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Saint Helen's Missions

Box 80

Georgetown, Texas

Aug. 1, 1960

Father Seidel:

Last week I had the opportunity of speaking with the sheriff about the case. His observations are not only keen, and based upon much experience in such matters, but seem to be the course we should follow. I gave this same set of observations to Bishop Reicher, and he too is impressed with the saneness, and the practicality of the sheriff's conclusions.

After outlining to the sheriff the many facts I had received from Father Nash, the Sheriff is of the opinion that the case is quite weak for the prosecution. He is also of the opinion that the prosecution must be made to see just how weak their case is, lest they go off half-cooked, and set the wheels into motion that would bring this out in public print, and give the opponents of the Church a field day. He is also of the opinion that the case would be tried here, and would not be judged on logic, but on the prejudices of the jury. There are also political implications to this that could make this a juicy scandal for the opposition to Kennedy, and best of all there are the Messons, whom the Bishop feels small chance to hurt the Church, just as the H.E.B. Baptists paid for the prosecution of the Priest in East Texas who was killed by the lad he befriends.

What to do about this? First, the Sheriff said that we should follow the idea of not hiring a lawyer for the reasons given by Father Nash. Second, we should not put a detective on the case hired by us, since that would mean he would be snooping around, questioning witnesses, and stirring up things again. However, he does feel that we should hire a person, something like a first class private detective who would be able to sit down with Father Nash and Father T. [unclear] to get all the information on this case. Then let him write it up, and present it on paper in such a way as to highlight the loopholes that are so numerous in this case. Once this is done, arrange a meeting with the police chief of McAllen, the prosecuting attorney, and the sheriff, plus four priests. At this meeting the whole situation is brought out, and the prosecution will be able to see how strong the opposition is to their charges. They can also be brought to realize in a nice way that the Church will not take this sitting down.

The Sheriff does not want more than the number mentioned, and he thinks that this will quiet things considerably. Once this is done, then after three or four months, or even less if possible, have this young man transferred to another part of the country, as a normal obedience. He feels that everyone knows that priests are always being transferred around so this would not be strange. After some time in his new place, a year or two, then have him sent out to a foreign Mission. The reason for the first move is to get him out of the area of suspicion. If something happens, the officers of the area will always be suspicious of him.

The sheriff concludes that the longer time we have, the weaker the case gets, and so he suggested all the foregoing. He has much experience in such things, and I believe this is extremely wise. He also is a Catholic, and he also stands to legitmatically by such a scandal here, in such a non-Catholic area. I feel that he has rendered us an invaluable service. I submit these ideas after having consulted with Bishop Reicher, who is also in agreement with this course.

The Bishop wishes to see you, Father, at your convenience. Let me know if I can do anything in the future to help this thing along. Your worries are ours, since we fight the same Evil One who has concocted this thing in his ceaseless fight against the Church, and to stop the good being done by your wonderful Congregation. My prayers, and my Mass intentions are with you, Father, and I am sure our Priests will pray hard for a "special intention" mentioned as such to them.

Yours in Christ,  
Father J.F. Pawlicki, c.s.c.

John - Proctor Bishop ...