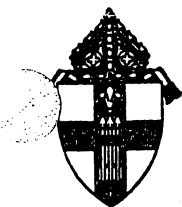


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DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

September 15, 1967

FATHER DONALD OSGOOD, LANCASTER

Father Crosby was approached at the CCD Congress at Durham by a woman who did not identify herself. She said that something should be done about the situation in Lancaster. There was much talk about Father Osgood and his effectiveness as a priest was being shattered.

[REDACTED] of Lancaster called Father Crosby today to give him further details on the matter. Father Crosby called the Chancery and asked me to check the matter. After speaking to the Bishop, I called [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was most anxious to point out that he was doing this (calling us) because of the seriousness of the situation. He is very upset. He does not want to get a priest in trouble etc. (very sincere). The point of his call is to request an investigation into Father Osgood's activities. He knows the following things from others. It is being talked about. He has no first hand knowledge of the events having only heard them from others. This is precisely the point, this type of talk is so widespread that it needs investigation.

There is talk of gatherings of boys with Father Osgood. At these gatherings there is liquor and "pictures". The boys run in age from 12 to 15. He felt however that the liquor was involved only with boys 18 and 19 and not with the younger boys. He did not want to make any comment on physical actions because he said he felt that the man was a priest. I insisted that if there was common talk about physical actions that he should tell me since everything else he mentioned was "the subject matter of talk". He admitted that the "talk" included references to "physical actions". His youngsters know about this but have not been involved. No one in his family has been involved so he knows nothing from his family except little bits of information I would gather. It seems that a close friend of his is a [REDACTED]. One of his sons was involved. He had told them he had enough and was going to call the authorities to ask for an investigation and he asked the [REDACTED] family if he could give us their name so we could call them. They said he could. [REDACTED] hopes that we might be able to let him know in a week or two if anything was being done to look into the matter. I said we would try to let him know but the important thing was we were grateful for his call. We both agreed that we hope there is nothing to the story but even if there is not the amount of talk on this subject alone merits looking into it. One final point. This talk concerns events in Lancaster alone. There is no talk of Father Osgood's past. It concerns events of the last 3 months.

Conversation with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was told about the various stories being circulated about Father Osgood. Since she has boys who serve on the altar, she asked them about the situation. Her son, age 14, was taken for a ride in the car by Father Osgood, he was shown these pictures (I assume from the tone that they were ponographic) He was told to promise not to tell his parents about it. [REDACTED] said no actions were involved according to her son. The only other thing that she knows is that Father Osgood has been the subject of conversation all summer at the swimming pool of the town among the kids. They have little respect for him as a priest although he is well liked for the interest he shows in youth programs (seemingly contradictor I asked what the "talk" about Fr. Osgood consists in. Same as [REDACTED] story.....books, pictures, liquor. Once again I asked whether the talk also includes accusations about any actions. Once again she said she didn't want to be talking about a priest. I told her that I was simply interested in whether he was being accused of anything not whether he was guilty. She said that the stories do involve accusations of actions. There are all sorts of stories being circulated. Examples: 12 mothers of altar boys went into see the bishop some time ago complaining about the situation. Another story: a psychiatrist came to see Fr. Osgood. There is a rumor that this is not something new, that it happened before in his past. Fr. Osgood is a sick person.

Conclusion: the family likes Fr. Osgood. He has tried to do good work. They need a young energetic priest in the area who will work with youth, but doubt to whether there is truth to the stories or not, Fr. Osgood's reputation has been effected, and he has suffered permanent damage in the community. All these things have never been told to the pastor. These people just felt they could not go to Father Gilbert with a story like this. These people feel that they would prefer their name not be used in telling fr. Gilbert unless we judge that it is absolutely necessary/ The family seems to be very much embarrassed by what has happened and feel that this is not the type of thing you discuss with anyone. They have never joined in the talk about Fr. Osgood and condemn such talk. They felt since they had this personal experience that rather than talk about it they would ask the authorities to investigate Fr. Osgood's actions