PRWEB) June 26, 2009 -- With the recent success of the Ronald McDonald House Raffle in San Diego, CA.. Miles and Laura Brannan of Ft. Lauderdale, FL have teamed up with a local charity to raffle off their \$3 Million Waterfront Estate for \$10 per ticket. In San Diego, the tickets were \$150 each but the Brannan's wanted to open the drawing up to more people by lowering the ticket price to \$10.

The prize is a 6 bedroom, 6 ½ bathroom gated waterfront estate in Ft Lauderdale, FL. It has over 6,000 square feet with a 4 car garage, movie theater, office, game room, and heated swimming pool. The winner will receive the home free and clear, meaning no mortgage or any liens. www.floridaluxuryauctions.com

In addition to offering people the opportunity to win this beautiful home for just \$10, the couple states that a portion of the proceeds from the drawing will benefit The Mission of St. Francis. "The Mission of St. Francis is a wonderful organization that helps individuals suffering from addictions by providing them housing and helping them get jobs to get back on their feet. We've all been hit hard by the poor economy lately, and I feel the Mission is really making a difference in people's lives." Brannan says.

According to Jim Barrett, a Tax Attorney at Miami's Baker and McKenzie Law firm, "The church needs money and they need to sell their house. It sounds like a clever way to solve two problems."
www.floridaluxuryauctions.com

Only 300,000 tickets will be sold for this raffle, and the drawing will take place as soon as all tickets have been sold. Winner does not need to be present to win. All monies collected are being held at Chicago Title Insurance Agency, Inc. until the drawing. www.floridaluxuryauctions.com

For more information you can visit the website or contact the Brannan's at 954-561-7564.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



AFFI Will Hold First Ever Israel Leadership Summit in the fall of 2009

The Alliance For the Future of Israel (AFFI) will hold a first ever leadership summit with a unique opportunity for participants from across the United States to travel throughout Israel and hear from Israel's top leaders and experts.

(PRWEB) June 24, 2009 -- The Alliance For the Future of Israel (AFFI) will hold a first ever leadership summit with a unique opportunity for participants from across the United States to travel throughout Israel and hear from Israel's top leaders and experts.

The Israel Leadership Summit is scheduled for September 29-October 6, 2009, and is limited to only 50 people. Registration is open to all.

The summit will take place throughout all of Israel with site visits to the Israel-Gaza border, the Golan-Heights, Tiberias, Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley, Tel-Aviv, and the Judean Desert.

Attendees will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles under the stars in the Judean wilderness of Ein Gedi, and have a rare opportunity to meet firsthand with top business, political, and military leaders.

Participants will hear insight from Israel's Brigadier General Oded Tyrah, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, Vice Prime Minister Silvan Shalom and many others.

Forums include the Iranian Nuclear Threat with expert analysis from Alon Ben-David, journalist and senior defense correspondent. Other forums are Israel's Challenges in the Global Arena hosted by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Electoral Reforms and Political Strategy in Israel with Eyal Arad, senior political strategist.

Many VIP opportunities are also available and include private tours across the Israel-Syrian border covering the entire Golan-Heights, and insight on the fight for Jerusalem where guests can see the tomb of Biblical prophet Samuel and hear about the latest terrorist threats facing Jerusalem.

The mission of AFFI is to bring Jews and Christians together for the support and continued development of the modern nation of Israel. For additional information surf to <http://www.israelleader.com> or to <http://www.overridepro.com/israel/israel.html> . Deadline for registration is July 29, 2009.

Contact:

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Freelanthropy.com Charity Web Search Service Announces New MyAccount Feature

Freelanthropy.com charitable online web search and shopping service, powered by Yahoo! Search, is offering its new MyAccount feature. The new feature is for supporters using Freelanthropy's charitable search service and enables individuals to see how much their own activity is generating for their designated charity. As with all of the products and services that Freelanthropy provides to its partner nonprofit organizations and their supporters, the new MyAccount feature is free.

Los Angeles, CA (PRWEB) June 24, 2009 -- Freelanthropy, LLC., (www.freelanthropy.com) a free web-search program that allows people to support nonprofit causes just by searching the Internet, today announced the release of its new MyAccount feature enabling supporters to see exactly how much money their individual web searches and online shopping generate for their favorite charity.

"We've always provided simple, free ways for people to support and stay connected to the causes that they care about," said Freelanthropy Founder and President Dan Sheehy. "The new MyAccount feature helps strengthen that connection by allowing them to see exactly how much their own Web searches and online shopping are earning for their designated charity. The new MyAccount is a bit like having your personal fundraising thermometer connected to the free charitable web search service."

Sheehy added, "In these tougher economic times [charities](#) are struggling to meet demand and donors are having a harder time giving. Freelanthropy's free search tools offer a simple way for people to continue to provide financial support to their charities even if they're not able to write a check directly. The new MyAccount feature allows them to feel even better about using the simple web search service as they see their personal contributions grow each day. Not having to sell cookie dough or collect money from friends and colleagues is also a big plus."

In addition to empowering supporters to generate revenue for their charity just by searching or shopping online, Freelanthropy also helps them to stay connected to their chosen charity through the free "Community Toolbar" that Freelanthropy provides to each of its nonprofit partners.

Each charity's free Community Toolbar includes:

- Charity's logo - keeps the cause top-of-mind with supporters every time they open their web browser
- Yahoo Search - leading web search generates money for the charity
- Links to Charity's website - supporters are just a click away from the info they need
- News & Alerts - charities can "broadcast" important news, inspirational messages or reminders directly to their supporters
- Shop & Give - access hundreds of online merchants and earn money for charity

Supporters add the [charity toolbar](#) to their Internet Explorer or Firefox browser. It keeps them connected to their cause while making it simple to generate financial support for the charity every time they go online.



About Freelanthropy:

Freelanthropy, LLC. is an online services provider of innovative fundraising, communications and branding solutions for a wide variety of non-profit organizations including schools, churches, shelters, clubs, trade organizations and more. Nonprofit organizations interested in applying for Freelanthropy's free services and supporters interested in registering for their free MyAccount can visit freelanthropy.com/apply. For more info contact Freelanthropy at 626-771-3556.

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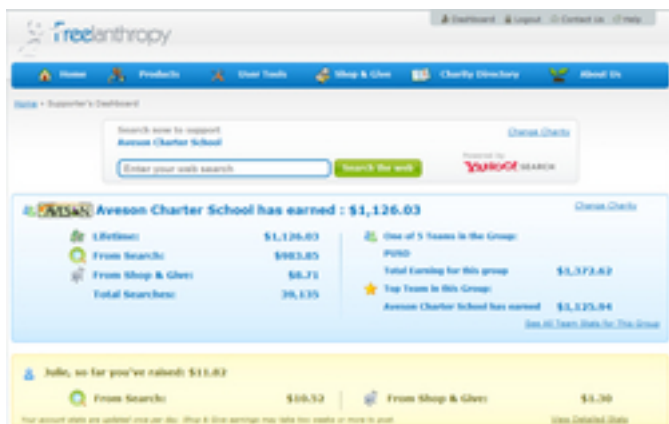
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News Image



A Question for the 40th Anniversary of Apollo 11: Apollo 11's "Giant Leap" or Apollo 8's "Genesis" Reading?

When NASA and the media celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20, 2009, they are certain to overlook a profound question, one that is explored in the latest books by Barry Vacker, a professor of media studies. That question? Which words spoken from the moon have proven more prophetic and powerful back on Earth: Neil Armstrong's "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" or William Anders' "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth," from the famed Genesis reading of Apollo 8?

Philadelphia (PRWEB) June 23, 2009 -- When NASA and the media celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20, 2009, they are certain to overlook a profound question, one that is explored in the latest books by a professor of media studies.

That question? Which words spoken from the moon have proven more prophetic and powerful back on Earth: Neil Armstrong's "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" or William Anders' "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth," from the famed Genesis reading of Apollo 8?

Cultural and media theorist [Barry Vacker](#), a professor at Temple University, believes that the leap into the secular universe of the space age has been undercut by a great leap backward into the creationist worlds of evangelicalism and fundamentalism.

"The deeper meaning of Armstrong's words broadcast to a billion television viewers on Earth and of the famed Earthrise photo beamed to our planet from Apollo 8," said Vacker, "was the realization that we live on a tiny planet floating amidst the vast cosmic void. There is nothing to save us or our planet but ourselves."

"For some, this realization united humanity in a feeling of global goodwill and energized the ecological movement," Vacker continued. "But during the last 40 years, the majority have responded with a retreat to the superstitious past, as evidenced today by the global rise of creationism, anti-intellectualism, religious warfare, and even evangelical presidents in the White House."

As Vacker explains in his books, much of humanity has turned away from a secular or scientific orientation toward the 'big bang' universe in order to understand our existence, instead preferring sacred texts written centuries ago in the pre-scientific age. As the mayhem in our daily headlines reveals, Armstrong's "great leap for mankind" has proven less prophetic than Apollo 8's Genesis reading, at least so far.

Vacker explores Apollo 8, the space age, and the retreat from secularism in *Starry Skies Moving Away* and *Crashing Into the Vanishing Points* (Theory Vortex, 2009). Vacker also wrote the text for Peter Granser's photography book about America, *Signs* (Hatje Cantz and Chicago Museum of Contemporary Photography, 2008), where he first wrote about the Apollo 8 Genesis reading. He is also the author of *Slugging Nothing: Fighting the Future in Fight Club* (Theory Vortex, 2009).



Also, he is editor of the forthcoming anthology, entitled Media Environments (University Readers, 2010). Author of many articles and book chapters, he also wrote and directed the documentary film: [Space Times Square](#) (2007). For more information on Vacker's book series, visit the [Theory Vortex](#) web site.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

Interfaith Prayers Press for Food Justice in New York City

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500 Joins Forces with Faith Leaders for Environmental Justice to Call for a Just and Sustainable Food System for New York City.

New York, NY (PRWEB) June 23, 2009 -- Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh faith leaders locked hands with representatives of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1500, We Act for Environmental Justice, The Majora Carter Group, and the NYC Coalition Against Hunger on the steps of City Hall last Thursday under an early morning deluge. Rain-soaked, yet regal, the diverse group stood as one to demand changes to food policy at the city and federal levels. Their "demands" were in the form of prayers and policy recommendations. And perhaps their prayers and petitions were answered. City Council will hold an educational hearing on food access disparities today in the state office building.

On the City level, the faith leaders urged Mayor Bloomberg to include food policy in PlaNYC, an omission that disproportionately affects low-income and minority residents who are more likely to be unable to afford and access healthy food in their communities.

On the federal level, they called on Congressional leaders to support a strong Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, which Congress will consider this year.

Lisa Sharon Harper, co-chair of Faith Leaders for Environmental Justice, the vigil's sponsor, explained, "Low income black and brown families are sitting in the back of the bus when it comes to food in New York City. They pay up to twice as much for less nutritional value and they are twice as likely to suffer from diabetes as higher income New Yorkers."

Faith Leaders for Environmental Justice, also co-chaired by Charles Calloway of We ACT for Environmental Justice, is a collaboration between interfaith leaders committed to making deep impact on issues of environmental justice in New York City through coordinated collective action on issues such as food justice, climate justice, and energy conservation.

"As faith leaders," Harper added, "we have a moral mandate to speak up when the lives of the vulnerable are threatened by the systems that govern us. That is why groups like New York Faith and Justice, Interfaith Center of New York, Hazon, New York Theological Seminary, and New York Divinity School have banded together to lead this effort in partnership with several food justice advocacy groups."

Said Alexandra Yannias, coordinator of Interfaith Voices Against Hunger/Feed the Solution, an initiative of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, and facilitator of the Faith Leaders' food justice working group: "As more children suffer from hunger, obesity, and diabetes in our communities, we must improve federal legislation for child nutrition to create a healthier generation. We call on Congress to support a strong Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act by increasing the per meal reimbursement for school meals to allow the programs to purchase healthier foods and by making the programs universal in low-income neighborhoods."

Policy decisions must integrate a just and sustainable food system into the political structure of New York City.

Currently, fast food restaurants are subsidized by the city to locate at 125th street or above. Meanwhile, supermarkets are closing in that area and pharmacies are opening in their place to meet the high demands for diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease medication.

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer proposes the creation of a foodshed, similar to the city's watershed. A foodshed would create a 200-mile zone around New York City that could provide more fresh produce at a cheaper rate by taking advantage of local farms and distributors.

Said Stringer, "We need a paradigm shift in the way New York thinks about food. One of the most exciting next steps is the idea of a foodshed. The goal would not be to get 100 percent of our food from the foodshed but to get as much as possible in order to make locally grown fresh food more available, particularly to under-served communities, and to promote economic development in and around New York."

"Job standards are especially important, since under-served areas have the highest rates of poverty and unemployment," added Allen Strouse, Food Policy Associate for UFCW Local 1500, which serves the interests of 22,000 members. "Incentives need to guarantee that employers provide good jobs so that programs like FRESH truly benefit working-class New Yorkers. We need supermarkets that bring good food, good jobs, and good health."

Said Yannias, "We cannot continue to stand by as low-income communities in New York City suffer from hunger and diet-related diseases. We must take action now by calling on our representatives on the federal and city levels to improve how we feed our children and our communities."

Lisa Sharon Harper, who is also executive director of New York Faith & Justice, reflected, "For those who have much, food seems like an insignificant side issue. For those who have little, food is the difference between life and death, health or debt."

"We must redistribute the health in New York City," Harper added, "and we must do it now."

UFCW Local 1500 has been invited to help educate city council members on food access disparities today at 1pm hearing at the state office building.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



New Garden Friends School to Collaborate with International Nonprofit for Conflict Resolution

New Garden Friends School, an independent preschool through 12th-grade educational institution in N.C. affiliated with the Quaker faith, has been named the first academic hub for Boston University-based Axis of Hope, an international nonprofit devoted to conflict prevention. New Garden teachers will be certified to lead Axis of Hope workshops and will use the organization's curriculum in their classrooms. They also will train other educators in the techniques the foundation uses to help kids understand, manage and prevent conflict.

Greensboro, NC (PRWEB) June 22, 2009 -- Today New Garden Friends School announced a new collaborative partnership with the prestigious Axis of Hope Center for International Conflict Prevention based at Boston University. New Garden teachers will be certified to lead Axis of Hope workshops and will use the organization's curriculum in their classrooms beginning September 21, International Peace Day. They also will train other educators in the techniques the foundation uses to help kids understand, manage and prevent conflict.

New Garden Friends School is an independent, preschool-12th grade educational institution affiliated with the Quaker faith community. It is the first organization to be selected by the Axis of Hope to support and extend its work.

"We chose New Garden Friends School not only because of its academic excellence and progressive teaching techniques, but also because of its commitment to Quaker values that align with our foundation's mission," said educator Carl Hobert, founder of Axis of Hope. "Students are taught to respect each other, search for the truth, resolve conflict peacefully and understand the importance of community, stewardship and the environment."

The work of the Axis of Hope is grounded on the simple premise that it is best to help kids learn to manage conflict during their formative years, before they become hardened by life experiences. Through creatively-designed workshops offered in elementary, middle and high schools around the globe, students role-play and get hands-on practice in defusing and managing volatile situations. "If we go into a school struggling with gang violence or other destructive behaviors, we begin by getting the students to focus on a major conflict in the Middle East, Africa or some other global hotspot - far removed from the classroom," Hobert said. "Then they are better able to step back and apply what they've learned to the conflict in their own lives. That's the magic."

David Tomlin, head of New Garden Friends School, says the collaboration with Axis of Hope extends initiatives that are already underway at the school.

"Peace is one of the fundamentals of the Quaker faith and underpins how our teachers and students work together to prevent and manage conflict in the classroom," he said. "Through our affiliation with the Axis of Hope, we expect to build on that experience and to teach students the skills they need to become leaders in an increasingly complex world."

Training for the New Garden Friends School staff will get underway during September. For more information on the Axis of Hope, visit www.axisofhope.org. For more information on New Garden Friends School, visit



www.ngfs.org.

About New Garden Friends School

Founded in 1971, New Garden Friends School is part of a centuries-old tradition of Quaker education and is committed to the Quaker testimonies of peace, equality, truth, integrity, simplicity, community and stewardship. An interdisciplinary, hands-on approach to learning is designed to help students uncover their strengths, express themselves fully and become active community leaders.

New Garden Friends School serves pre-kindergarten through 8th graders from a lower-middle school on the Guilford College campus and 9th-12th graders from an upper school on Pleasant Ridge Road. The organization is a member of the Friends Council on Education, an association of more than 80 Friends schools across the nation committed to excellence in education.

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Online Web 2.0 VersionYou can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Ananda Village Celebrates 40th Anniversary of Yogananda's World Brotherhood Colonies

Ananda Village in Northern California will celebrate its 40th year as a successful intentional spiritual community over the July 4th weekend with a series of uplifting public events. Ananda Village was the first Ananda World Brotherhood Colony, as envisioned by Paramhansa Yogananda. Ananda Village is now one of 7 Ananda World Brotherhood Colonies including in Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; Sacramento and Mountain View, CA; Assisi, Italy; and Pune, India.

Nevada City, CA (PRWEB) June 22, 2009 -- Over a long July 4th weekend, Ananda Village will host a series of joyful and informative public programs and events to commemorate 40 years of success as an intentional spiritual community. The public is welcome to participate in a class with Ananda's founder, [Swami Kriyananda](#); a World Brotherhood Communities Fair, an outdoor evening concert of beautiful music performed by the World Brotherhood Choir, a new video about World Brotherhood Colonies worldwide, a picnic and a world kirtan on the Village Green, tours of Ananda Village and delicious vegetarian meals at [The Expanding Light Retreat](#). Sunday morning all are welcome to join our deeply inspiring Vedic Fire Ceremony, Purification, Sunday Service and Festival of Light.

The World Brotherhood Communities Fair will feature:

- *Comments from Swami Kriyananda
- *Nature Walks led by staff of The Sharing Nature Foundation
- *10 informative displays about aspects of this worldwide movement including
 - ** Ananda Yoga
 - ** Spiritual Retreats - Come & Stay!
 - ** Education for Life / Living Wisdom Schools / Ananda University
 - ** Permaculture & sustainability at Ananda Village
 - ** Crystal Clarity Publishing
 - ** Meditation & Kriya Yoga
 - ** Family Ministry
 - ** Spanish Ministry
 - ** Healing Prayer Ministry

July 4th commemorates the birth of our nation, the first country founded on a principle: religious freedom. So too, it marks the founding of Ananda Village, based on the principle of spiritual freedom. Both represent the emergence of a new age defined by a unified vision of harmony - with nature, with our fellow man, and with God. All are invited to join in this special weekend.

The media is most welcome. Swami Kriyananda will be available for interviews over this summer.

Some accommodations including tenting are still available within Ananda Village at The Expanding Light Retreat. Call 1-800-346-5350.



[Paramhansa Yogananda](#) is the great Guru who authored "Autobiography of a Yogi". He was the first yoga master to reside in the west. Yogananda's teachings embrace the truths that underlie all the great religions. His teachings show how everyone can realize God in their daily lives as a tangible, loving reality.

Swami Kriyananda has been a disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda for over 60 years. As one of Yogananda's foremost disciples he has inspired thousands all over the world. Kriyananda is a member of the prestigious Club of Budapest, where he is joined by such figures as the Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu and Mikhail Gorbachev. Swami has lectured, taught, and written over 90 books based on Yogananda's teachings. These have sold well over 3 million copies in 30 languages.

[Ananda](#) is a global movement based on the teachings of Paramhansa Yogananda. People from all faiths and backgrounds are welcomed at Ananda. All are invited to participate at Ananda's temples, yoga retreats, meditation groups, and communities to experience the joy of your own being.

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

The Year for Priests Opens: A Time for Rediscovering the Beauty and Importance of the Priesthood

Commentators from The Maximus Group are Available on Formation, Perspective, Life and Role of Priests

Atlanta, GA (Vocus) June 19, 2009 -- Pope Benedict XVI will open the "[Year for Priests](#)" today, June 19 in St. Peter's Basilica. "Faithfulness of Christ, faithfulness of priests" is the theme for a year that ends on June 19, 2010 in St. Peter's Square at a World Meeting of Priests. The year also marks the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, known as the "Curé of Ars."

According to the Vatican announcement, Pope Benedict stressed that priests need to be "present, identifiable and recognizable – for their judgment of faith, personal virtues and attire – in the fields of culture and of charity which have always been at the heart of the Church's mission." The Vatican's intention for the "Year for Priests" is to rebuild strong priestly spiritual identities, noting that "priests are important not only for what they do, but also for who they are."

In a letter to priests, the Holy See stressed that the Church "is proud of her priests, loves them, honors them, admires them and recognizes with gratitude their pastoral work and witness."

The prefect for the Congregation for the Clergy, Cardinal Claudio Hummes, is encouraging local dioceses and parishes to plan events that will "celebrate and show appreciation for priests."

The Maximus Group, the leading [Catholic communications](#) company in the United States, has assembled a variety of spokespersons to speak on multiple aspects of the Catholic priesthood. Here is a sampling of available commentators:

- Fr. Richard Gabuzda – Executive Director of The Institute for Priestly Formation; Fr. Gabuzda can speak on the spirituality of the priest in today's world;
- Dr. Christine Mugridge – Theologian, social communications expert and editor of *Called by Name: The Inspiring Stories of 12 Men Who Became Catholic Priests*;
- Deacon James Keating – Director of Theological Formation for The Institute for Priestly Formation, and author of *Resting on the Heart of Christ*, a new book that guides seminary theologians in their formation of young priests;
- Jeremy Stanbary – International performer and Founder of Epiphany Studio Productions; writer, producer and star of *Lolek*, a popular one-man drama about the young adulthood of Pope John Paul II, focusing on his vocation and call to the priesthood;
- Fr. Michael Najim – Vocations Director for the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island and author of *Radical Surrender: Letters to Seminarians* (Released July 2009);
- Fr. Robert Barron – Francis Cardinal George Chair of Faith and Culture at the University of St. Mary of the Lake / Mundelein Seminary, and author and founder of *Word on Fire Ministries*; Fr. Barron can speak on the vow



of celibacy and address the controversy it evokes in the culture;

- Dr. Pia de Solenni – Moral theologian, cultural commentator and expert on women’s issues can address the Church’s position on women in the priesthood;
- Fr. John Bartunek, LC – Author of *Inside the Passion* and *The Better Part: A Christ-Centered Resource for Personal Prayer*, Fr. John can share his personal call to the priesthood, a call that drew him away from a career as a model and actor.
- Fr. David Toups – Associate Director of the Secretariat of Clergy at the USCCB, and author of *Reclaiming Our Priestly Character* (Released January 2008); Fr. Toups can speak to contemporary priestly life in light of a thoughtful review of the crisis surrounding priestly identity in the culture
- Fr. Thomas Berg – Executive Director of the Westchester Institute for Ethics and the Human Person, Fr. Berg can speak on the modern role of priest in the public square;
- Dr. Art Bennett – Director of the Alpha Omega Clinics and author of *The Temperament God Gave You*; is a psychologist who helps priests in their role as counselor to the everyday Catholic facing crisis’ relating to morality and sexuality.

Full biographies of these commentators and their topics are available.

For interview requests or additional information, please contact Schicker at 404-610-8871 or Walker at 678-990-9032, both with the Maximus Group.

The Maximus Group, LLC – The Maximus Group, a Catholic communications agency, first offered this unprecedented service to the media in 2005 at the time of the passing of Pope John Paul II, during the interregnum and papal conclave period that concluded with the election and installation of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger as Pope Benedict XVI. Media outlets regularly return to Maximus when faced with a need for commentary from a Catholic perspective.

Maximus’ mission includes providing cultural commentary from reliable, informed, authentic sources who can provide intelligent and entertaining dialogue on topics relating to faith, value-based issues and the Catholic Church.

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You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Authors on Blog Tour Answer Questions about Asking Questions

Two Chicago authors are beginning a blog tour to talk about the challenges of parenting, connecting with one's children, and conversing with kids about everything from God to growing up.

Chicago, IL (Vocus) June 19, 2009 -- Two Chicago authors are beginning a blog tour to talk about the challenges of parenting, connecting with one's children, and conversing with kids about everything from God to growing up.

These two authors recently released [The Meal Box](#) - a new mealtime product created to "get conversations cookin'." National best-selling question-book author Bret Nicholaus and family expert Tom McGrath, created 54 two-sided cards. On one side of each card is a totally fun and creative question to get general conversation going; the reverse side contains a family faith tip that relates to the question and allows mom or dad to comfortably segue into various faith-related topics with their children.

This new product prompted a national blog tour which will run from June 22nd - June 24th on the following blogs:

- June 22nd - [Catholic-Chicks.com](#)
- June 23rd - [CatholicMom.com](#)
- June 24th - [MyMommyManual.com](#)
- June 25th - [PeopleforOthers.com](#)

Bloggers and their readers will have the opportunity to "chat" with the authors, and question them about The Meal Box, parenting challenges, how to connect and communicate with children, and much more. A copy of The Meal Box will be raffled off at each blog and a special discount for purchasing copies of The Meal Box will also be available.

Additional blog tour stops will be forthcoming.

More information can be found at: [newsroom.loyolapress.com](#)

About the Authors

Bret Nicholaus is the coauthor of the national best-selling question book *The Conversation Piece* (over 200,000 copies sold), as well as nearly twenty other books designed to get people talking. Bret and his wife, Christina, have two young boys.

Tom McGrath is the author of a multitude of family resources, including the best seller *Raising Faith-Filled Kids*. He is a frequent speaker on faith formation in the family. Tom and his wife, Kathleen, have two grown daughters.

The Meal Box: Fun Questions and Family Tips to Get Mealtime Conversations Cookin'
Bret Nicholaus and Tom McGrath



Plastic box \$9.95
978-0-8294-2813-1

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

News Image





Salesian Missions Launches First-Ever National Awareness Campaign

Campaign ads ask, "What's your mission?" in support of Salesian Missions and utilizes social networking sites

New Rochelle, NY (Vocus) June 18, 2009 -- This month marked the launch of Salesian Missions first-ever national awareness campaign. The campaign includes the nonprofit organization's first television commercial and a new campaign website at www.FindYourMission.org.

The "[What's your mission?](#)" campaign is the first-ever national awareness campaign for Salesian Missions. The purpose of the campaign is to shed light on the work of Salesian Missions all around the globe, and the 3 million children who have been helped to date in more than 130 countries. This new national campaign also celebrates the more than 5 million Americans who have financially contributed to this work while reaching out to new audiences that will help to further important programs helping children around the globe.

A key element of the campaign is highlighting those who make a difference through generous donations - and empowering the audience to join them. The campaign features "real people" - Salesian Missions staff and others connected to the charity - adding not only a personal touch to the campaign message, but highlighting in a real way those who have already given so much to the organization. The campaign also invites others to join in, asking them to upload "What's your mission?" videos on YouTube with a chance to be featured in the campaign.

"The great work that Salesian Missions does around the globe in more than 130 countries too often goes unnoticed by the public at large," says Father Mark Hyde, SDB, Director of Salesian Missions. "Raising more resources and attracting new donors will depend heavily on getting our message out for people to hear and see."

The campaign has many features, including:

- New logo and campaign slogan
- National television commercial
- New campaign website (FindYourMission.org)
- Internet ads
- "In the Know" news segments on Direct TV
- Online social networking tools such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook
- Public relations campaign
- Cause-marketing partnerships

Salesian Missions has been working with Shoestring Creative Group, its advertising and public relations agency, since August 2008 to get ready for the June 2009 launch of the campaign.

Campaign commercials were filmed on location at the Salesian Missions New Rochelle, NY, headquarters in April 2009, and will run for five weeks beginning June 15. The commercials, already available on the campaign



website and YouTube, can be viewed on such stations as A&E, CNN, Discovery and the Travel Channel as well as other national cable stations. The campaign commercials invites viewers to go to the campaign website to answer the question, "What's your mission?"

By using real people to ask the audience "What's your mission?" the call to action is strong and sincere. To answer the call to action, the audience is given the campaign website address: FindYourMission.org. The new campaign website allows site visitors to find their missions through an interactive tool that highlights the work Salesian Missions does in more than 130 countries around the world.

The website reads: "No matter what issue or country around the world tugs at your heart, Salesian Missions supports what you care about most."

To answer the question "[What's your mission?](#)" go to FindYourMission.org today.

ABOUT SALESIAN MISSIONS: Salesian Missions is headquartered in New Rochelle, NY. The mission of the U.S.-based nonprofit Catholic organization is to raise funds for its international programs that serve youth and families in poor communities around the globe. The Salesian missionaries are made up of priests, brothers and sisters, as well as laypeople - all dedicated to caring for poor children throughout the world in more than 130 countries, helping young people become self-sufficient by learning a trade that will help them gain employment. To date, more than 3 million youth have received services funded by Salesian Missions. These services and programs are provided to children regardless of race or religion. To date, more than 5 million Americans have contributed financially to this work. For more information, go to www.findyourmission.org

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Ohio Catholic Priest Comes OUT as a Drag Queen with a Billboard Dance Hit

In celebration of Gay Pride Month, Big Mama Capretta reveals the surprise truth about her identity. By day, Capretta is none other than Father Anthony, a proud practicing Catholic priest from Columbus, Ohio! Big Mama Capretta's new hit single 'Big Mama's House' is currently #25 on the U.S. Billboard Club Play dance chart.

Los Angeles, CA (PRWEB) June 18, 2009 -- Gigantic vibrations are growing even larger with Big Mama Capretta's new hit single 'Big Mama's House' currently #25 on the U.S. Billboard Club Play dance chart. In celebration of Gay Pride Month, [Big Mama Capretta](#) reveals the surprise truth about her identity. By day, Capretta is none other than Father Anthony (aka Vincent Capretta), a proud practicing Catholic priest from Columbus, Ohio. By night, Big Mama Capretta is one heck of a fun drag queen performing for her minions!

"It's Big Mama y'all! And, I am no longer afraid to come out of the closet as a gay Catholic Priest!" shouts the 'out-and-proud' Big Mama Capretta aka Father Anthony Capretta. "Thank you everyone for buying, playing and charting 'Big Mama's House.' I am living proof that a person can do anything they set their mind to. We have to love and enjoy ourselves in this world. And, I am enjoying my life being who I am and who God intended me to be! Now, let's DANCE y'all!"

Not only does Big Mama Capretta have a hit song on the Billboard club dance chart, she also recently auditioned for 'America's Got Talent' for this summer's competition. To watch the new Big Mama's House video on YouTube visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjREbIMddkM>.

The buoyant kitschy track, produced by international dance music producer Rod Carrillo, is making crowds go wild with infatuation. Capretta's unforgettable 'Big Mama's House' single has a complete bump and grind remix package with the likes of Chris Shannon, DJ Kilo, Peter Brown, Tim Schommer, The Perry Twins and Rod Carrillo.

The new hot track and remixes are available at [iTunes](#) and [Masterbeat.com](#) for purchase.

Make some more room on the dance floor y'all - Big Mama has definitely arrived!

ABOUT CAPRETТА

Capretta began his music career at the age of seven studying music theory and classical guitar at the renown Cleveland Music School Settlement. Winning radio talent contests at the age of twelve led Capretta to vocal scholarship in the Opera Department of the prominent Cleveland Institute of Music. In addition to serving as lead tenor for the Cleveland Civic Light Opera for two seasons, Capretta has held several leading roles in professional and community theater. Capretta was featured at the New Music Seminar in New York City in 1986 in response to his first music video 'Fallin Again'. In 1987, Capretta hit the national Eurobeat charts in the United States on LSA Records with his covers of the disco classics 'I Will Survive' and 'Turn the Beat Around' and again in 1990 with 'Never Knew Love Like This Before'. Capretta hit the European dance charts in 1992 on Loading Bay



Records with his rendition of the classic 'It's My Party' and his featured on the Best of Loading Bay High Energy Volume I. Topping the Playboy Cable Channel Hot Rock's chart in 1993 with his #1 steamy music video 'Puerto Rican Sex', Capretta is also known for his successful music video 'Stormy Weather' on ETV and RockAmerica in 1996. Now Capretta resurfaces in 2009 on CM Records with the huge dance floor anthem 'Big Mama's House' produced by International dance music producer Rod Carrillo.

For more information on Capretta please visit: <http://www.capretta.co.uk>

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).



Church Signs Fill Advertising Gap for Cash-Strapped Churches reports EZSignsOnline.com

More and more congregations are relying on Market Street Church Signs with changeable copy to advertise their services and events. It is one of the most cost-effective ways to advertise, because each time they need to advertise or promote a new church event, they can use the same sign.

Worton, Md. (PRWEB) June 18, 2009 -- It's one of those effects of a bad economy that you seldom consider until someone mentions it: Churches are not advertising as much, and as a result, are not drawing as many people to their services (as reported by D. Burke, [Religion News Service](#)).

The lagging advertising trend is due to a couple of reasons, both related to the current recession: First, people are giving less in the church offering, which means the church has less money to spend on radio or newspaper ads. And second, newspapers, which are on the verge of extinction, are raising their ad rates, struggling to break even--and often pricing churches out of the market.

Wayne Hebert is owner of [EZSignsOnline.com LLC](#). He sees more and more congregations relying on their affordable Market Street Church Signs to advertise their services and events. And he says this is at least partly due to the struggling economy. "Churches really have felt the punch of the recession. And unfortunately, one of the first things they let go is their advertising budget. But the smart ones have started to see that a church sign, with changeable text, is one of the most cost-effective ways to advertise, because each time you need to advertise a new event, you can use the same sign; you don't have to dump new money into a newspaper ad that fewer and fewer people are seeing anyway."

Hebert says it was this cost-effectiveness that his company had in mind when they began developing their [Market Street Church Signs](#). "These Market Street Church Signs utilize a 'marquee style' changeable lettering system. A complete set of letters are included. They are available in 3 different sizes to suit your needs. We can personalize your new church sign with plain text or full color artistic layouts using your logo, photo and graphics or ours. "

The signs are made from a 1" thick solid PVC signboard and designed for maintenance free long term outdoor use. The company also offers several mounting options and all of their signs feature easy, fast assembly and installation.

Another issue that Hebert says was foremost in his mind in developing his lines of signs was the weather. During the summer months, which is the height of severe-weather season in many parts of the country, many conventional signs can take quite a beating. "The best church signs are those which can handle what Mother Nature can dish out, so wherever you get your church sign,, I would encourage you to keep the weather foremost in your mind," Hebert says. "It's a waste of money to get a sign that's destroyed the first few months you have it. Purchase a sign that is designed for long-term outdoor use with no maintenance required."



Hebert notes that his company's signs are rigid, strong and lightweight and handle all weather conditions well. "I also want to do a favor to churches, especially those who are struggling financially," Hebert says. "So during the summer months, when I know a lot of churches traditionally have a lot of events going on that they need to promote, we're offering [15 percent off](#) all our list prices, and special discounted shipping rates. We are also offering a [free fundraising window decal program](#) to assist churches in raising funds for their new church sign. The fundraiser decals are available free of charge. With at least a \$5.00 suggested retail price, your church building committee can then sell these decals as a fundraiser. Your church keeps 100% of the proceeds to offset your recent purchase of a new church entrance sign from us."

For more information, or to view complete options with pricing visit <http://www.EZSignsOnline.com>

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Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).

News Image





Smokey River Boys Will Participate in OBAMA Liberty Project for Handicapped School Children With Greatest Country Hits Package

The legendary Smokey River Boys released their #1 Greatest Country Hits package this week in conjunction with CMA Fest. The package contains the song "Lady Liberty" written for the OBAMA Liberty project for handicapped school children. Proceeds from the Liberty project will be given to various charity organizations worldwide.

Nashville, TN, New York, NY and Hollywood, CA (PRWEB) June 17, 2009 -- The legendary Smokey River Boys will participate in the OBAMA Liberty project for handicapped school children world wide with the release of "Lady Liberty," a song written and available on the #1 GREATEST COUNTRY HITS package just released on Platinum Plus Universal Records.

The project which showcases the Statue Of Liberty song, tells the story of how important freedom is to the world's needy children. This Smokey River Boys #1 Greatest Country Hits package of 14 Billboard #1 songs celebrates the 40 year history of the Smokey River Boys on MCA Universal. The group which came to national prominence during the "O BROTHER" movie which starred George Clooney have 5 incredible albums out. "The #1 Greatest Country Hits package is without question one of their all time legendary best," says Mikel Gore of Entertainment Headline News. The SRB have 7 Grammy awards and a long successful history of country bluegrass titles that form one of the most valuable song catalogs in ASCAP song history with Dueling Banjos, Best Of Banjo, O Brother, Down To The River To Pray and their "live" version on the Grand Ole Opry of Man Of Constant Sorrow.

The [Smokey River Boys](#) have participated in the OBAMA Liberty project and donated all the proceeds from their song, "Lady Liberty" to handicapped children's charity. The Smokey River Boys are one of the premiere Nashville based recording artists in the country bluegrass genre. They were elected to the Legends Hall Of Fame in 2003, the West Texas Hall Of Fame in 2005, the Pioneers Of Bluegrass Hall Of Fame in 2007 and were nominated for the Texas Medal of Arts in 2008.

Lead singer, [Robert Metzgar](#) penned the OBAMA song "Lady Liberty" about the Statue Of Liberty and is published by Walt Disney Music ASCAP. Together, Robert Metzgar and his mother, [Janie Metzgar](#) have a 75 year history at ASCAP and are considered "ASCAP icons in the songwriting business." Their release of Man Of Constant Sorrow appeared on the Americana charts for 144 weeks consecutively for one of the longest running [ASCAP](#) songs in bluegrass history.

Earlier greatest hits packages of the Smokey River Boys appeared as Time-Life-Warner vinyl sets. As one of the more progressive groups in country bluegrass type sounds, the Smokey River Boys have agreed to release this package first through the world's greatest indie site, [CD Baby](#) and the digital downloads will be available for 30 days exclusively on iTunes.com and other digital outlets in partnership with CD Baby. "We want to express our deepest appreciation for the coverage that Billboard magazine has given our 40 year music career in Nashville."

Along with songs like "Man Of Constant Sorrow, Down To The River To Pray, and O Brother," the boys have brought their best & biggest hits back with songs like "Number One Lady, Here's a Rose, and When You've Got



Each Other." Future album projects are already in the works such as the Smokey River Boys In Hollywood, A Smokey River Boys Christmas and the sequel to the O Brother movie. The Smokey River Boys are extremely proud of the world's most famous indie site, at CD BABY where all their product is available for purchase in album format, mp3 or digital download. The SRB are huge supporters of CD Baby which has delivered and sold more indie product than any other site in the music business.

For all the Smokey River Boys product simply go to [MySpace](#) or [Smokey River Boys](#) or purchase Smokey River Boys product exclusively at [CD Baby](#)

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Upcoming Brilliance Preschool & Academy Open House to Showcase Teachers, Educational Programs, and Parental Resources

If you are looking to review and experience the services provided by the Brilliance Preschool & Academy, June 30th will be your best opportunity.

(PRWEB) June 16, 2009 -- One of the most important aspects of any educational community is the opportunity for parents to experience the same things that their children are. A fast approaching open house allows for just that. Although parents can schedule an appointment to take a tour at any time, an open house scheduled for 5-7 p.m. on June 30th will be your best opportunity to view and interact with their teachers and educational programs. In addition, you can learn what you can do as a parent to be more involved in your child's education and their proper development.

The educational programs offered by Brilliance Preschool & Academy, a Private School in North Dallas, focus upon the 5 core elements that make up any high-quality style of learning. These 5 elements (Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Confidence and Character) are melded together to form an all around approach to the learning process that will benefit your child in more ways than many conventional programs can offer. There are programs offered at Brilliance Academy, for all levels of early development starting at 18 Months, Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st through 4th grades.

Brilliance Preschool & Academy incorporates a committee made up of the parents of current students that is called the Brilliance Parent Association (BPA). As Kelly Mayberry, Director of Brilliance Preschool & Academy stresses, "parent involvement is one of the most influential elements to the social development of their child". All parents of current students are welcome to attend these meetings to help plan activities and events in which their children participate.

Parents that participate in the upcoming open house will have a valuable opportunity to meet with the teachers involved in their child's program and experience all of the programs that Brilliance Preschool & Academy has to offer. Feel free to ask about their soon to be implemented Outdoor Art Studio during the tour as this is just one of the exciting new projects that Brilliance Preschool & Academy will be undertaking.

For additional information about Brilliance Preschool & Academy, visit:

www.BrillianceAcademy.com

About Brilliance Preschool & Academy

Originally a preschool educational facility, Brilliance Preschool & Academy was founded in January of 1996 to fill a need for preschool education. In the following years, the institution added 1st - 4th grades based on the success of their original programs.

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Greek-Catholics Ask U.S. Secretary of State Clinton and European Union to Help End Religious Cleansing in Romania

Greek-Catholics continue to suffer severe discrimination, and cultural and religious cleansing in Romania, despite the fall of communism 20 years ago. The Greek-Catholics are a religious minority in Romania, and the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church is one of the Eastern Rite Churches in communion with the Pope.

Laguna Hills, CA (PRWEB) June 15, 2009 -- Father Mihai Grigor, the Greek-Catholic priest of Sapanta, Romania, [sent a letter on June 3 to all embassies in Bucharest](#) whose countries are members of the European Union, requesting international support to save the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta, which is currently being destroyed despite a court order.

In 2008, the U.S. Department of State recognized persecution of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania in two reports. Its [Human Rights Report](#) says, "Restrictions on freedom of religion continued to be a great concern due to the restrictive, discriminatory religion law. Property restitution remained slow, and the government failed to take action to return the Greek Catholic churches confiscated by the communist government in 1948. ... There were numerous disputes over churches that the Orthodox Church did not return to the Greek Catholic Church despite court orders to do so." Thus, on May 13, 2009, Father Chris Terhes, president of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Association, released a [letter to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) requesting intervention with the Romanian government to end the persecution of Greek-Catholics, and restore human rights and religious liberties. In the letter, Fr. Terhes also addressed the ongoing destruction of the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta.

In 1886, the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta, Maramures County in Romania, was built in the neo-Gothic architectural style. As the U.S. government reports, in 1948 all churches and properties of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania were confiscated by the Communist regime and given to the Romanian Orthodox Church. After the fall of Communism in 1989, the Romanian government refused to return these properties, so the Greek-Catholic Church had to file lawsuits to regain its consecrated land and church buildings. As the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights reports, many of the lawsuits are delayed unreasonably ([Greek-Catholic Parish Sfântul Vasile Polona v. Romania](#)).

Even when the Romanian Orthodox Church built a new church in Sapanta, it refused to return the Greek-Catholic church to its rightful owner. To this day, Fr. Grigor must celebrate Holy Mass for his parishioners in a storage shed, and it is painfully similar to religious persecution conducted by the former Communist regime against the Greek-Catholic community.

Furthermore, the Romanian Orthodox Church started destroying the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta. Therefore, on April 23, 2009, [the Sighetu Marmatiei Court of Justice, Maramures County, issued an order](#) stating "...cease the demolition and construction works performed by the defendant (Sapanta Orthodox parish) for the Greek Catholic Church, owned by the plaintiff" (case no. 1132/307/2009). Yet Romanian Orthodox Church officials in Sapanta continue demolition of the Greek-Catholic church. The [U.S. Human Rights Report](#) confirms



that "the demolition of the Greek-Catholic churches is taking place under various pretexts to shield them from restitution".

Thus, all relevant Romanian authorities, from the president to the prime minister to the chief of police and others, were notified many times in writing by the Greek-Catholic Parish in Sapanta about the violation of the court order, but no one is enforcing the law so the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta continues to be destroyed.

Fr. Grigor said, "How can there be an independent justice system that works in Romania when government authorities are not applying the law for all citizens? This is not the first Greek-Catholic church to be demolished in Romania after the fall of the Communism."

Instead, greater threats are added to injury. Fr. Grigor said, "Representatives of the Romanian Orthodox Church threaten us even through the media. They say that nobody can stop them and they will take this situation into their own hands. In fact, one of our believers was threatened with death by an Orthodox representative. So, what should we believe? In what country and what union do we live?"

Just as he appealed to members of the European Union, Fr. Grigor explained, "We have reasons to believe that the destruction of the Greek-Catholic church in Sapanta, adjacent to the Merry Cemetery - a national landmark - is part of the cultural and religious cleansing that the Romanian government is perpetuating against the Greek-Catholic community and Greek-Catholic heritage."

Fr. Grigor's letter was sent along with documents proving that the church is a Greek-Catholic property, plus the court order translated into English, in addition to pictures showing the destructive cultural cleansing that the Greek-Catholics of Sapanta are suffering. For pictures and other details, please visit www.rogca.org.

The Romanian Greek-Catholic Association Inc. is a non-profit organization that supports the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania, assists the needy in Romania, and provides public awareness about the discrimination and persecution of the Greek-Catholic Church and Greek-Catholic believers in Romania.

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Kellita Smith Of The "Bernie Mac Show" Takes To The Stage In A Powerful New Play

Kellita Smith Stars in Powerful New Play.

Los Angeles, CA (PRWEB) June 15, 2009 -- "Don't get it twisted. I'm not the same woman you knew twenty years ago," declares Samantha Cooke, played by Kellita Smith in "One Woman, Two Lives" making it's world debut July 17, 2009 at The Imagined Life Theater (formerly 2100 Square Feet). www.Onewomantwolives.com.

In "One Woman, Two Lives" the strikingly beautiful Smith, ("The Bernie Mac Show," "King's Ransom", "Three Can Play that Game", Best Supporting Actress NAACP Theater Award Winner - "Feelings") magnificently portrays Samantha Cooke, a complex and conflicted woman torn between two worlds fighting to sustain and protect her family from a past that threatens to undermine her almost perfect present. Married to Jonathan, a successful mega preacher, portrayed by an equally talented Thomas Bell ("Cupids Arrow", "The Message"), Samantha has been voted First Lady of the Year. However, the accolade causes the mother of three to doubt herself and her worthiness. In spite of receiving encouragement from her family and neighbors, Michael portrayed by Sammie Wayne and Belinda, portrayed by Karen Malina White ("Cosbys," "A Different World" and "Malcolm and Eddie"), Samantha can't seem to shake the uneasiness that has begun to envelop her. As the play takes on surprising and startling twists and turns, her doubts and worries unfortunately become warranted.

Three time NAACP Best Director Image Award recipient Denise Dowse is the director of this intriguing and ground breaking stage play. No stranger to taking the written word from the page to stage in creative and talented fashion, Dowse, a veteran actress, ("Ray", "Coach Carter") elicits beautiful and memorable performances from this ensemble cast which also stars veteran and award winning actors Esther Scott ("You Got Served", "Dreamgirls", The Geena Davis Show") who plays the outspoken mother-in-law Edna, Billy Mayo ("Desperate Housewives", "The Traveler") who plays a deliciously duplicitous Melvin Foster and also features child actors Diamond Summers, Sarah Nanko, Lavaunte Jackson and Evan Thurman.

"One Woman, Two Lives," is written by Alretha Thomas who has penned several other plays produced in the Los Angeles area including NAACP Theatre Award winning play Civil Rites (2004), A Shrine to Junior (2002) nominated for an NAACP Theatre Award as well, Grandpa's Truth (2006), Sacrificing Simone (2007) and her first novel "Daughter Denied."

Performances of "One Woman, Two Lives," on Friday's and Saturday's are at 8pm. Sunday performances are at 3pm; from July 17 through August 23, 2009 at the Imagined Life Theatre, (formerly 2100 Sq Ft) located at 5615 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90019. General admission tickets are \$25.00. For reservations, group sales and more information regarding "One Woman, Two Lives" produced by Diverse Arts Collective, please call 626-858-1907 and or go to www.Onewomantwolives.com. Tickets can be purchased online at www.ticketweb.com and or by calling 866-468-3399. Tickets can also be purchased at the door (cash only please).

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