

DECREE

In Nomine Domini

In October 2008, a committee, composed of a number of pastors as well as Pastoral Center staff, was formed to study the financial relationship between the Central Ministries of the Archdiocese of Boston (hereafter “Central Ministries”) and the Parishes, Quasi-Parishes, and Rectorates of the Archdiocese of Boston (hereafter “Parish” or “Parishes”). This committee, first named the Improved Financial Relationship Committee (“IFRC”), was later changed to reflect the progress they had made, becoming the Improved Financial Relationship Model (hereafter “IFRM”). Their tasks and goals included: the creation of financially vibrant Parishes enabling them to carry out their missions; the improvement of financial stability of Parishes and Central Ministries; enhancement of the financial relationship between Parishes and Central Ministries; increased mutual accountability by having Parishes and Central Ministries revenues more closely tied together; increased support and communication between Parishes and Central Ministries; increased participation in the Central Ministries budget process by Pastors and lay members of the Christian faithful; and a simple, fair and equitable system where all Parishes are asked to give their proportionate fair share. IFRM did this through extensive and wide reaching consultation and over the course of four years, with the full implementation not happening until July, 2013.

While the IFRM has largely been a success in accomplishing its goals and tasks over the course of these past nine years, there have been a number of unforeseen variables, including, but not limited to, continuing costs associated with the Office of Pastoral Support and Outreach, previously funded through other sources, that is now part of the expenses of Central Ministries. The pastoral plan, Disciples in Mission, has also been launched since the time of the IFRM. Therefore, I called a new committee of Pastors and Central Ministries staff to address these new variables (hereafter the “Committee”). This Committee met thirteen times over six months and initially consulted with the Presbyteral Council on May 18, 2017. The proposal from the Committee was then brought to the Vicariate Meetings of the Archdiocese for feedback and comments. The Committee returned to the Presbyteral Council for consultation and further feedback from the Vicariates on June 19, 2017. Based on this feedback, the Committee met to clarify areas of the proposal and make revisions. Revised information was disseminated to the members of the Presbyteral Council to share in the Vicariates, offering further opportunities for input: presentations at Vicariate Meetings, conference calls, and an open meeting at the Pastoral Center in Braintree, Massachusetts. The Committee returned to the Presbyteral Council Meeting on September 26, 2017 for a final consultation and affirmative vote in favor of the revisions to the tax. This was in addition to the two consultations made at the Finance Council on May 25, 2017 and October 12, 2017.

Therefore, I, Seán P. Cardinal O’Malley, O.F.M. Cap., hereby decree and declare, pursuant to canon 1263, the imposition of a moderate tax (hereafter the “Tax”) for the needs of the Archdiocese upon all the Parishes (i.e., Parishes, Quasi-parishes, and Rectorates) subject to me, proportionate to their income and according to the terms

described herein. The Tax consists of three components. The first component is the tithe of Ten Percent (10%) and Catholic Appeal assessment of Eight Percent (8%). The second component is Eighteen Percent (18%) directly on net rental income. The third component is Eighteen Percent (18%) on the net proceeds of the sale of Parish properties.

First Component of the Tax – Tithe/Assessment

The first component of the Tax is a tithe of Ten Percent (10%) imposed on Base Revenue as defined herein (hereafter the "Tithe") and an assessment of funds raised in the Catholic Appeal which shall be an amount equal to Eight Percent (8%) of Base Revenue as defined herein (hereafter the "Assessment"). For Parishes with schools that belong to the Parish, the Tithe will be Five and Three/Tenths Percent (5.3%). Base Revenue is calculated as the three (3) year average of the following income components:

- Offertory/Offertory Monthly — amounts collected from parishioners at weekly Masses for support of the Parish at either the first or second collection. This includes amounts collected for this purpose, whether collected at Mass, mailed, paid by credit card, electronically funded, or any other means.
- Grand Annual — amounts collected as the result of an annual solicitation(s) often to be used for a specific designated purpose in support of the Parish. This includes amounts collected for this purpose, whether collected at Mass, mailed, paid by credit card, electronically funded, or any other means.

The Second Component of the Tax – Net Rental Income

The second component of the Tax consists of Eighteen Percent (18%) to be imposed directly on net rental income, which includes, but is not limited to, amounts received as rent or fees for any lease/license agreement to use or occupy a portion of the Parish premises, for example, leasing of parking lots, buildings or licensing space for cell towers (hereafter “Net Rental Income”). For Parishes with schools that belong to the Parish, the Net Rental Income Tax will be reduced by Four and Seven/Tenths Percent (4.7%). Parish expenses associated with this rental property may be deducted from this income based on criteria established in the Net Rental Income Guidelines. Net Rental Income will no longer be included in Base Revenue noted above as part of the Tithe component or the Catholic Appeal Assessment of the Tax. The particular components of what constitutes Net Rental Income shall be developed as recommended policy by the Abatement Committee as described herein.

The Third Component of the Tax – Net Proceeds of the Sale of Parish Property

The third component of the Tax consists of Eighteen Percent (18%) to be imposed directly on the net proceeds from the sale of Parish property (hereafter “Net Proceeds of the Sale

of Parish Property.”) The particular components of what constitutes Net Proceeds of the Sale of Parish Property shall be developed as recommended policy by the Abatement Committee as described herein.

Rebates

A rebate “pool” is established for those Parishes that meet the conditions stated below and exceed their Assessment (hereafter, the “Pool”). For those parishes that exceed their Assessment, 50% of the amount over Assessment will be directed into the Pool. Money from the Pool will pay for abatements to the Tax (consisting of the Tithe/Assessment, Net Rental Income, Net Proceeds of the Sale of Parish Property) for those Parishes that meet the conditions below and who apply for abatements as described below. The balance of the Pool will then be distributed to qualifying parishes on a pro-rata basis.

Conditions to Rebates and Abatements

In order to qualify for an abatement (for the three components of Tax - the Tithe/Assessment, Net Rental Income, Net Proceeds of the Sale of Parish Property), Parishes must meet or exceed their “In Pew Goal” by implementing the “In Pew Campaign” best practices as outlined in the Catholic Appeal Procedural Guide and engage a Catholic Appeal Coordinator volunteer. The Catholic Appeal Procedural Guide will be reviewed and approved by the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia. With consideration given to the information provided by the Parishes, determinations of compliance with these conditions shall be the sole purview of the Abatement Committee, described below.

Abatement Process

The abatement applications will be reviewed by the Abatement Committee established by the Archbishop. Parishes that are experiencing financial difficulties may apply for an abatement of any component of the Tax (Central Ministry Tithe, Catholic Appeal Assessment, Net Rental Income Tax and Net Property Sales Tax). The Abatement Committee consists of the Chancellor, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy, the Director of Parish Services and at least three pastors appointed for five (5) year term(s). The Abatement Committee shall review and recommend amendments to the instructions, procedures and timelines as needed. These instructions, procedures, and timelines will be submitted to the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for his review and approval.

All abatement requests are not guaranteed and are subject to available funding. Each year a report will be issued by the Abatement Committee, noting by Parish all components of the Tax, Abatements and Rebates.

The Tax and its components will be reviewed at least every five years.

This Tax will be promulgated by electronic mail to each pastor/administrator/rector of the Archdiocese and by publication in The Pilot newspaper. This Decree shall become effective at 12:01 AM on November 23, 2017.

Given this 13th day of November, 2017 at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Boston in Braintree, Massachusetts.


Archbishop of Boston


Chancellor

