

O'Malley agrees to meet with parishioners

By Claudia Torrens / Daily News Staff

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FRAMINGHAM -- Archbishop Sean O'Malley will meet with parishioners in vigil at St. Jeremiah's Church in an attempt to "resolve their concerns."

A spokesman from the archdiocese said yesterday that by mutual agreement with the church, the time for O'Malley to respond to St. Jeremiah's appeal has been extended by 30 days. Within that period, O'Malley will meet with parishioners and with the parish council at St. George's, the parish that absorbed St. Jeremiah's.

"This is an attempt to try to resolve the differences that are out there," said archdiocese spokesman Terry Donilon. "He has been trying the hardest to work with all parties."

Yesterday was the last day for O'Malley to respond to the church's appeal.

Appeals Committee co-Chairwoman Jackie Lemmerhirt said she feels "very optimistic" about reaching an agreement that will allow the church to open its doors again. Lemmerhirt also said the archbishop has granted permission to reinstall air conditioning at the church, which was removed in April. The church closed May 13.

Lemmerhirt said an independent consultant will also review the facilities of St. George's and St. Jeremiah's and determine whether St. George's can handle both congregations. She also said her group requested the facilities review in October.

Donilon said O'Malley is on retreat and will be back in a couple of weeks. He did not know about a specific date for the meeting.

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