

Contact: Maggie Hawkins, Maggie Hawkins PR, 281.373.1445, [maghpr@swbell.net](mailto:maghpr@swbell.net)  
Jennifer Thomason, BenBella Books, 214.750.3600, [Jennifer@benbellabooks.com](mailto:Jennifer@benbellabooks.com)  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **D on 't C hew Jesus!**

### *A Collection of Memorable Nun Stories*

#### **Baby Boomer Catholics Pen Nostalgic, Lighthearted Book About Nuns**

HOUSTON (Dec. 1, 2006) – Ask someone to describe a Catholic nun from yesteryear and varying descriptions emerge: praying, kneeling, singing, dancing, flying, and even ruler waving. But ask millions of Catholic baby boomers and they'll tell you nuns were passionate, devoted women who inspired respect, love, fear, gratitude -- and lots of memories.

Hundreds of those memories are shared in the new book **D on 't C hew Jesus! A C ollection of Memorable Nun Stories** (BenBella Books/November/hardcover \$20). Authors Danielle Schaaf and Michael Prendergast, lifelong friends since Catholic grade school, take a look back at nuns and their influence. Told through nearly 400 firsthand anecdotes and recollections and gathered from Catholics and non-Catholics alike throughout the United States and abroad, the nostalgic and lighthearted book pays tribute to the sisters.

Funny and often touching tales of devout piety, religious training, tough love, and classroom antics fill the book. Stories run the gamut from poignant demonstrations of sisters' powerful influence to hilarious "out-of-character" episodes like nuns hurdling gates, toting guns and pitching snowballs. The book includes shock-and-awe, ranging from catching a glimpse of Sister in a swimsuit (or not!) to watching her command attention with only "a look."

(more)

D on 't C hew Jesus!/add 1

“Nuns were more than stereotypical knuckle-crackers. They were fervent, clever, creative, and often single-minded in purpose. They’ve given millions of us uniquely colorful experiences that make for inspired storytelling. **D on 't C hew Jesus!** allows us to pass along those experiences to new generations,” said Prendergast.

Sisters’ influence during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was widespread – but waning. By 1965, nearly 180,000 sisters taught 5.5 million children – one in every 10 baby boomers! Today, there are fewer than 70,000 nuns with many older than 70 and facing uncertain retirements. According to the National Religious Retirement Office, Catholic religious orders today face an \$8.7 billion shortfall in retirement funding and that is projected to grow to \$20 billion by 2023.

“We were shocked to learn that so many of these remarkable women still living are facing such tough times,” Schaaf said. “To that end, we hope **D on 't C hew Jesus!** can help build awareness of their dilemma and raise funds.” A portion of proceeds from the book will be donated to S.O.A.R.! (Support Our Aging Religious), a national non-profit organization serving retired religious.

**D on 't C hew Jesus!** is available through bookstores and online, or through the publisher, [www.benbellabooks.com](http://www.benbellabooks.com). Plans are underway for a follow-up book of nun stories. For more information, or to contribute a story to the next book, contact the authors: [www.nunstories.com](http://www.nunstories.com); email [author@nunstories.com](mailto:author@nunstories.com) or call toll-free 1.877. NUNBOOK.

###