

January 17, 1956

The Reverend Robert D. Nikliborc
Villa Regina Mundi
Jemez Springs, New Mexico

Reverend and dear Father Nikliborc:

It is gratifying to learn from your letter of January 14, 1956, that you have entered into a special retreat at Villa Regina Mundi. You recognize the opportunity and the special graces that you will accept or reject in this, the most crucial time of your entire career.

Before the retreat concludes you must take a definite stand. You are either for Him or against Him. My earnest prayer is that you will make every moment count for the definite rehabilitation indicated.

You may, of course, present your case to the Very Reverend William A. Bergin at the Seminary, or to any other priest, but as far as the undersigned Bishop is concerned, no defense on your part is called for.

You state in the third paragraph of your letter of January 14, 1956: "There are facts which * * * but which will disprove many things which Father Rice has told you. etc." Your assumption is in error. Monsignor Rice made no report whatsoever regarding you or anyone else involved in your case. The fact is that your defects on both occasions were reported by lay people, who gave absolute proof which you could not gloss over or deny. Your letter also gives the names of two Pastors who could testify regarding your parochial work. As you know very well, that phase never entered into the question. In all honesty try to get this straight, that even after having been warned and pleaded with, whatever resolves you made crackled and went up in smoke, in a word, did not make a sufficient impression on you to realize the gravity of the offenses. That is precisely why you are expected to make the most of these supremely important days at Jemez Springs. You must learn all over again the meaning of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, its requirements and the virtues you are expected to practice. Number two, you must try to realize by meditation how serious was your offense, which involved another party and had very grave potentialities.

000133

January 17, 1956

Page 2

You were briefed thoroughly on all these points, not once, but many times. Much of your future depends on your power and sincerity of purpose to grasp this now.

If Father Fitzgerald and Father Rossi are thoroughly convinced that you are sincere and if they approve of your celebrating Holy Mass, you have my permission to do so.

Please do not waste any more time in trying to dig up defenses for the past. You are there to build up for the future. It can be done by the grace of God and cooperation on your part. Be assured of a daily remembrance at the Altar invoking the Holy Spirit to enlighten and guide you.

With kindest regards and every best wish, I remain,

Your devoted servant in Christ,

The Most Reverend Charles F. Buddy,
Bishop of San Diego.

v