



BISHOP-ELECT ARTHUR L. KENNEDY

REMARKS FOR NEWS CONFERENCE

JUNE 30, 2010, 11:00 A.M.

Your Eminence Cardinal Seán, Your Excellencies, my brother priests, ladies and gentlemen and invited guests, allow me to begin my few words with an expression of deep and humble gratitude to God for the gifts and graces that He has provided me from the very time of my first sense of His call to the priesthood and for the comfort and courage provided through the times of both travail and joy that have been part of the past forty-three years as a priest in the service of Christ and His Church. That the original call to be His priest has led to this moment and this call to be an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Boston brings more clearly to mind the continuing collaborative graces and responsibilities that require of me an even fuller response to imitate the love of Christ and to make known the infinite source of all gifts, namely the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit. This name we always use as we make the sign of the cross, reminding us of Christ's cross and his love.



It is with honor and fidelity that I give thanks to our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI for his naming me an auxiliary bishop with a share in the apostolic responsibilities and missions that flow from the Cross of Christ. This sharing is one that I willingly accept in the service of our own humble and faithful shepherd and Archbishop, Cardinal Seán O'Malley. I look forward to collaborating with him in the rebuilding of the Church here in this most important Archdiocese in the United States. Pope Benedict's love of Christ and His Church, and his careful attention to the faithful commitments of priests in all such rebuilding, stands as an example for us all!

To you, Your Eminence, I offer you my sincere appreciation of your trust in me over these past three years as the Rector of Saint John's Seminary. Your support of Saint John's Seminary is the central reason that we have been able to increase the numbers of seminarians and it is a pleasure to be able to tell you that we will have 80 residents this coming September. I am honored that you have considered me as one who would cherish a share in your responsibilities in the rebuilding of the Church in the Archdiocese of Boston.

It has been clear in the Papacies of both John Paul II and Benedict XVI that the seminary is a crucial place for an Archdiocese in its formation and education of priests to be pastors for the people in the celebration of the sacraments and in spiritual guidance and support of those entrusted to their care. The vocation of every priest and bishop is offered in the context of the shared priesthood of the faithful in Baptism; it is from within that common life that God begins to call some into the special sacramental ministry of the priesthood. That awareness of God's invitation to follow Him in his self-sacrificing love by giving one's entire self to Him is almost always fostered by the faith and perseverance of those who guide us from childhood to adulthood. Today I tender a special remembrance of my mother and father, brothers and sister, and my extended family for their guidance and prayers which provided, and still provide the familial community of faith and service to God and to the Church.

In addition to the formation of priests, the Seminary offers programs for formation and education of Laypersons and underscores their important place in the Church's mission; this complementary and collaborative relationship of priests and laity is at the heart of bringing Christ to the world. The Seminary has made a commitment to further this collaboration in the formation of additional programs to be added to the Master of Arts in Ministry in establishment of a Theological Institute for the New Evangelization. This will be of special importance in the evangelization of culture that is so much a part of the Church's mission.

Over forty-three years in the priesthood, I have served in a number of parishes in the Archdioceses of Boston and St. Paul-Minneapolis and have been blessed by the graces that always grow and strengthen us in faith and service in a community based on a spiritual bond of faith, hope and charity. For thirty of those years I was privileged to teach Theology and Catholic Studies at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota; that too was a source of great blessing mediated by the colleagues, priests, students and staff of the University.

On Monday of this week the Church celebrated one its great early saints, Irenaeus; he was a bishop at a crucial time for the Church universal and in Lyon; an extraordinary pastor and a theologian who wrote in defense of the teachings of the Gospels. One of his great insights was into the essential need for the unity of the Church; a unity that would reflect the unity of Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit. That unity is both a gift from God and it requires the co-operation of all who share Christian faith. That ancient concern is further refined by Vatican II in its decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*; it has been a great fortune to have been assigned to assist in some measure in the unfolding of the quest for ecumenical unity of Christ's Church, for in that work one knows the holiness and graces of those Christians who belong to other communions than the Catholic Church.

Likewise, in the meetings of people of other religions, one finds the facts that support St. Augustine's wonderful insight: "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." It has been especially among faithful Jewish people and rabbis that God's care and grace can be experienced, and it is so important now that we have theological conversations of Jews and Catholics -- learning from one another again as did many catholic and rabbinic scholars in the Middle Ages.

Let me conclude by thanking the Bishops of other dioceses for sending men to Saint John's for their formation and preparation for a life committed to Christ; to the priests of the Archdiocese for your generous support on the occasion of my return to Boston as the Rector of St. John's Seminary; in difficult times your prayers and words of support have made tasks easier. To the faculty and staff of the seminary goes gratitude for the wonderful cooperation in sharing those tasks. To the Seminarians of St. John's, I always give thanks to God for you! Every priest and bishop has been engaged in the very same world of grace and effort that you now experience, although under different cultural conditions. The formation and education of one who will be a future priest requires many graces and constant prayers, much learning, pastoral exercises in parishes, hospitals, prisons, with the homeless on the streets, a generous human heart and a heart that is united spiritually to the Sacred Heart. May you continue in this amazing world that seeks to entrust one's life to God's plans and to confront the mystery of evil that must always be faced. We all pray for you that you will be holy, faithful and persevering, courageous and have in you the Mind of Christ.

Thank you again Your Eminence and my gratitude to all who are present here today.