

CHURCH OF ST. RITA

281 BRADLEY AVENUE • STATEN ISLAND, NY 10314 • (718) 698-3746

January 25, 1988

Dear Bishop Mugavero:

I write to you personally with reference to Father Romano Ferraro, a priest of your Diocese, who has been helping us at St. Rita's parish now for almost a year. He has been living in his uncle's house, which is within our parish, and he asked last March if he might offer Mass at St. Rita's while living in his uncle's house. I had known Fr. Ferraro, as he lived with me at St. Francis Xavier parish in the Bronx, when I was pastor there, when he filled in, at the request of the N.Y. Hospital Apostolate, for the two hospital chaplains who resided with us at St. Francis Xavier, who cared for the Catholic patients at Jacobi and Einstein Hospitals located within St. Francis Xavier parish, for their summer vacations.

Father Ferraro told me about the unfortunate incident which happened while he was at St. John Vianney Church in Woodbridge, N.J. last year, when he preached about Santa Claus, and was grossly misquoted; and when, as a result, he was asked to leave the parish by the pastor. And I also know that he has had some problems while a priest in Brooklyn. He has acknowledged to me: "I have caused the diocese some grief!" The exact nature of his difficulties with the diocese I have not sought to know. I only know that he has repeatedly applied to the diocese to be reinstated, and is now patiently awaiting some word from your personnel board to this effect.

Father Ferraro has been most willing to help us at St. Rita's in many ways; he offers one or two Masses for us on Sundays - there are two priests assigned here for six weekend Masses; he will offer a weekday Mass here when we have a Funeral or a nuptial Mass; he often offers Mass for our Dominican Sisters at their convent. He stayed at the Rectory during the Summer months so that Father Michael Sepp and I could take a vacation. In short, he has done so many kind and good things here that our people keep asking why Father Ferraro cannot stay here permanently.

I have made a formal request of our own Personnel Board, to have Fr. Ferraro assigned to St. Rita's as adjunct clergy. However our personnel board is reluctant to accept a priest from the Brooklyn Diocese who is on leave from the diocese, especially if his own diocese is reluctant to take him back!

Father Ferraro left for Rome last Thursday, to marry a cousin there, and will be visiting relatives in Italy until February 12th, when he returns to Staten Island. He has told us that he will not be able to stay at his uncle's house, as the house is being rented. We cannot accept Fr. Ferraro permanently at St. Rita's, if our own Personnel Board is reluctant to extend to him courtesy and necessary faculties.

May I simply request that you review his status with your Personnel Board, and if possible, according to their report, do everything within your power and judgment to restore Fr. Ferraro - his priestly service and his own self respect - to the Brooklyn Diocese. I can state very honestly that Fr. Ferraro does not know that I am writing this letter to you; frankly, I do not know if he would appreciate my personal intervention. However, our people are mystified - and many of his friends from St. John's, Woodbridge, N.J. are hurt and scandalized by the "treatment" he has received from various quarters.

Respectfully yours,

1136

John F. Reardon

as per direction of Pop. M. I spoke with F. Pearson on 2/4/66
of some her general background (incl. History of Appointments recommendations)

F.P.