

DOMINICAN PREACHING SECRETARIAT
The Province of Saint Joseph

183 BAYVIEW AVE. - JERSEY CITY, N.J. 07305

December 9, 1975.

His Eminence
Humberto Cardinal Medeiros, D.D.
Archbishop of Boston
2101 Commonwealth Avenue
Brighton, Mass. 02135

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Your Eminence:

The subject of my letter concerns the attitude and behavior of a member of your clergy:

Reverend Thomas P. Forry
Associate Pastor
St. Frances X. Cabrini Church
North Scituate, Mass.

During the week November 1 - 7, 1976 I conducted a Parish Renewal Mission there at the invitation of the Ladies Guild with the approbation and welcome of the Pastor, Rev. John T. Cunningham. I am enclosing a copy of my program. The emphasis involves building a community, and to this end, the local clergy are urged to participate as fully as may be reasonable.

Upon arrival at the Rectory, and in an initial "buzz-session" with the Administrator, Father Paul Jakmauh, Father Forry absented himself, acted in a cold manner, manifestly detached himself from any involvement, and for the remainder of the week, closed himself up in his bedroom. In fact, he did not appear at table for any of the meals when I was present nor did he speak to me all week. While Saint Frances has many "extra-ordinary ministers", Father Forry did not assist in distributing communion, except for one time because he had a funeral immediately following my AM program, and yet each night of the renewal program, the Church was packed. He did not attend any of the lectures, and yet there was "standing room only". In other words, he is personally unaware of what was going on with "his own" that week.

While I make it a practice of never involving myself in the internal affairs of any rectory or parish, one can hardly ignore the fact that in Saint Frances, the female housekeeper literally lives in fear of physical harm from Father Forry. One particular experience which I had with him at the altar, in the presence of the congregation, and with the CCD Coordinator, Sister Rita, standing at our elbows, has convinced me that Father Forry possesses the

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real potential for physical reaction to any situation which does not meet his particular mood. I can elaborate on this in further correspondence if you wish.

The Administrator of the parish, Father Jakmauh, did everything humanly possible to make me "at home" and to compensate for this most debilitating experience. He was hospitable, gracious, and to the extent that he could, involved himself in the renewal program.

But the basic question comes down to this: How can a Christian community be led or even built, to say nothing of being healed, when the Administrator himself does not dare to sleep in the same rectory as his Associate? Where the Associate walks around with obvious rage and frustration in his soul? Where the house-keeper lives in trepidation. It was a significant barometer to me that rarely did the rectory doorbell ring, nor the telephone. I am sure that the parishioners must be aware of this cold-war atmosphere, and perhaps avoid it. How much they are being denied! How my heart aches for their needs!

The conclusion of all this is that today I have had to write Father Jakmaugh a very regretful explanation to his invitation to return to St. Frances for a future program. The actual invitation was issued by the Ladies Guild with Father's knowledge, of course.

I could not, in conscience, live under such circumstances, nor could I, in my capacity of Provincial Secretary for Preaching, assign another Dominican to go there. There is an integral contradiction between what would be preached and lived. I find this a very sad decision to make, and I regretfully bring it to your attention, yet I have reason to believe that there are urgent grounds there for ecclesiastical action. I pray that the rightful authority will be courageous enough to step forward and take that action so that this wonderful Parish of St. Frances may continue to grow. They are a great, intelligent, and sensitive people.

Please know that in some sixteen years of preaching, this is the first time I have ever had to write such a letter about a diocesan Priest, and I have done so only after two weeks of calm deliberation and prayer. As an official of this Province, I am hardly unaccustomed to taking necessary action to make corrections with our own preaching brethren, but it truly is unsettling to reach out to areas other than one's own family. I pray that you understand, and I also pray for the enormous, and oftentime, lonesome responsibility your great office imposes on you.

Yours respectfully,

Val LaFrance, O.P.

Father Val LaFrance, O.P.

cc: Fr. Jakmauh

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P.S. It may be of some interest to you that I have conducted my program in some of the following parishes in your Archdiocese:

St. Edward, Mefield
St. Julia, Weston
St. Barbara, Woburn
St. Joseph, Belmont
St. Zephrin, Cochituate
St. Catherine, Somerville
St. Bernard, West Newton
Immaculate Conception, Malboro

and many others.

VL
V.L.

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