



December 22, 2006 - Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley's Christmas Schedule December 24th & 25th

(Brighton, Massachusetts) December 22, 2006...The Archdiocese of Boston today provided the following information concerning Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley's schedule on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

December 24

11:00 am: Cardinal Seán to visit Pine Street Inn, 444 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA.

12noon: A Christmas message from Cardinal Seán available online at iCatholic.com, a web portal created by CatholicTV in Boston (www.catholictv.com). Approximately 2.5 minutes in length, the Cardinal's message can be viewed in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and is also available for downloading.

6:00 pm: The Cardinal will celebrate Christmas vigil mass for the Vietnamese community at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, 1400 Washington Street Boston.

Midnight: Cardinal Seán to celebrate Midnight Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, 1400 Washington Street, Boston.

December 25

9:00 am: Cardinal Seán will celebrate a one-hour televised Christmas Mass from the studios of WHDH-TV/Channel 7 in Boston.

11:00 am: The Cardinal will visit St. Francis House, 39 Boylston Street, Boston, and offer his Christmas blessing.

NOTE: Please visit the Boston Archdiocese's updated newspaper web site, TheBostonPilot.com for multimedia features and daily updates of national, Vatican and breaking local news of issues important to Catholics, not only here in the archdiocese, but in the wider Church. The attached Christmas message from the Cardinal is appearing in this week's edition of The Pilot. (Media Note: Please note that the Cardinal will not be conducting interviews at these celebrations and visits.)

Christmas Message from Cardinal Seán Published in The Pilot

(Published in this week's edition of The Pilot and available soon online at www.thebostonpilot.com)

Only a couple of days until Christmas, we all ask ourselves: "Is there anyone I forgot?" We want to give gifts to family, friends and loved ones as well as to those whose kindness and service we appreciate.

Some people are hard to buy gifts for. They seem to have everything they need or want. Still, we struggle to get the perfect gift. The question we all need to ask is, "What I am giving to the one whose birthday we are celebrating?" We undoubtedly think that Jesus is in the "has-everything-category." But at Christmas, Our God makes Himself small and vulnerable so that we need not be afraid to draw near, so that we realize that He has come in poverty and simplicity to teach us about love and about what really matters. Does Jesus want something from me? Yes, He does. That's why He came into the world. He seeks our friendship. He calls us to be disciples and friends.

Our gift to the Lord must be our friendship. Friendship is not inexpensive. It demands sacrifices of time, energy and resources. Friends become friends by communicating, by talking, by getting to know each other.

In the legend often told to children, there is a noble and good monarch who is anxious to get to know His people so he assumes a disguise as a peasant so He can live among his subjects and experience their pains and wants and feel their aspirations. At first glance, the story might seem to parallel Christ's coming at Christmas. But actually, Christmas is quite different. Our God came not disguised as one of us. He has become one of us. And He does not come into the world to get to know us. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He is our Creator, our Father. He comes into our world so that we can get to know Him and to be His friend. And in discovering who God is, we come to



understand who we are and why we are here and what we need to do with our lives.

Christmas is the Birthday of the One who wants to be our best friend. His name is Emmanuel, God with us. Christmas is a moment to renew and deepen our friendship with the Lord. The gift the Lord is waiting for, longing for, is our heart. At Christmas, God makes a gift of Himself to us. All other gifts are as nothing compared to Christ. Every gift, nevertheless, that is given with love reflects the goodness and love of Our God who made Himself homeless so that we could find the way home.

Merry Christmas!

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