



Contact:

Stephanie Heiland
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
314.909.4633

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Free Public Program at Smithsonian's International Gallery
Celebrates Black History Month and Catholic Sisters' Commitment to Education**

In conjunction with the *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters of America* exhibit on view in the International Gallery of the S. Dillon Ripley Center, a free public program "Women in Education: Continuing the Legacy" is being presented on February 24, 2010, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. in the Center's Discovery Theater.

This program highlights Catholic sisters and their colleagues in the field of education both yesterday and today, their efforts, accomplishments, and challenges, with a special focus on educational endeavors in the African American community.

Sister Patricia Haley, SCN, president of the National Black Sisters Conference, will moderate this panel discussion with Sister Mary Charlotte Marshall, OSP; Sister Barbara Spears, SNJM; and Sister Mary Bourdon, RJM.

Through rare artifacts, compelling photographs and videos, and vivid first-person narratives, the *Women & Spirit* exhibit explores the contributions Catholic sisters made – and continue to make – in shaping the nation's social and cultural landscape. The exhibit is on view in the International Gallery of the S. Dillon Ripley Center through April 25, 2010.

This "Women in Education: Continuing the Legacy" public program and the *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters of America* exhibit are projects of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

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(For more information about the exhibit, visit www.womenandspirit.org)