

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Catholic Church at Downtown Crossing Hosts Prize-Winning Play  
*Conversations with My Molester: A Journey of Faith***

Written & performed by Michael Mack

Directed by Daniel Gidron

[www.michaelmacklive.com](http://www.michaelmacklive.com)

**Venue:** St. Anthony Shrine

**Address:** 100 Arch Street, Boston, MA 02110 (Downtown Crossing)

**Show Times:** Fri 3/10 @ 6:00, Sun 3/12 @ 1:45, Sun 3/19 @ 1:45, Sat 1/25 @ 7:00

**Cost:** FREE and open to the public

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Boston MA – Poet, playwright, and actor Michael Mack will perform ***Conversations with My Molester: A Journey of Faith***, his "powerful" (*Washington Post*) one-man play "given a standing ovation" (*The New York Times*) at St. Anthony Shrine Catholic Church in Boston for four (4) shows during Lent.

Following every show, an audience talkback will feature Mack and volunteer priests, including Fr. Tom Conway OFM, Executive Director of St. Anthony Shrine, in a candid question-and-answer session that focuses on healing from abuse – both as individuals and community.

***Conversations with My Molester: A Journey of Faith*** is Mack's spiritual autobiography. Like many Catholic boys in the 1960s, Mack wanted to be a priest. That dream ended at age 11 when his pastor first invited him to the rectory. In the decades that followed, Mack wrestled with haunting questions about sexuality and spirituality, imagining one day meeting his abuser for a conversation.

Forty years later he had that chance, and landed on his former pastor's doorstep – beginning his return to the Church.

Why host this play during Lent? Fr. Tom Conway OFM, Executive Director of St. Anthony Shrine, said that "Lent is a time to ask for forgiveness, and to work toward reconciliation and healing. The Church caused tremendous pain and suffering to those who were abused."

Fr. Conway further emphasized the long-running mission of St. Anthony's for the Boston community. "The Shrine is a place with some considerable history of reconciliation. It seems appropriate for the friars of the Shrine to welcome *this* particular event at *this* Catholic Church."

Mack's lyric monologue premiered at Boston University's Boston Playwrights Theatre at the 10-year anniversary of the clergy sexual abuse crisis in Boston, Directed by theater veteran Daniel Gidron. It subsequently toured the northeast and netted a prize-winning run (Best Script award, Best Solo Play nomination) at New York City's Midtown International Theatre Festival.

The play also won an Artist Grant for Dramatic Writing from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), the state's most competitive and prestigious individual arts fellowship, along with an IRNE nomination for Best Solo Play from the Independent Reviewers of New England.

"Both the play and the conversations afterwards are for and about healing," said Mack, who calls his work a kind of ministry. "I never became a priest," he said, "but I've always felt a spiritual calling. This play is my personal work to advance social justice and reconciliation."

While not graphic, Mack's play can be intense -- but also funny and even comforting. "We've heard many stories of sexual abuse," Mack said, "but fewer about healing. I hope to offer an authentic portrayal of recovery in action."

For more about the play, visit [www.michaelmacklive.com](http://www.michaelmacklive.com).

**Bio:**

Poet, playwright, and actor Michael Mack is a graduate of the MIT Writing Program and lives in Cambridge. His poems and stories have aired on NPR and have twice been published in *Best Catholic Writing* (2005 & 2007), *America* (the national Catholic weekly), the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), and the *Beloit Poetry Journal*.

He first became known for his multi-character solo play *Hearing Voices, Speaking in Tongues* -- about his mother's life with, and recovery from, schizophrenia (which also won an MCC Fellowship). Mack has been in demand for that play, which he has performed at the US Library of Congress, Harvard and Yale universities, for scores of mental health conferences -- and even at the FBI's 32nd Annual Hostage Negotiation Seminar in Baltimore.

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