

March 11, 1990
Lowell, Ma.

The Most Reverend Robert J. Banks, D.D.
Boston, Ma.

Your Excellency,

I'm Father George Protosapas, O. M. I. I'm retired but I help out in parishes. As of now, every Tuesday and Wednesday, I replace Father Lawrence Rondeau, the pastor of St. Joseph's church in Salem.

St. Joseph's not new to me. I was in charge of the Spanish faithful in Salem and Peabody for seven years.

I want to say in this letter a few words concerning the planned closing of Ste. Therese chapel and also about Father George Rosenkrantz.

About a month ago, I said the 4 o'clock Mass on Saturday and the 7:30 on Sunday morning. More than 90% of those attending were women over 70 years of age.

I also said the 11 o'clock Mass on Sunday morning at Ste. Therese. The church was filled and the group was a mixed group: some old people, some middle-aged couples, many young people and young married couples with their children.

The future of St. Joseph's parish lies more in the territory where St. Therese is than in that of St. Joseph. St. Therese is scheduled to close on Sunday April 1, after the 11 o'clock mass. I think that this decision is premature. If the pastor of St. Joseph were a strong leader, chances are that the people who attend St. Therese would probably gravitate to St. Joseph. But that is not the case. In fact, some claim that already 200 families have left St. Therese of their own will for parishes other than St. Joseph. With the definite closing of St. Therese, an exodus from St. Joseph's parish may follow. It is true, from what I understand, that the people of St. Therese had an opportunity to express their views on the matter. Only a handful showed up. It is not that they are indifferent, I assure you. It could be that they felt the decision had been already taken and that there was no use to show up.

I would like to address another issue. It concerns Father George Rosencrantz. I lived with him for over three years. As an associate he was terribly lazy, arrogant, not at all concerned with the parishioners. He was away every afternoon in the company of questionable friends. On five days of the week he would leave around 12 P. M. on Tuesday and return in the wee hours of Saturday. He saw

people at the office, at the most one or two a week on condition that they make an appointment with him by phone. I will not go into details but he was, without doubt, a scandal to parishioners. Frankly, in my opinion, he should not be reassigned to a parish. He had to leave in the past the parish of Our Lady, Star of the Sea ^{in Manhattan} for the same serious reason that he is leaving St. Joseph. For the good of the church he should be deprived of exercising his priestly functions.

I write this not in a spirit of rancor but in a spirit of fraternal charity. It goes without saying that I accept beforehand, in detachment, your final decisions. Also these opinions that I express are strictly personal and confidential.

Sincerely

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