

Dear Friends of the Chaplaincy:

I wanted to bring you up to date on plans as we prepare for the leadership transition in the Chaplaincy.

Scores of David O'Leary's friends and colleagues gathered earlier this week for a reception at Boccelli's Restaurant in Medford to thank him for his many contributions as University Chaplain. It was a festive occasion and brought together many of those whose lives David has touched while at Tufts. As you know, David will still be on campus this spring, teaching in the Religion Department and serving Mass at some of the Sunday evening services sponsored by the Catholic Community at Tufts. He has assumed his new parochial assignment at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Medford and we wish him well in his varied responsibilities after the New Year.

The President will be appointing the Reverend Patricia Budd Kepler to serve as our University Chaplain ad interim, effective January 1. Pat is uniquely qualified to provide for a smooth transition and to maintain the momentum in the Chaplaincy. She knows Tufts and our Chaplaincy well, having served previously as Interim University Chaplain. A new edition of her book, *A Window on History: 150 years of Religion at Tufts*, appeared recently. Many of you may also know Pat from her long service as Pastor of Somerville's Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church. She had previously served as Director of Ministerial Studies at the Harvard Divinity School. More recently, she has served as Interim Co-Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Waltham and then at Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church in Easton. Pat will be on campus three days a week during the spring semester. I hope you will join me in welcoming her back to the Tufts community.

Looking ahead, we are laying the groundwork for the search for the next University Chaplain. The President and I will be engaging a selection of representative stakeholders in a pair of visioning retreats in late January. At the same time, we will be engaging in benchmarking research to ensure that the organizational structure of the Chaplaincy reflects current needs and aspirations. We anticipate appointing a search advisory committee, reporting to the President, which will work with an experienced search consultant. Our goal is to ensure that the next University Chaplain can provide leadership to sustain and advance a tradition of vibrant spiritual practice, profound ethical reflection, and effective action to better the world.

We hope that in the coming semester you will continue to engage actively with the Chaplaincy, and I hope you will feel free to contact me if you have suggestions or comments as we prepare for the next phase in the Chaplaincy's development.

Best regards,

Michael Baenen  
Chief of Staff  
Office of the President