



2009 Catholic Appeal To Launch Responding to God's Grace, Renewing Our Church

March 6, 2009, Braintree, MA - Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley will officially launch the 2009 Catholic Appeal, Responding to God's Grace, Renewing Our Church during 4:00pm Mass on Saturday, March 7, 2009 at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Dedham, MA. The Cardinal will be joined by clergy, St. Mary Parishioners, members of the Life Teen and St. Mary's ARISE programs as well as members of the Catholic Foundation.

The Catholic Appeal allows the Archdiocese to strengthen parishes and schools, launch and sustain faith formation programs for youth, college students and adults, and provide many services for the needy within its 144 cities and towns. Please visit www.BostonCatholicAppeal.org.

The 2009 Catholic Appeal launches in most parishes of the Archdiocese on March 7 & 8, 2009. The financial goal for the 2009 Catholic Appeal campaign is \$15.0 million, which is the same amount as the 2008 campaign. This past year the Archdiocese raised \$15.1 million, which represented an increase of 3% from the previous year and a 58% increase since 2002.

Cardinal Seán said, "During these difficult economic times, we are seeing great works of mercy for those who are struggling to make ends meet. The Catholic Appeal allows us to reach out and help thousands of people in ways that bring them closer to our Lord. Parish programs, Catholic schools, social service ministries and youth programs are among the many initiatives that receive support because of the generosity of Catholics across the Archdiocese of Boston who participate in the Appeal."

Scot Landry, Archdiocesan Secretary for Institutional Advancement, said, "Each year we ask our Catholic faithful to help us advance the saving ministry of Jesus Christ here in our Archdiocese. Thousands of people, hundreds of programs, 292 parishes, and our Catholic schools all benefit from the great generosity of our Catholic faithful. This year, more than ever, we will be asked to do more to assist those most impacted by the economic downturn. Support for youth programs, vocations, faith formation and evangelization are critically important to the future of our Church, which is why we fund these programs each year. In our effort to be successful this year, we are committed to insuring that we are Responding to God's Grace, and Renewing Our Church."

Craig Gibson, President of the Board of The Catholic Foundation said, "Cardinal Seán is leading our Archdiocese with great vision, resolve, humility and a deep love for the Church. Our hope and prayer is that we experience a successful 2009 Catholic Appeal so that we can continue to provide our parishes, schools, social ministries and programs with the necessary support they need to advance the mission of Christ. We are all called to serve. This is that moment in time when we must go the extra yard for the people of God."

St. Mary of the Assumption Parish Brimming With Parish Life & Energy

St. Mary of the Assumption Parish was selected as the location for the launch of the 2009 Catholic Appeal because of the many ways the St. Mary's community is having a positive impact in the lives of its parishioners. Examples include the Arise Together in Christ program and a vibrant Life Teen Program. Both of these are important programs that benefit from support of the Catholic Appeal and the central ministries that coordinate renewal initiatives.

Fr. Williams said, "We're happy to have Cardinal Seán come to St. Mary's to kick off the annual Archdiocesan Appeal. I know how important our weekly offertory is to our parish, and the appeal has the same function for the Archdiocese. There is a mutuality between the parish and the Archdiocese that is important for both of us. Our parish ARISE program, which has been a great gift to a hundred of our parishioners, is supported by the Spiritual Development Office. Our very successful Life Teen Program is supported by the Office of New Evangelization of Youth and Young Adults. If we have engineering questions, or real estate questions, or renovation questions, we call the Pastoral Center in Braintree for assistance. And the Cardinal is here to ask our assistance to support those central offices. We really do need each other."



Brief History of St. Mary of the Assumption The first Mass in Dedham was celebrated in 1843 by Father James Strain in Daniel Slattery's home. There were eight Catholics present. The first St. Mary's Church in Dedham was built in 1857 but fairly quickly outgrown. In 1878, Fr. Robert Johnson, then pastor, set out to build what he called "a cathedral in the wilderness."

In October 1880, Archbishop John J. Williams helped to lay the cornerstone of the present Church at 420 High Street in Dedham. Priests from all the neighboring parishes attended the ceremony. A special train was run from Boston, bringing a large number of friends and a choir of 100 singers. Thousands witnessed the ceremony. The upper church was finally completed and on September 9, 1900, St. Mary's Church was dedicated by Archbishop Williams.

What Contributions Fund

Gifts to the Catholic Appeal provide 77% of the resources for the Archdiocese's Central Operating Fund, which finances over 50 ministries, programs and offices, including many services for parishes and schools. The Catholic Appeal is to the Archdiocese what the weekly offertory is to our parishes or what an Annual Fund is to a university. 44.4% of gifts received support specialized services to parishes, 23.5% funds education, formation and evangelization efforts, 12.8% underwrites ministries of the Cardinal and the Regional Bishops, 11.0% finances general and operational services, and 8.3% goes for the mailings, materials and management of the Catholic Appeal.

MEDIA IS INVITED TO COVER THE MASS; MR. LANDRY WILL BE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE COMMENT.

PLEASE EMAIL TERRY DONILON IN ADVANCE IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE 4PM MASS AT tdonilon@rcab.org. Thank you.