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**For Grace to Host 6th Annual Women in Pain Conference and Live Webcast:
“Getting Real: Transforming Hidden Truths Into Positive Action”**

*The Sept. 13 conference will focus on chronic pain and coping choices,
with a special emphasis on positive actions and forgiveness*

LOS ANGELES (July 23, 2013) – For Grace will host its **6th Annual Women In Pain Conference** on Sept. 13 at the California Endowment’s Center for Healthy Communities in downtown Los Angeles and via live webcast. The conference will bring together hundreds of women in pain, their caregivers and the healthcare professionals who treat them along with leaders in pain management, pain psychology and advocacy to explore chronic pain and the spectrum of coping choices one makes to endure and thrive with this daunting health challenge.

Five CEUs will be available for Registered Nurses in attendance, and the event will be open to all via a live worldwide webcast. For more information and to register, please visit:
<http://www.forgrace.org/women/in/pain/C269>.

The conference will feature presentations and panel sessions from distinguished pain psychologists, medical and wellness practitioners who will focus on helping women in pain and their caregivers discover how coping choices and techniques, from the everyday to the most extreme, affect their pain control, overall wellness and relationships.

Living with chronic pain – whether it stems from fibromyalgia, arthritis, back pain, or some other condition – challenges every facet of an individual’s life. How one copes with pain on a daily basis can be the difference between a successful integration of chronic pain into a productive, contented experience – or a descent into depression, isolation, substance abuse and worse. Poor coping choices, such as hiding one’s pain from others, drug dependence and domestic violence, are “mal-adaptive behaviors” which complicate recovery from chronic pain. Adaptive coping decisions, such as social circles, healthy diet and exercise and practicing forgiveness for oneself and others are essential in forging an environment of wellness that will assure better days ahead for the person with pain and those who support them.

This year’s conference theme, “Getting Real: Transforming Hidden Truths Into Positive Action” is inspired by For Grace founder Cynthia Toussaint’s recent memoir, *Battle for Grace: A Memoir of Pain, Redemption and Impossible Love*, which details her 30 year odyssey with chronic pain. A pain sufferer since the age of 21 when a minor ballet injury turned into a lifetime of chronic pain, Toussaint has been in partial remission for the past few years and enjoying a full life that includes swimming, singing and other activities she hasn’t done for more than 25 years.

"Since I chose to be brutally honest about my good and bad coping choices in *Battle for Grace*, women are approaching me to ‘confess’ the behaviors they’ve never shared”, said Toussaint. “I wrote the book to

start conversations about the ‘unspeakables’ we women in pain will go in order to survive. This conference is a natural extension of that dialogue and I expect it to be our most empowering event to date.”

According to a 2011 report from the Institute of Medicine, more than 100 million people in the United States suffer from pain every day. The latest research shows that women are more likely to suffer from chronic pain than men, and the pain can come more frequently and hit with greater intensity.

The one-day conference will kick-off at 9:00 am on Sept. 13 with a “Coping Pitfalls & Missteps” panel moderated by pain psychologist **Dr. Heather Poupore-King**. On the panel will be three women challenged by chronic pain who will share their “mal-adaptive behaviors.” **Dr. Forest Tennant** will present better wellness choices to move beyond the chronic pain crisis stage. The morning program will wrap up with ordained minister and woman in pain, **Kristina Breen**, sharing how forgiveness may be the most important tool to life recovery from chronic pain. The afternoon program will include an inter-active session exploring the full spectrum of coping choices and a final panel will consist of women in pain who will share how their good decisions led to personal triumphs. Additional conference activities include creative art presentations by women in pain featuring a photo essay by **Dana Gambill**, and an award-winning art gallery by **Radene Marie Cook**. Also, Toussaint will debut a vocal performance of *Time After Time* which through the act of forgiveness will be dedicated to family members and friends who could not face her illness.

The 2013 “Patron of Women’s Rights” Award will be given **State Senator Sheila Kuehl**. Actor **Kevin Dobson** (*Knots Landing, House of Lies*) will deliver three special readings that introduce the major themes of the day.

Confirmed speakers and panelists include:

Dr. Heather Poupore-King – Pain Psychologist, Stanford University Pain Management Department

Dr. Forrest Tennant – Pain Management Specialist

Kristina Breen – Woman In Pain & Ordained Minister, Church of the Master

Heather Grace – Woman in Pain and Co-Leader, Intractable Pain Patients United

Britt Johnson – Woman In Pain & Founder, The Hurt Blogger

Amanda Greene – Woman In Pain & Founder, LA Lupus Lady

Simenona Martinez – Woman In Pain & Singer/Actress

Cynthia Toussaint – Woman In Pain & Founder/Spokesperson, For Grace

About For Grace

Founded in 2002, For Grace is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure the ethical and equal treatment of all women in pain. For Grace has educated, supported and empowered thousands of women in pain through the use of public advocacy, legislative outreach, and mass media.

For more information, please visit For Grace online at www.forgrace.org.

Reporters seeking to attend the 6th Annual Women in Pain Conference must contact John Garrett at 818-760-7635 or jgarrett@forgrace.org.