

# ARCHBISHOP O'MALLEY TARGETED BY MEDDLERS

Boston Archbishop Sean O'Malley has come under increasing criticism for his decision to close sixty-five parishes in the archdiocese. Addressing this issue today is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"No one wants to see a parish closed. The ties that Catholics have to their parish are thicker than blood, and it is for this reason that no bishop takes any delight in restructuring his parishes. But in the real world of demographic changes, financial constraints and a shortage of priests, tough decisions must be made. To suggest there is another way is almost always delusional.

"It is one thing for long-time members of a parish to experience anguish when they are about to lose their church, quite another when meddlers intervene to foster their own agenda. This is exactly what is happening in Boston: Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), and Massachusetts Secretary of State William Galvin, are obstructing the process to score political points.

"It is obvious to just about everyone that VOTF is spent: it is an organization in search of a mission. Born of the homosexual scandal in the Church, the group has been left in the lurch ever since the Church started to reform itself. Furthermore, it does not exaggerate to say that Archbishop O'Malley's brilliant leadership has functionally disabled VOTF, making it an increasingly irrelevant body. That is why it is seizing on the issue of church restructuring—one that has absolutely nothing to do with its alleged interest in combating sexual abuse. Things have descended so far that VOTF must now resort to fielding endorsements from notorious Catholic bashers (e.g., Steve Gushee of the *Palm Beach Post*).

"Regarding Secretary of State William Galvin, some clerk needs to introduce him to the establishment clause of the First Amendment. For a state official to busy himself in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church is to tread on dangerous grounds. As a private citizen, and as a Catholic layman, Galvin has every right to opine on any religious matter he wants. But he had better keep his status as a government official at bay."