



June 27, 2004 - Archbishop O'Malley Accepts Recommendation from Meade-Eisner Committee concerning Peabody-Salem

(Brighton, MA) June 27, 2005... Archbishop Sean O'Malley today announced his acceptance of a recommendation from the Meade-Eisner Reconfiguration Review Committee that St. Thomas the Apostle parish in Peabody-Salem remain open.

In keeping with the Archbishop's acceptance of this recommendation a new pastor will be soon appointed at St. Thomas parish. That pastor will be directed to work with the Fr. Albert Sylvania, pastor of Our Lady of Fatima parish in Peabody and the parish communities at St. Thomas and Our Lady of Fatima parishes over the course of the next few years in order to then make a recommendation to provide for the pastoral care of the two parish communities through one parish.

The Archbishop and the co-chairs of the Reconfiguration Review Committee, Sr. Janet Eisner, SND and Peter Meade, expressed their gratitude to Fr. Herbert Jones, O. Carm., for his care of St. Thomas parish during his time as Administrator there and to Fr. Albert Sylvania, Pastor and Sr. Ellen Dabreio, SND, Pastoral Associate, at Our Lady of Fatima for their assistance with this process. Sr. Eisner and Peter Meade noted the Archbishop's acceptance of the Committee's recommendation as further sign of the Archbishop's openness and willingness to listen and to consider opportunities for the future.

The Meade-Eisner Committee expects to offer the Archbishop a final set of recommendations later this week.

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.

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