

Warwick House

ST. PHILIP PARISH

ONE WARWICK STREET
ROXBURY, MASS. 02120

August 13, 69

Dear Jay:

As weary as I am of re-hashing this incredible series of events which began with a simple mistake in timing my transfer to coincide with the exodus of my predecessor, I do so once again in order that you might have in writing my position and not have to depend on memory or hearsay.

After turning down several offers over the years to enter the campus ministry, I accepted this time because I was told that I would thus be free evenings, beginning June 4th to pursue my concern for the hundreds of "alienated youth" on the streets in Boston.

I packed and was ready to move (the delay in arrival of my replacement until June 18th presented no problem since my pastor and I had provided for such an eventuality by arranging my vacation for June) but was instructed by your office to attempt to make no contact with Tom Ferrick but leave all arrangements to you. Despite misgivings I complied. Subsequently I spent 10 days of my "vacation" sitting watching my pile of boxes while you determined what I had already heard and had passed on to you: that Tom had no intention of leaving until August. ?

At this point I had to move out since John Daly was beginning to move in. But where would I move my gear while attending Harvard for the last two weeks of June? "Go home" you suggested. "I have no home," I replied. Move your things to the cellar of St. Anthony's, you suggested. Absurd and inconvenient as I found that to be I was willing. Next you called to tell me you had further learned that Tom was not leaving the college either until August. Therefore I was to take an assignment in one of several parishes for the month of July. Again I did not complain even though that meant the end to my evenings in the city which was the selling point for my accepting the transfer in the first place.

I informed Bob Bullock who suggested that I live at St. Paul's or a Dorchester parish. I then informed you that I cared little where I lived so long as it was settled and permanent. You were to look into it. I never heard from you again.

Fortunately through my own begging efforts I was accepted at St. Paul's "on trial". I moved in all my gear; did my two weeks at Harvard and was informed on the last day (despite my plea for an earlier answer) that not only was I unacceptable to my fellow priests at St. Paul's (because the pastor would create tension, not me) but that Fr. Collins in asking around felt that "no pastor in the Archdiocese would have you".

Now for July where was I to move my pile? Why had I not heard about

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a consultation meeting regarding which parish I would fill in at for July? In August when I finished that mystery assignment was I truly assured of St. Anthony's? Was any concern going to be given to my deep involvement in the alienated youth community in Boston?

As time ran out and I had not heard I called your office on June 25th. I called again for help on June 26th. Each time I left a message. In desperation I appealed to Bob Bullock who said he would discuss it with me later. He left for Mexico a few days later without having contacted me. June 27th I called your office again. A meeting was in progress and you would return the call. You didn't and of course there was no answer on Saturday or Sunday. All I had left was Monday since by now the letter that had been sent to St. Clare's in Braintree had caught up with me and I was due in Squantum on Tuesday. After calling 15 movers and being told that there were no open dates for 2 weeks, Fr. Collins had me moved in an open 2 ton, orange D.P.W. dump truck to St. Anthony's attic. And I went like a lamb, still uncomplaining to the circus in Squantum.

As August was rapidly approaching I wrote, detailing the extremity in which I now found myself, financially and otherwise. I made it clear that for the future I wanted no more conversations but rather that everything be in writing. I was certain that this time there would be no slip up. That perhaps now it was understood how desperate I was. Paul wrote back a beautiful letter of apology, taking full blame for the mishaps, assuring me that my misgivings of being punished were erroneous, even offering me his own personal money which of course I could not accept. I admit that I was displeased with his explanation that the decisions he made regarding my life without consulting me (Squantum and the letter from the Cardinal regarding Mel, Bernie and myself) smacked of a paternalism I despise but have learned to expect in the church. I will continue to hope that even my friends will not patronize me or make decisions about my life without at least first consulting me.

Paul's kindly letter ended with a plea for forgiveness and suggesting lunch. I avoided that because I still wanted in writing the answers to my questions. I was sure that frantic efforts must now be underway in your office to see to it that when my Squantum Exile was ended that I would slip quietly into St. Anthony's or whatever parish you had arranged. I called Tom to remind him that I was coming Saturday August 2nd. I packed in the morning, moved all my things again and lo, the tragedy or errors now turned to comedy--he was still there. My afternoon was already committed to 2,000 hippies at Boston Common where I was to give a talk. The evening was taken up with drugs, hospitals, police stations etc. and when my evening ended at 1 pm and I realized that I had no place to go. I went to the Y, to motels (because I didn't want it said that I spitefully ran up a hotel bill) and they were full. I wandered around Boston til 6:30 a.m. and still

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once again went through the humiliating act of ringing a doorbell and begging for a bed to sleep on at Warwick House, where this time my brother priests showed compassion and took me in. The next day I called your office. Paul was on vacation. You were busy. I left a message to call me but failed to recall that you had no idea where to call me back. The next day I called you again and you told me you had considered my letter to Paul "brash". I think after you heard my prolonged odyssey you were convinced that this was not true. I, on the other hand was astonished to learn that you had made no attempt whatever to facilitate my departure from Squantum, that you didn't even know the date, that you thought I might linger on there, and, God be praised, that you were even going to ask me to take yet another fill in job for August. You told me that Warwick House was unacceptable to you, that you could not encourage me to unpack, that you would look into another residence.

Now another week has passed during which I stupidly continued to live out of boxes, during which I might have taken some vacation had it not been necessary to await the imminent resolution;--today I made one last effort- I called Tom and find he is still in Allston and obviously you have been unable to find another place at which I am acceptable.

So, dear Jay, it may sound "brash" or "grievance-collecting" or insubordinate or disobedient--call it what you will. I have unpacked and am settling in at Warwick House, gathering up my belongings, finally sending out change of address notices instead of a weekly trip to five different parishes for mail, and intend to stay here. I hope this is in no way construed as defiance of the Personnel Board for I have tried valiantly to abide by its decision, to accept the job and the residence they indicated and at great personal cost to myself, financially and emotionally did all humanly possible to resolve this unfortunate, and I'm sure, unintended series of events.

To repeat some of the "brash" words I spoke to Paul? You had a functioning, happy, celibate, suburban priest. In two months my life has become a nightmare: I have lost the confidence of my superiors, been made to seem a complainer, lost the apostolates that gave me sustenance, caused admiratio on the part of my friends and family who cannot understand this apparant instability, been reduced to begging for the toleration of brother priests and pastors for things such as board and room to which I have a canonical right and you the obligation to provide, been subjected to a turmoil of uncertainty and insecurity, been suspected of maneuvering for a preferred position, placed in the light of a malcontent, been ignored by the personnel office except on the few occasions they returned some of my phone calls and letters, given great anxiety to my mother who has had the serious heart attacks, had one whole summer destroyed, interrupted a two year series of allergy shots which must now be started all over again, compelled to borrow money from relatives,

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--all this for what? Simply because I wanted a permanent residence anywhere, so that I could work. Not golf, not goof off, not run around, but simply function as a priest. I enclose a statement of the funds I think are owed to me and ask your earliest consideration at least of this portion of my problem.

Last two weeks of June at \$250.00/mo.....	125.00
July salary \$350.00 minus \$100.00 rm./brd. minus \$110.00 paid to me by Star of the Sea.....	\$140.00
August..\$350.00(of which I pay \$100.00 to Warwick House.....	\$350.00
Tip to six-man DFW crew(all other movings I performed myself--no charge..)	\$30.00
<i>Rent + Brand for St Philip's - - - - -</i>	<i>50.00</i>
	<u>\$695.00 total</u>

If my requests in this letter should be deemed unacceptable then I hereby formally apply for a leave of absence since I can no longer afford emotionally or financially to work for the Archdiocese of Boston, as much as I would like to.

Sincerely
Paul R. Frank