

# Ms. Fulwiler goes to Washington (and so do I)

Every single time I drive into Washington, D.C., I get miserably lost or trapped in a huge traffic jam or both. It's a fabulous city, full of culture and history. But you have to get there. And then you have to find your way out.

No matter how many times my father says, "It's a grid," I still cannot figure out how to get around the city in a car.

So I would need an extraordinary reason to head down there on a weeknight during rush hour.

I found one.

Jennifer Fulwiler, author of *Something Other Than God* and blogger at Conversion Diary, was visiting D.C. And since she lives in Austin, Texas, and I live in Baltimore, this seemed like a fantastic opportunity to meet her. So I cleared my calendar, invited my mother to join me, and we drove into our nation's capital.



I had the opportunity to speak with Jen briefly before her talk, but other people were vying for her attention, and I wasn't going to stand in others' way. I had had the opportunity to interview her by phone, and this was their chance.

When Jen started speaking, I realized listening to her was like reading her book or her blog. I knew she was talking to me.

I already knew the story of her conversion from atheism to Catholicism, but her presentation was still captivating.

She spoke about atheism: "You can take a number that is the most beautiful number in the world, but if you multiply it by zero, it's still zero."

She spoke about the rules of the Catholic Church: "I came to see them as a prescription for a lifetime of love more than rules."

She spoke about her journey: "Not only is this a story of fulfillment and happiness," she said.

“It was the fulfillment of my atheism.”

She spoke about raising her children in a world where living out your Catholic faith is not easy: “I’ve done a lot of studying of missionaries. I just look at it as we are in a mission field.”

At the end of the evening, I asked Jen to autograph a book for me and one for my sister, Treasa.



I left the Catholic Information Center flying high on the excitement of the evening, renewed in my faith, and encouraged by the reminder that people experience their faith journeys at different times and in different ways.

And I even managed to drive home without getting lost or stuck in traffic. It’s just a grid, you know.