



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

October 30, 2017

**Signature Drive Campaign on Church Property
Modification**

On June 1, 2017, the Ordinaries of the four Dioceses of Massachusetts issued a Policy regarding signature drive campaigns on Church property. With the exception of the modifications listed below, that Policy remains unchanged moving forward.

Currently efforts are underway by concerned citizens to place ballot questions before the voters of Massachusetts on November 6, 2018 and November 3, 2020. Those ballot questions, if approved by the voters, would have varying effects. Two would amend the Massachusetts Constitution; one would repeal an existing law while several others would enact new laws. Given the importance of these efforts, and while maintaining the basic principles the original Policy issued in June, the Diocese of Worcester will allow signature gathering to be conducted on Church property for the purpose of assisting the advocates of the petition drives according to the following guidelines.

- (1) The decision to allow signature gathering will be at the sole discretion of the Pastor/Administrator of the Church provided that any petition approved by the Pastor/Administrator must be in accordance with the teachings of the Church.
- (2) Signature gathering must take place at a designated location(s) on the property away from the flow of parishioners approaching or departing Holy Mass. The location shall be determined by the Pastor/Administrator.
- (3) The Pastor/Administrator shall decide the appropriate method of communicating to the parishioners the fact that petitions are available for signing at the designated locations(s). Announcements at the beginning/end of Mass, bulletin inserts, email notifications, etc. are suggested means of communication.

Any questions should be directed to James F. Driscoll, Executive Director, Massachusetts Catholic Conference at 617-746-5620 or jdriscoll@macatholic.org.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester