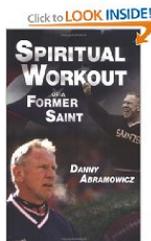


# First Annual Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference

By all accounts, the first attempt to put on a Catholic Men's Conference in Connecticut was a huge success. Over 800 men from around the state attended the event, which was held on Saturday November 15h at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. The conference featured inspirational talks from several speakers, including our own Connecticut bishops. Organizers Bob Marcarelli and Jim O'Day spent over two years preparing for the event which left the attendees feeling emotionally high and spiritually charged. The conference was designed to make all attendees better fathers, husbands, and Catholic men.

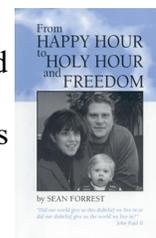


The keynote speaker for the event was Danny Abramowicz, the former NFL Wide Receiver and coach who has been very active in Catholic men's ministry.

Abramowicz gave a great witness to the Faith - including his success in the NFL, his family, his bout with alcoholism, and his spiritual reawakening. Abramowicz's story and his strategy for increasing spiritual strength is outlined in his new book, [Spiritual Workout of a Former Saint](#). He is also a co-host of the very popular TV and radio

show called [Crossing the Goal](#) which can currently be seen on EWTN on Friday evenings from 9-9:30 PM and Sunday evenings from 6:30-7 PM, heard on [WJMJ](#) at FM 88.9 on Sunday evenings from 6:30-7 PM, or viewed on the Internet at the [Crossing the Goal](#) web site.

Connecticut's own Sean Forrest, a singer/songwriter and Youth Minister who held a concert at Sacred Heart Church in 2003, gave a great talk regarding his conversion story (documented in his book [From Happy Hour to Holy Hour and Freedom](#)), what he's seen and heard from Catholic teens today, and what we can do to help. Sean holds retreats and conferences for tens of thousands of youth each year, and his [Moving With the Spirit](#) ministry has been a huge success. His ministry is currently also involved in building a school, orphanage and clinic in the villages of Dandann and Duverger, Haiti.



Father Larry Richards is known for his inspiring and life changing speeches, and this talk was no exception. Father Larry spoke of our need to put God first in our lives, the necessity for a personal relationship with Jesus, and of the importance of the recognition of sin in our lives and frequent confession. The [Reason For Our Hope](#)

[Foundation](#) was founded by Fr. Larry Richards in answer to 1 Peter 3:15: "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope." The mission of the Foundation is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and His Church through various multimedia resources and to make available Catholic speakers who are effective instruments of this evangelization. The Foundation also helps various charities that make real the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Father Larry's talks can be ordered from the [Reason For Our Hope Foundation](#) web site, or you can listen to him online at [RelevantRadio.com](#).

Other speakers included Sean Wolfington, entrepreneur, financier and producer of the phenomenal film [Bella](#), and Father Charles Sikorsky of the [Institute for Psychological Sciences](#).

Archbishop Mansell celebrated mass during the afternoon with concelebrants Bishop Lori, Bishop Cote, and Auxiliary Bishop Rosazza. During his homily, Archbishop Mansell spoke out boldly against President-Elect Obama's proposed Freedom of Choice Act which would stifle Pro-Life efforts. During an earlier talk, Bishop Lori also spoke about the importance of family and the degradation of the institution of marriage in



Connecticut with the passage of the recent Connecticut supreme court ruling. In between talks and during the lunch break, several priests were on hand to administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation - and the lines were amazingly long!

The conference also featured a fantastic vendor fair which included representatives from Connecticut based Catholic book stores such as our own [St. Anthony Book and Gift Shop](#) in downtown Seymour, retreat centers such as the [Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center](#) and [My Father's House Retreat Center](#), [Holy Apostles College and Seminary](#), [EWTN](#), [The Knights of Columbus](#), [Lighthouse Catholic Media](#), and [The Family Institute of Connecticut](#).

More information on the First Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference can be found at <https://www.ctcatholicmen.org>. If you unfortunately missed the event, hopefully some of the links on the page will help to give you a taste of what the event was like - until next year's conference that is!