

MEMORANDUM

TO: File of Father Romano Ferraro

FROM: Monsignor Bevilacqua

DATE: January 10, 1977

IN RE: Interview with Father Ferraro

Today I interviewed Father Romano Ferraro because of an incident of homosexuality that allegedly occurred in St. Joseph's parish in Kings Park in the diocese of Rockville Centre.

Up until now there has been no information about the past history of Father Ferraro. I was acquainted in general with the fact that he had been involved in homosexual incidents in the past. I checked with Monsignor Lavin and he had no file on him. I checked with Monsignor King who had handled the different situations as they occurred in the past. He told me that he had never kept anything written on him.

I therefore took advantage of this interview to get a very brief and general background on various incidents that occurred.

Father Ferraro told me that he had to leave the Navy in 1970 because of one incident of homosexuality. At that time he was asked to resign from the Service.

He then returned to the Diocese and from 1970 to 1973 was stationed at St. Rose of Lima parish in Rockaway. He states that there was only one incident there and he had to leave. He told me that he was told that he would not have an assignment but would have to see a psychiatrist. During the time without an assignment he was to receive \$125. per month from the diocese.

In 1973 he did go to see a Dr. Freund in New York City. He stayed with him for about 5 months but did not feel he was getting anyplace so left him. He then went to see Dr. Edmund Elbert and was with him until the end of 1975. He did not like Dr. Elbert, stating that he did most of the talking.

During this time he also was going to St. John's University studying for a degree in History.

In March or April of 1975 he began to work full time at St. Joseph's parish in Kings Park. He remained there up until two weeks ago.

He states that on December 29th, he was at a party of "Teams of Our Lady" at the house of a Mr. and Mrs. [hosts] and their family. He said Mass there and then afterwards he said there was some wrestling with the children by himself and by Mr. [host]. He states that a small son of a family that was at the party claimed that Father Ferraro had touched him sexually twice in the evening. He does not know the boy's first name but his last name was [Survivor 4]. Father Ferraro says he does not remember touching the boy but possibly he did. It was in the course of the wrestling that the boy claims he did it twice.

Father Ferraro claims this is the only overt incident that he committed since St. Rose of Lima. He does admit, however, that there were other times and not too frequently that he may have made imprudent suggestive statements or asked suggestive questions.

Father Ferraro claims that his major problem is with boys 13 to 15 years of age. The one in the Navy involved a 13 to 15 year old boy and it involved the incident of touching one boy in bed.

The incident in St. Rose of Lima in 1973 again involved one boy alone and it involved touching him in a car.

I asked him why he did not inform the Chancery that he was working full time with a very good income (more than \$500. a month), knowing that the Chancery was paying him \$125. a month. He says that he had told Father Mahoney while he was at St. Joseph's in Kings Park he was working. When I kept questioning him on why he did not tell us about the check, he said he was not trying to deceive us. He said that he thought by telling Father Mahoney, Father Mahoney in turn would tell us. He figured that we kept sending him the check for our own reasons and he also added that he did use the check for good purposes, namely, paying off several debts. I told him that that was not a reason to keep the check, that was a use for the check. I told him that many priests would love to have an additional income of \$125. a month. He kept protesting that he had told Father Mahoney and therefore he had not tried to deceive us. Again I pressed him why he did not think it was strange that he was living at St. Joseph's parish while the check was being sent to his brother's house in Hempstead. He said it never dawned on him to inform us since he had already told Father Mahoney.

He stated that in 1975 he asked Father Mahoney for an assignment in Brooklyn. Father Mahoney told him that he would consider him for a parish. Because Father Mahoney's statement was so indefinite, Father Ferraro then proceeded to find his own assignment in St. Joseph's in Kings Park. He never heard from Father Mahoney after that.

I talked to him about the need for him to undergo therapy and I asked him if he would be willing to see Dr. Gannon. He said he would be most willing.

He states that he has no place to stay. I then pressed him further and he finally admitted that he has several brothers and sisters and that probably he can stay at his brother's house in Brooklyn. At the present time he says that he can be reached in care of his brother [redacted] Ferraro at [redacted], Brooklyn, 11219 (telephone [redacted]).

*2/15/77
This number
checked to [redacted]
and it is not number
for [redacted]*

He said that he can also be reached through friends of his: c/o [redacted] (telephone [redacted]).

It seemed to me that Father Ferraro was trying to minimize the realities of his problem. According to his statements, practically nothing has ever occurred that would be of a very serious nature in the area of homosexuality. He admits only to three incidents which involve solely touching. He says that it will never happen again since he realizes that he has been imprudent even in doing things that ordinarily would be considered perfectly normal. He wants to go to the psychiatrist so that he can better control himself and act more prudently. He gives the impression that he does not think that he has a real homosexual problem but it is more a problem of imprudence.

He also shows an apparent lack of morality in his retaining the checks from the Chancery though he was receiving a more than adequate income while he was at St. Joseph's parish. His explanation that he had told Father Mahoney that he was working at St. Joseph's is an unrealistic explanation. In various ways he shows a lack of responsibility. He seems to try to create a great sympathy for his unfortunate position. One of the indications of this was when he began to describe how in the past week he had no place to stay. He explained that he had to sleep in different houses. When I pressed him on this he finally admitted that he had six brothers and sisters and that his brother [redacted] had a very adequate apartment in which he lived alone. He claims that none of his family know about his situation.

Dr. Gannon said that he would be in touch with me after he sees Father Ferraro. He will then discuss with me the prognosis and also the question of his receiving an assignment.

agb

January 13, 1977

Dr. Gannon telephoned me today. He saw Father Ferraro yesterday. He feels that perhaps something can be done to help him. He said that he will never be a great whirlbeater but perhaps he can develop some external controls over his problem. He feels that he should see him twice a week at least for a while. He also feels that for the present he should not be given any assignment. As soon as he feels that Father Ferraro is ready for an assignment, he will let me know.

agb