



**November 27, 2006 - Local Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Prelates Issue Joint Statement for Upcoming Meeting Between Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict XVI In Istanbul.**

**BOSTON** - Metropolitan Methodios of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston and Seán Cardinal O'Malley of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston have issued the present joint statement of fraternal understanding and prayer for the upcoming three-day visit of Pope Benedict XVI with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Istanbul, Turkey on November 28 - December 1, 2006.

As global tensions run high, the local Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic hierarchs pray for the safety and fruitful ecumenical dialogue of their respective Church world leaders.

Pope Benedict will visit the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the invitation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the spiritual leader of more than 270 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, for the occasion of the feast day of Saint Andrew the Apostle, the older brother of Saint Peter. Saint Andrew traveled across Asia Minor and is the founder of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the former name for present-day Istanbul. Both prelates are noted throughout the world for their extraordinary efforts to create bridges of truth and love across religious, ethnic, environmental, and political divides.

Metropolitan Methodios and Seán Cardinal O' Malley are hopeful that the meeting between Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict, the two "Bridge Builders" and "Peacemakers" of Apostolic Christendom, will influence ties between their respective churches and have a profound impact on religious freedom and on the recognition of minority rights

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