

December 20, 1995

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VICAR GENERAL / CHANCELLOR

Rev. Msgr. James Campbell  
412 N.E. Madison  
Peoria, IL 61603

Dear Msgr. Campbell,

I have hesitated to write this letter for the past several months but I feel the time has come. My husband and I have been registered contributing members of Epiphany parish since 1990. To say that things have changed in the last few months is an understatement. I realize that anytime a new pastor is named that changes will occur, but some things are quite disturbing.

Father Maloney appears to be a pleasant, out-going man but I feel some of what he says and does during Mass are very inappropriate. We generally attend either the 9:00 or 10:30 AM Sunday Mass and nearly every week, Mass begins three to seven minutes late. I don't understand why this continually happens. Two weeks ago at the 9:00 AM Mass, Father Maloney told us during his sermon that the Christmas collection is a gift to the pastor. He reminded us that the people of Epiphany had always been generous in the past. Going one step further, the following announcement has appeared in the church bulletin for the last two consecutive weeks: "Timely Tax Tip - You have until December 31st to claim any deductions on your 1995 income tax. Charitable contributions are still deductible, if you are able to itemize them on your tax returns." I do not disagree with the Christmas collection being a gift to the pastor but I didn't feel that the reminder was necessary. Especially since Father Maloney has scheduled ten Masses at Epiphany on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

I believe I am an active parishioner. My husband and I had a son in April and Father King baptized him at Epiphany in May. It was probably the most joyous event of our lives. We have every intention of our son continuing his religious education over the years at Epiphany but we are very unhappy with the untraditional Catholic approach which is being taken.

One Sunday in October, Father Maloney was referring to Bishop Myers and he mistakenly called the Bishop, "Johnny". I know it was a slip of the tongue but it was still disrespectful. Father Maloney quite often tells stories that involve Bishop Myers. They evidently are personal friends but I don't feel that a Sunday Mass sermon is the place to reveal these stories.

In the past whenever I was on the altar either as lector or Eucharistic Minister, we have always shown great reverence and respect. Traditionally, the celebrant opened the tabernacle and distributed the ciboria. I feel very honored to have been commissioned as a Eucharistic Minister and take this responsibility seriously. Since Father Maloney was named pastor, no one genuflects at the tabernacle and whoever is closest, opens it and distributes the ciboria. The last two times I have been on the altar at Sunday Mass, I have been terrified that someone will drop something. There is just so much activity and noise on the altar at that part of the Mass, it seems unholy.

One Sunday Father Maloney thanked the Knights of Columbus for donating tons of dirt and for spreading it to even out the edges of the blacktop. He made a completely unnecessary remark referring to how much Father King likes thick blacktop. It was a negative statement and completely uncalled for. It is a fact and common knowledge that Epiphany has one of the most beautiful churches and best kept

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grounds and facilities of any parish in the Diocese of Peoria. That did not happen over night or by dumb luck. Epiphany became the wonderful place it is because of Father King and all the hard-working parishioners over the years. Our undying gratitude and respect go to Father King for his dedication and service to Epiphany.

There are several parishes in Bloomington-Normal. We could attend anyone of them but my husband and I feel that Epiphany is our home. It is a special place and we really don't want to move our membership. Our only recourse would be financial even though we feel strongly about upholding our financial obligations to the church.

We realize that Epiphany is a large parish with over 1100 families and some people may not share our views but we feel strongly that most of the changes taking place at Epiphany are not positive ones. We appreciate you taking the time to read this letter and know you will consider our concerns. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and many blessing in the new year.

Sincerely,

