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## September 22, 2005 - Labels Are For Jars Achieves Major Fundraising Goal For Cor Unum Meal Center In Lawrence

*Ground breaking of 5,600 square foot meal center to begin this fall. Labels continues to raise operational funds.*

**(LAWRENCE, MA) September 22, 2005...** Father Paul B. O'Brien, chairperson of the [Cor Unum Meal Center](#) and pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Lawrence, together with Archbishop Seán P. O'Malley today joined with leaders of Labels Are For Jars and members of the Lawrence community to announce the achievement of the fundraising goal for the construction of the Cor Unum Meal Center.

Cor Unum has been established to address the vast unmet needs of the hungry in Lawrence, the poorest city in Massachusetts. In Lawrence today, 75 percent of children are at risk for hunger.

Ground will be broken for the meal center this fall, with construction expected to last approximately six months.

"When you understand the enormity of hunger in Lawrence and the resources needed to effectively fight hunger, the reality can seem overwhelming," explains Father Paul O'Brien. "Cor Unum is the proof that people who are committed to creatively fighting hunger in the United States can achieve remarkable success. We believe that the right to nutrition is a fundamental human right. With Cor Unum, thousands of people in Lawrence will no longer be denied that right."

"The Lord teaches us: 'Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me,'" says Archbishop Seán. "'When I was hungry you gave me to eat.' Today, here in Lawrence and throughout the Archdiocese, too many people go hungry each day. Children, parents, and families are all looking for a simple meal to sustain them one more day. Cor Unum is a remarkable development that will weave a fabric of care and love for the neediest among us. Father Paul O'Brien and the wonderful Cor Unum and Labels Are For Jars teams have made possible what most people would find impossible to achieve. Soon, this site will be filled with people caring for people. We thank you for having the courage and the commitment to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in Lawrence."

In 2004, Cor Unum's leadership embarked on the ambitious goal of raising up to \$1.4 million dollars needed to fund the construction of the center. Labels Are For Jars has raised \$475,000. The Archdiocese of Boston has committed to funding all construction costs over \$900,000. Individual donors, as well as foundations and businesses, have contributed the remainder of the construction funds.

Today's event launches the next stage of fundraising for Cor Unum: \$400,000 needed for operational expenses. "It seems almost unbelievable that Cor Unum has become a reality in such a short time," explains Boston College freshman Meghan Battle, a member of a Labels Are For Jars street team in Concord, MA. "Now the challenge is to raise an additional \$400,000 to fund the operations of Cor Unum. We hope that everyone who wants to get involved with this project will connect with us through [labelsareforjars.org](http://labelsareforjars.org)."

Located in South Lawrence, the Cor Unum Meal Center will be a 5,600 square foot building constructed on a 27,359 square foot lot on Carver Street in Lawrence. The land, owned by St. Patrick Parish, is currently used as a parking lot and will be dedicated to the center. The Cor Unum Meal Center will welcome all people in a dignified atmosphere and provide a safe environment for the body, soul, and spirit of all who are in need. The center will provide:

- A facility large enough to feed 75 people at one seating, with multiple serving times to

accommodate up to 250 people for each meal;

- A varied menu of nutritious, well-balanced free meals prepared and served on site seven days per week, up to three meals per day;
- An opportunity to socialize with others in a warm, friendly, accepting atmosphere;
- A food pantry, currently located in the basement of Saint Patrick Parish's offices, for the provision of food in the form of groceries.

### **Labels Are For Jars**

**Labels Are For Jars** is a dynamic undertaking designed to raise money to fund and operate the Cor Unum Meal Center.

Labels Are For Jars has designed a thought provoking black t-shirt, which helps to undermine societal labeling. The shirt is adorned with a commonly used negative label ("addict", "geek", "homeless", "jock", "minority", "prisoner", "mentally ill", "pacifist", "slacker", and "troubled teen") and "labelsareforjars.org" across the back. The shirt is packaged in a clear plastic jar with a coin slot cut into the screw top. Buyers are encouraged to use the jar at home, school, or work to collect as much money as they can.

The shirts are sold on the web and through direct sales groups in local communities called street teams. Street teams are primarily groups of high school and college students, who have a unique power to affect change in our society. Labels gear is also available in Newbury Comics retail stores in Boston, Newton, Burlington, and Peabody.

Publicly launched just over a year ago, Labels Are For Jars has raised \$475,000 to establish the Cor Unum Meal Center.

For more information, please visit [www.labelsareforjars.org](http://www.labelsareforjars.org).

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### **ARCHBISHOP'S REMARKS**

*COR UNUM*

*September 22, 2005*

On this site, in the near future, the hungry will be fed.

Children and families will be served in a compassionate and dignified manner.

We are called to a greater good when we see a person lacking proper nourishment, a safe roof over their heads or the necessary provisions we so often take for granted.

On this site, the Lord's work truly will be done each and every day.

We give thanks to our Heavenly Father for Cor Unum and for the people who have given this place life.

To Fr. Paul O'Brien, pastor at St. Patrick's Parish and his team of volunteers who conceived Cor Unum, we give thanks for their vision and generosity of time and spirit.

To the remarkable network of young people who run Labels Are For Jars, we give thanks for your energy, creativity and commitment to those in need and for the insuring that Cor Unum has the resources it will need over the long haul.

To our local community leaders and the many individuals and organizations that are supporting this meal center, we give thanks.

There is almost nothing worse than looking in to the eyes of a hungry child or a wanting parent who only seeks the comfort, care and safety of their family.

This is the one thing that tears at your heart.

You feel a sense of being powerless and certain sadness.

We often ask ourselves, why, in a country with the vast resources of the United States do we have so many people lacking the basic needs?

But the Lord teaches us to have faith and to trust in His power.

We need only look in the mirror to find the solutions. All of us share in the responsibility to care for our fellow citizens.

Out of the haze that is hunger, you find the hand of God in the sweat and tears of people like those who have created the Cor Unum Meal Center and Labels Are For Jars.

The Archdiocese of Boston feels so strongly about the need for Cor Unum, we decided we absolutely had to dedicate resources to this project in order that the meal center would be able to get off the ground.

It is what God calls us to do, and we must answer the call.



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