

Immaculate Heart Of Mary Church

52 Spruce Street, Weymouth, Mass.

June 7, 1967

Most Reverend Bernard J. Flanagan, D.D.
Bishop of Worcester
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

Your Excellency:

I am answering Your Excellency's letter of June 6 about the advisability of further testing in another parish for Reverend Mr. Thomas Teczar. I think that this would be helpful, particularly in testing the worth of the progress which he seems to have made here with us. When he first came and for the first two months, I did little correcting or guiding, letting him follow his own judgements in most matters. For that period, there were many and frequent instances of poor judgement. For the last month or more, I have adopted the policy of speaking openly with him whenever I thought he needed correction. There would be at least half a dozen instances when I have done this. Sometimes the immediate reaction was resentful, but it was invariably replaced by conformity, co-operation and good will, within a matter of hours. He has also persevered in following whatever advice I have given him. Sometimes matters were involved which could have been overlooked as far as I was concerned, but I pointed out to him the necessity of following practices here, by way of testing, that would be necessary if he were to adapt himself to life in various parishes under various pastors.

I am not sure whether he is conforming to my suggestions only outwardly because he thinks that my judgement about him will carry weight in determining his fitness for ordination, or whether he understands and has inwardly made my suggestions his own for future guidance. That is why I think another assignment would be useful in evaluating his seeming progress here. If he gives free rein once again to his own impulses as he did when he first came here, I would doubt the wisdom of ordaining him. If some of his mistakes here do not reappear in the new assignment, I think we can consider him a reasonably good candidate for ordination. I would suggest that no further warnings should be given about his formerly manifested predilection for intimate and rather exclusive companionship with young boys. If this breaks out again, I do not think he should be ordained. If he thinks the new pastor or curate has been alerted to it, he may merely suppress the inclination. If no mention of it is made, I think it might manifest itself again -- this on the possibility that he conformed to my advice without agreeing inwardly with it. I can, when I come to Worcester, discuss some of the other matters with you.

One thing in which I think I erred was my acceptance of his suggestion that the people address him as "Father". This, he told me, was what was done when he worked in parishes in Pennsylvania. I now think that this title causes him to seem to the people to be a priest and to invite confidences and the giving of advice that, in some instances, would better be reserved to those who carry the responsibility.

PT 0842