

Most Reverend Francis Mugavero
Bishop - R.C. Diocese of Brooklyn
75 Greene Avenue
Brooklyn, New York, 11238

Sunday, July 1, 1973
Fst. of SS Peter and Paul

Dear Bishop,

You are remembered, as always, in my constant prayers.

More than a month ago, probably more than six weeks ago, I wrote to you requesting a transfer, hopefully, I wrote, to an Italian parish. Despite the circumstances surrounding the letter, the request was a genuine one, since I do have a great appreciation for my heritage. That letter was never answered. It had been written with the advice, I might add, of Msgr. King.

As you well know, some unfortunate difficulty had arisen in the parish for which I had, prior to writing my letter, been to see a psychologist, suggested to me by Father Rau, on a weekly basis.

In my letter I asked, if it were possible, than an Italian parish (if it desired) pay for the Italian course that was to be given at the seminary. That course was convenient in several ways; I could leave St. Rose for a "reason" and with some honor...thus giving the diocese sufficient to consider the situation surrounding myself, and finally to prepare well for a possible reassignment. When I received no answer, and being left no other alternative, I presumed to attend the course. I do fully understand and appreciate Fr. Bevilaqua's situation with regard to funding, and so am left with this status, that, if there is hope of reassignment, I shall, with your permission, finish the course with the knowledge that I will then have funds to pay for the entire course. It's an excellent program for which I would not mind paying personally. I do have sufficient funds saved at present to do so, but they would then be depleted. Lest you think ill of me for being so seemingly foolish as to leave myself with so little savings let me point out that I have given most of what I had to my family members in their needs. If, however, I am not to be reassigned, I shall have to leave the course after this week, and will, of course, pay for the part I have already attended.

As to the possibility of reassignment, I know the anxiety that must be yours with regard to a fellow priest and possible embarrassment to the diocese and church. I can only say that I am now taking those measures which I did not have the insight to know I needed more than two years ago, namely working with a psychologist and a confessor on a regular basis. I see these as the most and best I can naturally and super-naturally do to amend the present situation. If I had the slightest doubt as to my vocation in life, I would ask you for a leave of absence to search for answers, but I do not. I feel a sense of complete worthlessness when I am not "about my Father's business." For this reason I beg to be permitted to continue with the abovementioned assistance while still working in a parish. I'm sure you will understand Bishop, what I mean when I say that I do not come to you as a "prodigal" son, because I am not at all convinced of "sin", but rather as a fellow priest struggling for survival. Even in our national sport a man isn't out until he has made three strikes. I have already made two bad swings. Please allow me this additional chance to show that I can yet get a hit. You can rest assured that if, with the assistance of the psychologist, we should sense any danger to myself and the diocese if I continue in priestly work, I shall contact you immediately and ask your permission to withdraw in whatever manner you deem best.

I have, unfortunately, not been to see the doctor in the past few weeks, simply because of finances; working again, in priestly duties will afford what is necessary. It would not leave very much over for my private needs, but I simply do not worry about that.

Fr. Bevilacqua was right in saying that if I had a cancer I would certainly find a way to obtain the funds necessary to deal with it, but that comparison was not fully justified with regard to my present psychological situation: I would not in the least hesitate to let my family know of the cancer....and besides, our hospitalization plan would help greatly in the matter of physical illness.

Please Bishop, I have prayed to the Holy Spirit to bring you to that decision which would be in accord with the Will of God. I know you will, as you always do, think carefully on this matter and see if it is not possible to reassign me. I shall have, I feel, a much better chance to overcome the present difficulty, in, than out.

No matter what your decision, I will remain ever,

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Rev. Romano J. Ferraro

P.S. It will be most advantageous to answer this letter by either summoning me to the Chancery or writing to either of the two following addresses: The Seminary at Douglaston, or: (my brother's home)

