

# The Pilot

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## Cardinal O'Malley to tweet each day until ballot vote

By PILOT STAFF

BRAINTREE — In conjunction with the beginning of the Year of Faith, Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley will use Twitter to connect with Catholics and members of the wider community on the goals of the Year of Faith and also on the concerns about Question 2 on the November ballot, which if passed, would legalize assisted suicide in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Cardinal O'Malley is asking Catholics in the archdiocese who are on Twitter to follow @CardinalSean and to respond to and re-tweet his messages in order that they may be more widely seen and heard.

"The next four weeks are very important here in the Archdiocese of Boston and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts," the cardinal said in a statement.

Regarding his planned tweets on Question 2, Cardinal Seán said that even though we are less than one month away from Election Day many people still have not heard about this ballot question."

"It's critical that we all do what we can to inform everyone we can reach about three categories of concerns about Question 2," he said.

"First is the opposition of the medical profession, disability advocacy groups and people of faith about assisted suicide. Next there are the specific flaws in the ballot initiative that lead even those who favor assisted suicide to oppose Question 2, such as no requirement to consult a psychiatrist, palliative care profession or family member before receiving a lethal prescription. Third, there is the concern that a complex issue like this should be decided in the state legislature who can study and debate it and not by a ballot initiative process."

Cardinal O'Malley spoke to the promise of Twitter as a tool to help assisted

suicide.

"Twitter has been used to advocate for many important issues as one user's message can be re-tweeted several times to reach millions. My hope is that Catholics will respond to the need to share information on this issue by first following @CardinalSean on Twitter and then re-tweeting some or all of my messages."

"On Nov. 6, voters will be asked to support so-called 'death with dignity.' Who wouldn't want a dignified death? Unfortunately, this is a euphemism meant to mask the reality—doctors providing a lethal prescription for someone with a terminal diagnosis of 6 months or less to end his own life. It's important that we — all of us — help people to understand what Question 2 is all about. Please join me, through Twitter and other means, to stop assisted suicide by informing others about Question 2 and encouraging your own Twitter followers to vote no."

The cardinal will also tweet about some of the foundational principles and hopes of this Year of Faith in the archdiocese.

"This week we begin the Year of Faith across the universal Church. It is an opportunity to grow in our faith and trust in the person of Jesus Christ and increase our knowledge of the content of our Catholic faith," he said.

In addition to tweeting important



Screenshot of @CardinalSean twitter page. Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley will use Twitter until Nov. 6 to connect with Catholics and members of the wider community on the goals of the Year of Faith and also on the concerns about Question 2.

articles and links, Cardinal O'Malley will be posting topics on the Year of Faith or on Question 2 in which he will be asking his Twitter followers to tweet comments or questions back that he will answer.

"Cardinal Seán has always embraced new media as a way to connect and communicate with the Catholic community," said Scot Landry, archdiocesan secretary for Catholic media.

"He was the first cardinal in the world to launch a blog in September 2006 ([www.CardinalSeansBlog.org](http://www.CardinalSeansBlog.org)). He created the Catholic Media Secretariat in 2010 to embrace all forms of media to share the Good News of our faith and to connect Catholics with the Church in new ways. This effort to expand his use of Twitter over the next 4 weeks, and possibly longer, is his latest initiative to leverage social media for the mission of the Church."

The Archdiocese of Boston has developed websites for the Year of Faith ([YearofFaithBoston.org](http://YearofFaithBoston.org)) and for the educational campaign on the Church's teachings on end of life issues ([SuicideIsAlwaysATragedy.org](http://SuicideIsAlwaysATragedy.org)). The archdiocese is also part of a large coalition of groups from other faiths, from the medical community, and from disabilities advocacy groups that are urging a no vote on Question 2. The coalition's website is [www.StopAssistedSuicide.org](http://www.StopAssistedSuicide.org).

Cardinal Seán began his Twitter account in May 2009. @CardinalSean currently has 5,091 followers. Twitter is an online social networking service and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as "tweets." It was launched in July 2006. The service has grown rapidly and current has over 500 million active users. Cardinal Seán's tweets can also be viewed at [www.twitter.com/cardinalsean](http://www.twitter.com/cardinalsean).