

## O'Malley: Hub victims 'moved' pope

By Marie Szaniszlo | Sunday, April 20, 2008 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | [Local Coverage](#)



Photo by Faith Ninivaggi

An emotional Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley said yesterday Pope Benedict XVI was "moved" by his meeting with local clergy-abuse victims and by a book containing the names of some 1,500 other Boston-area victims, as local clergy urged their flocks to be inspired by the pope's message to "assist those who have been hurt."

O'Malley, who introduced the five victims to the pope at an unprecedented meeting Thursday in Washington, D.C., said it was a way for the pontiff to reach out to all those affected by the crisis.

The cardinal choked up as he described the book he gave Benedict as a symbolic way to experience the scope of the scandal.

O'Malley's remarks came at the Boston Catholic Men's Conference at Boston College - his first public appearance since his return from Washington and his last before he leaves for New York to celebrate Mass with the pope at Yankee Stadium.

A recurring theme yesterday and at Friday's women's conference was the pontiff's hope of bringing about a "spiritual renewal for all Americans" during his first trip to the United States.

The Rev. Roger Landry, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in New Bedford, reiterated Benedict's message that Catholics need to be united and undertake a conversation, partly as result of the clergy sexual-abuse crisis.

The pope has referred to the crisis several times, Landry noted, emphasizing "how sorrowful we are, how much of a sin it was and how committed we are that it will never reoccur."

"He says more still needs to be done," Landry said, adding that the pontiff has encouraged Catholics "to do what you can to foster healing and reconciliation and to assist those who have been hurt."

To do that, the "greatest challenge the church faces we see every morning when we look in the mirror," Landry said.

Above all, Landry said, the pontiff urges Catholics to be a "leaven of evangelical hope in American society, striving to bring the light and the truth of the Gospel to the task of building an even more just and free world for generations yet to come."

After the men's conference, Ron Ciecuch, 74, of St. Paul's Parish in Cambridge called the confab "a real spiritual shot in the arm" that has kept him coming back year after year.

"There is a real sense of community here, a sense that each one of us is not alone," Ciecuch said. "I come away each time to live better and do more."