

March 22, 1974

Rev. Paul R. Shanley
128 Tremont St.
Braintree, Mass. 02184

Dear Father Shanley:

Thank you for your note of March 12th, with your generous check in the amount of \$25.00, for the Peter's Pence collection.

My dear Father Shanley, my brother in Christ, I am sure you realize that I share your feelings of being over-whelmed and of exhaustion at the scope and the complexity of your apostolate since I face even greater problems each day as Cardinal Archbishop of Boston. Your detailed description of people who are affected directly or indirectly by homosexuality causes my heart to ache and arouses in me sincere feelings of deep anxiety. I appreciate your dedication and zeal in administering to the less fortunate among us. More important than that, however, is the fact that I'm sure you strive each day with all the strength given to you to bring the gospel to homosexuals and that your burning desire is to bring the message of Jesus Christ which is the message of His Church, to those in need. In this, as you know, you share in my ministry for, as your Bishop, I am the one responsible to the Holy Father and to God for the welfare of all the souls here in the Archdiocese of Boston. I will be pleased to meet you again to talk about your dedicated efforts and more particularly about the effectiveness of your work. To that end I shall ask Father Helmick and Father McCune to set-up an appointment where you will have time once more to explain your present work now concentrated among the homosexuals of Boston. I may have the Chancellor with me and some other priest.

There must be greater efforts to help homosexuals understand their condition, avoid sin and grow in the life and love of God through Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour. I am sure that you

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will agree with me that these are the objectives of ministry as a priest of the Archdiocese. I am pleased that your efforts are concentrated on helping these people as individuals to become part of the Church community, not as a societal group that seeks some sort of accommodation in attitude and thought, but rather as individuals like the rest of us who as weak and wounded members of the Body of Christ wish to grow in Grace through their attachment to the Head, Jesus Christ, through prayer, through sacramental life and through the knowledge and practice of faith, hope and love.

It pained me recently to learn of your criticism of the Bishops' statement on Ministry to Homosexuals. I know you as a priest, who wants to cooperate with his Bishop and certainly with the Bishops of the United States and the Holy Father, himself, to fulfill God's Will among men. As your Bishop, I am grateful for your respect, your understanding and your love. I trust I have your loyalty and obedience. Let us pray for one another that the Lord might work through us "More things than this world dreams of."

With every good wish, I am

Devotedly yours in Our Lord,

Archbishop of Boston