



September 20, 2006 - Cardinal O'Malley To Travel To Rome To Be Honored Celebrant For Thousands At Padre Pio Mass and Will Formally Accept Boston's Titular Church, Santa Maria della Vittoria

Cardinal Seán To Share His Experiences In Rome With Archdiocese On Personal Blog - www.cardinalseansblog.org

Brighton, MA - Cardinal Seán O'Malley will travel to Rome, Italy tomorrow, Thursday, September 21st, six months after his elevation to Cardinal, to formally take possession of Boston's Titular Church, Santa Maria della Vittoria, conduct Archdiocesan business and serve as the honored celebrant of the Padre Pio Mass at the Shrine of Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo.

Cardinal Sean will share his experiences with Catholics across the Archdiocese of Boston during his upcoming trip to Rome on a personal blog, www.cardinalseansblog.org. The Cardinal is scheduled to begin posting on his blog tomorrow afternoon, prior to his flight to Rome. He is expected to update the blog frequently during his time in Italy.

On Saturday, September 23rd Cardinal Seán will be the honored celebrant for the famed Padre Pio Mass on the occasion of the anniversary of the Capuchin Saint's 1968 passing. Tens-of thousands of Catholics and Padre Pio devotees from across the world are expected to attend the Mass being held at the Shrine of Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. The shrine is the second most visited Catholic Shrine in the world and is home to the tomb of Padre Pio, who was canonized and made a Saint by Pope John Paul II in June 2002. Over seven million pilgrims visit Padre Pio's Shrine each year.

Cardinal Seán will formally take possession of Boston's Titular Church, Santa Maria della Vittoria, in Rome on October 1st during an evening ceremony and mass at the noted church. During the March Consistory, and following Church tradition, Pope Benedict XVI announced the assignment of Santa Maria della Vittoria to Cardinal Seán. While the formal titular ceremony will not be marked with the festive "high-Church" ritual of the Consistory events, it will nonetheless be a joyous occasion for the Cardinal, administrators and parishioners of Santa Maria della Vittoria and especially for the Carmelite Order, whose Discalced Carmelite Friars have maintained the church since they built it during the 1600's. Boston's titular church, Santa Maria della Vittoria, is dedicate to the Blessed Virgin and is well known for its spectacular artwork, particularly for Bernini's Ecstasy of St Teresa of Avila.

"It is always joyous and spiritually energizing to return to Rome and the Eternal City," said Cardinal Seán. "I am looking forward to the ceremony and mass at Santa Maria della Vittoria and I am humbled by the honor of celebrating mass for Padre Pio at his Shrine in San Giovanni Rotondo. As a Capuchin and a Catholic, I have the highest admiration for Padre Pio and I am looking forward to taking part in the anniversary mass in his honor.

I am also looking forward to a new opportunity to communicate directly with Catholics of the Archdiocese through my own blog. While this is a new venture for me, and for the Archdiocese, I am eager to take advantage of the latest technology and mode of communication to share with Catholics of the Archdiocese my experiences as I return to Rome and more importantly, to share with everyone a sense of what it is that Boston's Archbishop does on business in Rome representing the people of the Archdiocese."

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