

# ARTS & MEDIA

## For author, pregnancy is a living novena

By Patricia D'Ascoli

Transcript Correspondent

NEW MILFORD – Pregnancy and motherhood are subjects that author Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle holds most dear. The mother of five has, in fact, dedicated her life to sharing the message that motherhood is the loftiest and most important of all vocations.

In her work, Ms. O'Boyle endeavors to offer inspiration and support to Catholic mothers, and in the past 18 months, she has had three books published in this genre.

*Catholic Prayer Book for Mothers*, her first book, which was published by Our Sunday Visitor, became a Catholic best-seller. It was followed by *The Heart of Motherhood: Finding Holiness in the Catholic Home*, published last fall by Crossroad Publishing. And now, expectant mothers will have the opportunity to read *Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-to-Be*, a unique pregnancy guidebook published in April by Crossroad.

Ms. O'Boyle said that her books are aimed at mothers who are striving to find more meaning in their vocation and are looking for a deeper relationship with God. "I try to impress upon them that it really can be done and it really is quite easy," she explained during a recent telephone interview.

Calling her concept a kind of revolutionary approach to prayer,

the author tries to help mothers realize that their very lives are a prayer, because they are the ones God put in the heart of the home to take care of the children. She believes that her philosophy is empowering and hopes that it will provide comfort to mothers.

*Prayerfully Expecting* had a lengthy gestation period. It was written more than 16 years ago, when the author was on doctor-ordered complete bed rest during her fifth pregnancy because of a heart condition and hemorrhaged uterus. Ms. O'Boyle said she was inspired during that pregnancy to write a prayer journal book for expectant mothers. It is filled with her original prayers.

"I felt strongly that mothers need inspiration because we have such a daunting task of raising these children in the world today and there are not a lot of sources for pats on the back. Some mothers really need the affirmation to keep going with what they are doing in the way they are raising their children with good values and a good home life," Ms. O'Boyle reflected.

According to the author, the book essentially transforms a nine-month pregnancy into a nine-month novena. It is also a prayer journal with places throughout for



Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle

the expectant mother to record her thoughts, prayers and reflections. The book encourages mothers to take time to meditate, pray and view their pregnancy as a living prayer to God. *Prayerfully Expecting* was blessed by Pope John Paul II and includes a foreword by Mother Teresa.

"At that time, I knew Mother Teresa very well and she prayed me through that pregnancy. Mother Teresa had a big influence on me with my spirituality and my writing," Ms. O'Boyle said. "She encouraged me and praised me and told me it's so important to get this information out there for moms. She always said, 'I pray that it will do much good.'"

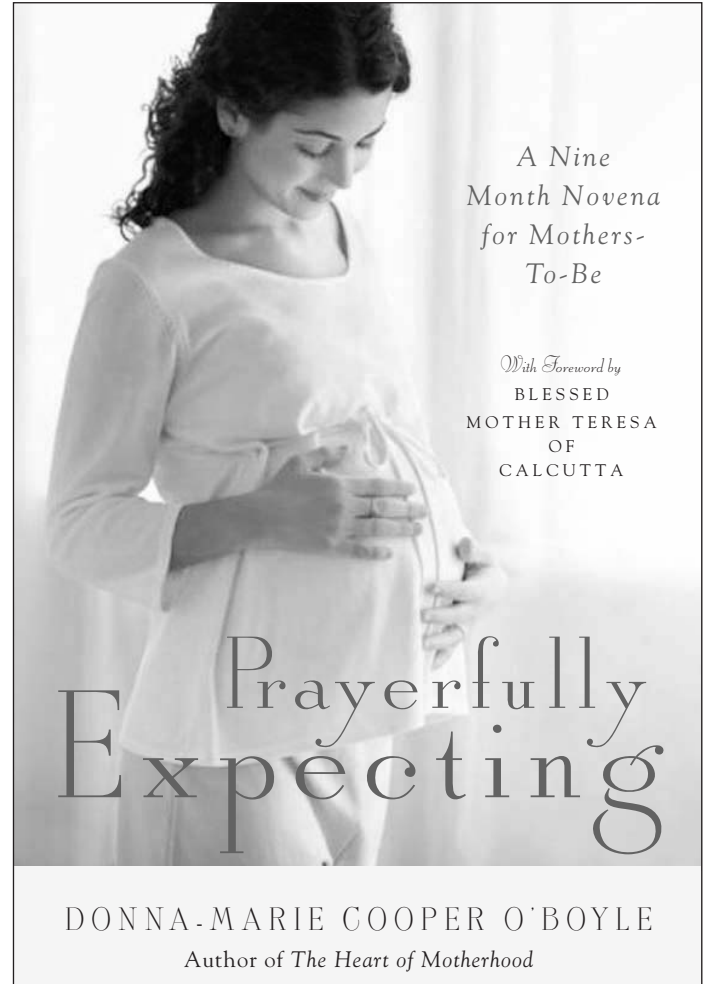
Msgr. David Q. Liptak, executive editor of *The Transcript*, offers high praise to Ms. O'Boyle in his foreword to *Prayerfully Expecting* in which he writes, "Donna-Marie affirms, as only a mother can, that motherhood is a commitment in faith, hope and love; hence, the expectant mother literally makes a pilgrimage of prayer as she approaches the moment of childbirth."

He also notes in the foreword that in the nine-month novena, Saint Anne, Saint Joseph and Saint Gerard Majella, the patron saint for expectant mothers, are invoked.

The book also includes quotes from Pope John Paul II and various saints and theologians.

Ms. O'Boyle, who has been a catechist for more than 20 years at St. Francis Xavier Church, is particularly pleased with *Prayerfully Expecting*, not only because of its personal nature, but also because it was illustrated by her oldest daughter, Chaldea Emerson. Ms. Emerson also provided some of the illustrations for *The Heart of Motherhood*.

While promoting *The Heart of Motherhood* and *Prayerfully*



**BOOK JACKET** – This is the cover of Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle's new book, *Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-to-Be*.

*Expecting*, Ms. O'Boyle has recently completed a manuscript about Mother Teresa, titled *Unlikely Saint*, which is tentatively scheduled to be published in January 2008. She is also creating a special Bible study series for Catholic moms and contributes free articles to a number of Web sites.

Because Ms. O'Boyle believes that her mission is to help others along the path of life, she has been an extraordinary minister of holy Communion, and, in 2003, she founded Friends of Veronica, a ministry of outreach to seniors and others in need, which she dedicated to the honor of Mother Teresa and


Pope John Paul II.

The author's Weblog "Daily Donna-Marie: A Dose of Inspiration" ([donnamariecooperoboyle.blogspot.com](http://donnamariecooperoboyle.blogspot.com)) is central to her ongoing commitment to provide inspiration to readers around the world.

Ms. O'Boyle will be at Sacred Heart Church in Southbury on May 15, St. Francis Xavier in New Milford on May 16, 28 and 29, Immaculate Conception Church in Waterbury on May 20, and Borders Books in Danbury on May 26. Information about the author is available at [www.donnacooperoboyle.com](http://www.donnacooperoboyle.com) and at her blogspot.

**Proclaim His Name**  
Catholic Book and Gift Store


Children's Bibles  
Religious Books  
Rosaries  
Statues



First Communion Gifts  
Medals  
T-Shirts  
Celtic Crosses

84 West, exit 18, bear right onto Highland Ave.  
84 East, exit 18, left then turn right at next light onto Highland Ave.

Hours: Tues. & Wed. 11-4; Thurs. & Fri. 11-5; Sat. 10-2  
615 Highland Ave., Waterbury • (203) 573-1773



**My Father's House**  
P.O. Box 22, 39 North Moodus Rd. Moodus, CT 06469 • 860-873-1581  
Website: [www.myfathershouse.com](http://www.myfathershouse.com) E-mail: [sbsheldon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sbsheldon@sbcglobal.net)

**May 6, 2007 - PASTA FUND RAISER DINNER & RAFFLE**  
- hosted by our 3rd Order Carmelites. At 3:00 p.m. Only \$12. Join us for a fun afternoon.

**June 14, 2007 - MARTY ROTELLA** will perform at our Thursday morning Prayer Breakfast. See you there.

**June 15-17, 2007 - WALKING THRU THE NEW CATECHISM WITH FR. CORAPI** - on video - by Fr. Bill

**June 22-24, 2007 - FR. MELVIN DOUCETTE** is coming back! He is a healing priest & has written books on contemplative prayer. He was a missionary to Africa for 30 years & has visions of Our Lady & suffers the Passion of Jesus in his heart. Save the date.

**LaSalette Retreat Center**  
947 Park Street  
Attleboro, MA 02703  
(508) 222-8530

**Current Offerings ~ Retreat Weekends**  
COME ASIDE, PRAY AND BE RENEWED

**May 11 - 13, 2007** ~ Movies and Faith  
**May 18 - 20, 2007** ~ Married Couples' Retreat  
**June 1 - 3, 2007** ~ Retreat for Breast Cancer Survivors  
**June 8 - 10, 2007** ~ Living Life According to a Divine Plan  
**June 8 - 10, 2007** ~ Church Workers Retreat  
**June 22 - 28, 2007** ~ Preached and Directed Retreats

For more information, please call or write Retreat Secretary  
e-mail: [lasalletteretreats@hotmail.com](mailto:lasalletteretreats@hotmail.com) • website: [www.lasalette-shrine.org](http://www.lasalette-shrine.org)  
For information regarding the La Salette Shrine, call: 508-222-5410

Tune in to

**RADIOTHON WJMJ**

**May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

Hosts: Phil Callan, Ivor Hugh, Dick Iskra, John Masternack and Linda Roberts

**BECOME ACQUAINTED!**

DIAL LOCATIONS:  
HARTFORD-88.9  
HAMDEN-93.1  
NEW HAVEN-107.1



A listener writes:  
You're doing the noblest of all work— You bring a ray of light into the darkness of day ... So that the deaf may hear, the blind may see and the insensitive feel ... The ever presence of God ... Even just for a moment of life.

God Bless You!

(860) 242-8800 • 1-877-DIAL-WJMJ • (1-877-342-5956)

A spiritual, inspirational and informative Friend ready to serve you daily from 5:00 a.m. to midnight.