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Archbishops' bet adds to World Series intrigue

by Brian Roewe

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When the World Series resumes tonight, it will inch closer to not only determining which team will win its third ring in 10 years, but also which Catholic prelate will have to pony up.

Before the St. Louis Cardinals lost to the Boston Red Sox 8-1 Wednesday night in Game 1 of the 109th World Series, St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson challenged Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston to a friendly wager.

On the line? \$100 to the winning city's Catholic Charities.

"May the Lord's blessing fall upon the players of both teams," Carlson said in a press release. "May they play to the best of their ability and without any injuries. As we celebrate the joy that comes from friendly competition, let us also call to mind the mission of the Church as evidenced in the great work of Catholic Charities."

Unfortunately, the injury bug might have already raised its head for St. Louis, who lost postseason hero Carlos Beltran to a severe rib contusion in the second inning. The outfielder suffered the injury after crashing into Fenway Park's right field wall while robbing Boston slugger David Ortiz of a grand slam.

Since the two teams last met in the Fall Classic in 2004 -- a four-game sweep by the Red Sox, ending an 86-year championship drought -- each has earned two titles, with Boston also beating the Colorado Rockies in 2007, and the Cardinals defeating the Detroit Tigers in 2006 and the Texas Rangers in 2011.

Carlson and other Cards fans will have to hope Beltran and the birds bounce back quickly if St. Louis is to win the Series and the wager.

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