



April 1, 2006 - Saint Mary and Saint Catherine of Siena Parishes In Charlestown To Merge

(Brighton, MA) April 1, 2006... The Archdiocese of Boston announced that two parishes in Charlestown will merge creating a new parish, to be named Saint Mary-Saint Catherine of Siena Parish. The change is effective April 18, 2006.

On October 31, 2004, Cardinal Sean O'Malley asked that the three parishes of Charlestown work to become one parish serving that diverse and historically Catholic neighborhood of Boston. This merger is the first step in that process.

The pastor for the new parish is Rev. James J. Ronan who currently serves as pastor for the two parishes being merged. Fr. Ronan said, "I believe this to be a very positive decision for everyone and especially for the Church in Charlestown." The merger was unanimously endorsed by the Pastoral Council and Finance Council of both parishes. Natalie Rizzo, vice-chair of the Parish Council at St. Catherine's commented, "We feel that this is a unique opportunity for us to help build the foundation of the new church in Charlestown". Gerry O'Neil, the vice-chair of the council at St. Mary's noted, "This action will best allow us to serve both the immediate and long term needs of our parishioners".

For the time being, Mass schedules will remain the same. The new parish will be staffed by Father Ronan and Father Linh Ngyun, as well as a secretary, business manager, director of music and liturgy, director of religious education and director of parish social ministry. The Councils of the two parishes have recommended that no church building be closed until the one parish in Charlestown is finally established. Decisions about the future use of other parish facilities will be made after broad and thorough consultation within the new parish.

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