



June 16, 2005 - Archbishop O'Malley Accepts Reconfiguration Recommendations From Meade-Eisner Committee

(Brighton, MA) June 16, 2005... Archbishop Sean O'Malley today announced his acceptance of a series of recommendations made by the Meade-Eisner Reconfiguration Review Committee following from their ongoing review of the reconfiguration process in the Archdiocese of Boston.

The Archbishop said, "I want to thank Peter Meade, Sister Janet Eisner, and all the members of the Committee for their dedication and their commitment to the good of the Church. They have all expended a tremendous amount of time and effort in this important work. I also want to thank the Catholics across the Archdiocese who have worked so hard to assist us with this effort. This has been an extraordinary time in the history of the Archdiocese of Boston. While there is still work to be done, we are nearing the point where the Reconfiguration process will be essentially completed. It is my hope and prayer that the decisions announced today will be received with an open heart and understanding by all the people of the Archdiocese. Throughout the course of the Reconfiguration process I have maintained a willingness to review earlier decisions based on the work of people who bring significant community respect and professional experience to this process. They are a blessing to the Archdiocese."

Peter Meade said, "I am encouraged by the faith and the commitment to our Church that so many people in the Archdiocese have shown towards this process, it has truly been an honor to meet them. Archbishop Sean has demonstrated an openness and willingness to listen and to consider. The Archbishop has been an integral part of the work that we have done."

Sister Janet Eisner said, "The Spirit is alive in our parishes! Our committee has been so inspired in our meetings with parish leaders by their amazing commitment to the life of the Church. Lay leaders, working with each other and with pastors, are creating dynamic faith communities, and we see over and over how deeply they care about the vitality and future of the Church. What a privilege to be engaged in this process."

The Archbishop has accepted the committee's recommendation to allow the following parishes to remain open:

St. Isidore Parish in Stow

St. Mary of the Angels Parish in Roxbury.

The Archbishop has accepted the committee's recommendation to rescind closing dates at the following parishes:

St. Pius X Parish in Milton. Fr. David Burke will be the principal contact concerning the status of St. Pius going forward.

Sacred Heart Parish in Watertown will remain open at this time in light of several surrounding parishes having been closed. Fr. Joseph Curran will be the principal contact concerning the plans for the parish.

The Archbishop has accepted the committee's recommendation not to establish a closing date for:

St. Peter Lithuanian Parish in South Boston. Fr. Stephen Zukas will be the principal contact concerning the status of the parish.

The Archbishop has accepted the committee's recommendation that:

St. Susanna Parish in Dedham remains open through March of 2008; at that time the Archdiocese will evaluate the needs of the parish community.

In addition, the Archbishop has accepted the committee's recommendation that:



St. Lawrence church in Brookline will be established as a chapel of St. Mary parish in Brookline. Fr. John Ahern, pastor of St. Mary, will work with the community at St. Lawrence concerning a schedule for Mass at St. Lawrence church and provision of pastoral services.

The Committee hopes to provide the Archbishop with additional recommendations in the weeks ahead.

About the Reconfiguration Review Committee:

Recognizing that the consolidation of parishes was painful to the people directly affected, the Archbishop believed he could benefit from an external review of the reconfiguration begun in January 2004. He sought an objective assessment of the past that would help the Archdiocese improve the reconfiguration process.

Having previously received the results of the very significant work done by the Archdiocese's Central Committee for Reconfiguration, in October 2004, Archbishop Sean O'Malley formed an eight-person, external review committee to evaluate the reconfiguration process underway in the Archdiocese of Boston and to make recommendations that would aid the Archdiocese in a fair and compassionate completion of the process.

Since its formation in October of 2004, the eight-person Meade-Eisner Committee has been credited with advising Archbishop Sean O'Malley in a number of revisions and refinements to the Archdiocesan reconfiguration plan.

The Committee is chaired by Sr. Janet Eisner, SND, President of Emmanuel College, and Peter Meade, Executive Vice President of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and Chairman of the Board of Catholic Charities in Boston. In addition to the chairs, the committee is comprised of community and business leaders both lay and clergy:

Mary Lou Batt, Vice President for Administration and University Centers & Institutes of Lesley University

Jack Connors, Jr., Chairman of Hill, Holliday

Neal Finnegan, Director of the Board, Citizens Capital, Inc.

Donna Latson Gittens, CEO causemedia Inc.

Jeanne Lafond, Pastoral Associate of St. Patrick's in Brockton

Monsignor Dennis Sheehan, Pastor of St. Paul's in Cambridge

Due to declining numbers of clergy, changing Catholic demographics and financial pressure, the Archdiocese of Boston began the process of parish reconfiguration in January of 2004. Through this process, the Archdiocese is seeking to serve the needs of area Catholics by building parish communities with resources to match needs.

Copyright © 2004-2006 Archdiocese of Boston; all rights reserved