

## ***2019 Spirit FM Catholic Women's Conference***

### ***Meet the Speakers***

#### **Fr. Larry Richards**



Fr. Larry Richards is a favorite on Spirit FM! His talks can be heard every Monday morning at 11:30am. A gifted and captivating speaker, preacher, retreat master and author, Father Larry Richards holds the answer to some of life's most profound questions. He speaks from experience as a pastor of an inner city parish, a high school chaplain, a counselor and evangelist. Fr. Larry Richards has directed hundreds of Retreats, Parish Missions and Conferences for young and old alike. His inspirational talks and presentations, always authentic and enthusiastic, have changed the hearts, minds, and lives of millions of listeners worldwide. He continues to accept invitations for speaking engagements all over the United States and in Canada and has recently traveled abroad to continue his mission of evangelization.

Father Larry currently serves as pastor of St. Joseph Church/Bread of Life Community in Erie, Pennsylvania. In 2004 Father founded The Reason For Our Hope Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to 'spreading the Good News' by educating others about Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith through CDs, DVDs and books.

He is the author of "Be a Man! Becoming the Man God Created You to Be", a #1 best seller for Ignatius Press, having sold over 100,000 copies. He also has a second book called "Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God's Will" published by Our Sunday Visitor which has sold over 40,000 copies. Father released a Catholic Men's Bible, NABRE, with Our Sunday Visitor in 2014, and also a Scripture Devotional Calendar entitled "No Bible, No Breakfast! No Bible, No Bed!" Father hosts the EWTN radio show called "The Reason For Our Hope", and a live EWTN radio show called "Open Line". Fr. Larry also hosts a radio show called "Changed Forever with Father Larry Richards" that can be heard nationwide on Relevant Radio

## Leah Darrow



Leah Darrow is a speaker that challenges her international audiences to live their lives in accordance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. She speaks on topics which include modesty, chastity, mercy, conversion, and human dignity.

Leah first gained international attention with her debut on the reality television show, America's Next Top Model. Following her time on the reality show, Leah continued to work in the world of modeling making appearances in many national and international publications. As she neared completion on what was to be her last photo shoot, Leah had an experience that set her life on a different course. Realizing her profession placed her in situations in which she was not truly comfortable, Leah left the modeling industry and has devoted herself to speaking about Gospel of Jesus Christ and helping people find their love, acceptance, and beauty in Him.

Leah emphasizes that the temporal world sells a kind of happiness that is driven by possessions, beauty, and money and points out that these things can never bring true satisfaction. She also enjoys speaking to women about the many gifts, talents, and abilities they have to offer and endeavors to teach them how to embrace their God-given dignity through being classy, fabulous, and faithful.

Leah Darrow has graduated with high honors with her bachelor's in Psychology from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and master's in Theology from the Augustine Institute. She is the creator and host of the Do Something Beautiful podcast, author of *The Other Side of Beauty* and co-founder of the LUX Conference, a women's conference for young adult Catholic professionals.

Leah is wife to a US Army Green Beret and mom to three marvelous, crazy little kids, and together they live in St. Louis, Missouri.

## Elizabeth Bunbury



As you enter Elizabeth Bunbury's studio at Saint Petersburg Clay Company, Elizabeth looks like she has been playing in the sand. With her head, shoulders, knees and toes covered with dried clay; one can see that she has been at it all day.

Having experienced grief through the death of a husband, living with a spouse suffering from alcoholism and drug addiction, and the loss that comes with divorce, Elizabeth received strength and encouragement from women throughout her journey. In March of 2008, Elizabeth decided that she wanted to celebrate life by throwing herself a party for her 50th birthday. "I wanted to give something back to the women who mean so much in my life," says Elizabeth. She decided that she would make crosses.

Over 100 crosses of all sizes, shapes, and colors adorned the walls of her sun porch. As a party favor, each woman chose their "perfectly flawed" cross as unique and different as themselves - except one woman, Julie, who resisted taking a cross.

She explained to Elizabeth and the other women at the party that she was agnostic. She had fallen away from the church full of anger, resentment and confusion. Elizabeth acknowledged her story and let her be. The next morning, as their paths crossed, Julie said, "I left there and took this cross. I took the ugliest, most beaten up cross. It was imperfect in so many ways. It was also the most beautiful. The cross spoke to me. I related it to my personal faith, which felt bent, chipped and broken." She carried it for months as a reminder of the blessings in her life. Eventually, Julie passed her cross forward. Her new cross is a softer, smoother one and reflects the healing that came from this sharing of faith and hope.

Elizabeth credits this story for inspiring Answered Prayers Cross, Inc. – a nonprofit outreach ministry - believing that all prayers are answered here on Earth as people cross paths with one another. Every morning she offers up her prayer: "Here I am Lord, what can I do for you today?" As you leave her studio, you are inspired to open your heart, to find hope, to listen to others, to give freely... to share your story.

(Written by Nicole Hawthorne)

## Abby Watts Conference MC



Abby is the host of the award-winning “Big, Big, House Morning Show” on Spirit FM 90.5. Each weekday listeners throughout the Tampa Bay area know they have a friend in the car with them that can understand those hectic days when we might not be *exactly* living out our faith the way we intended! Abby pulls it all together and makes sense out of the chaos that can demand control. With a focus on prayer and obedience, Abby leads us back to the calm place with our Lord and Savior.

Abby is also an author and blogger and is married to Davis Watts (More Music Midday host). They are parishioner at Nativity Catholic Church and call Seffner, Florida home.