



December 23, 2004 - Statement of the Archdiocese of Boston Regarding St. Thomas the Apostle in Peabody/Salem

(Boston, Massachusetts) December 23, 2004...The Archdiocese of Boston today announced that Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley is re-evaluating the reconfiguration plan for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Peabody/Salem. The Archbishop has rescinded St. Thomas' January 9, 2004 closing date. A new closing date is not being established at this time.

"In keeping with my commitment to study the impact of new information on previously announced parish closing decisions, I have modified the reconfiguration plans for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Peabody-Salem," stated Archbishop O'Malley. In recent weeks, the Archbishop became aware of new information concerning the demographic of the local community.

In addition, the Archdiocese announced that Rev. David J. Bartley will conclude his assignment as Pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish on December 31, 2004 following Fr. Bartley's request for a period of medical leave. The Carmelite Community of Peabody, Rev. Herbert Jones, O. Carm., Prior, will assume responsibility for the sacramental and pastoral care of St. Thomas Parish on December 31, 2004. Further, the weekly children's liturgy celebrated at St. Thomas the Apostle, which was in the process of transitioning to St. John the Baptist Parish in Peabody, will remain at St. Thomas.

Archbishop O'Malley expressed his appreciation for Fr. Bartley's six years of service as Pastor of St. Thomas and for the careful manner with which he has guided the parish through the plan for reconfiguration.

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