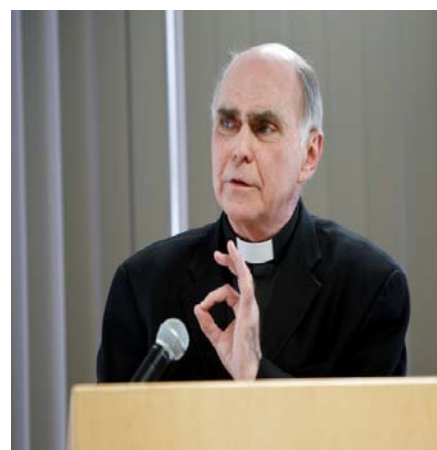


School Leaders Gather for Celebration of Education



BRAINTREE, MA – Over 150 Archdiocese of Boston principals and pastors gathered on January 6, 2011 for the 3rd annual “Convocation and Celebration of Education.” The gathering, led by Cardinal Sean O’Malley and Superintendent of Schools/Secretary of Education Mary Grassa O’Neill, was held at the archdiocese’s Pastoral Center in Braintree, Massachusetts. The convocation celebrated the achievements of the archdiocese’s 124 schools during the previous 12 months while providing a charge to Catholic School leaders.

The event’s keynote speaker was Father Bryan Hehir, Secretary for Health and Social Services for the Archdiocese of Boston as well as the former president of Catholic Charities USA and head of the Harvard Divinity School. Following an opening prayer and welcoming remarks by Cardinal O’Malley, Father Hehir gave an engrossing address on the topic of Catholic identity - discussing the content of Catholic identity, the idea behind Catholic identity, as well as the importance of its expression in the Catholic School culture. Father Hehir prefaced his remarks by discussing his exuberance of speaking to the people “directly responsible for transmitting the most precious gift we have in the Church – the gift of faith.”



Father Hehir addresses the assembled educators

Following Father Hehir’s remarks, Cardinal O’Malley and Dr. O’Neill recognized schools reaching anniversary milestones before Dr. O’Neill addressed the assembly, stressing the importance of sustaining school viability and academic achievement in a collaborative atmosphere. She also strongly encouraged the assembled principals and pastors not to be bashful regarding their collective educational excellence and emphasized this point by

providing enumerated lists of school academic and extracurricular accomplishments during the previous year.

Following the superintendent's comments, Cardinal O'Malley closed the event by providing some encouraging remarks which thanked the assembled leaders for their time and work while reiterating the need for a strong Catholic education presence in the Archdiocese of Boston moving into the future.

For more information regarding Catholic education, please visit the Boston Catholic Schools office website at www.catholicschoolsboston.org/.

By Sean Murphy, Catholic Schools Office