

MOST REVEREND JOHN M. D'ARCY

AUXILIARY BISHOP OF BOSTON
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL BISHOP

EXHIBIT

Doyle # 175
11/7/84

December 7, 1984

Most Reverend Bernard F. Law
Archbishop of Boston
Archbishop's Residence
2121 Commonwealth Avenue
Brighton, Massachusetts 02135

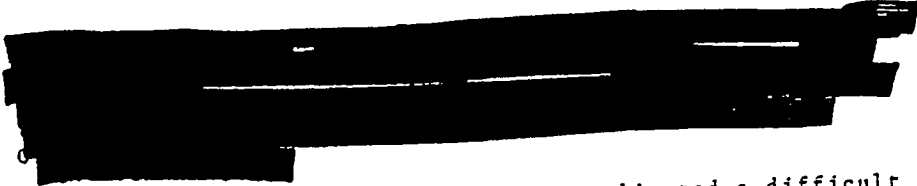
Dear Archbishop Law:

Just a word on the recent assignment in this region of Fr. John Geoghan as an associate at St. Julia's in Weston. There are two things that give me concern.

- 1) Fr. Geoghan has a history of homosexual involvement with young boys. I understand his recent abrupt departure from St. Brendan's, Dorchester may be related to this problem.
- 2) St. Julia's for some time has been a divided and troubled parish. There is great animosity on the part of many parishioners towards Monsignor Rossiter. It is difficult to deal with the situation because Monsignor is a good priest - he is always there, he is concerned, he does the traditional things very well, but there are many complaints from good people and there have been since I have come here to this region and, indeed, long before that.

A large number of parishioners go elsewhere. Many attend Mass at Pope John Seminary or they go to St. John's, Wellesley or other parishes. At the same time, there is a core of parishioners, mostly older, who are loyal to Monsignor Rossiter. The complaints center around his style and manner that is perceived by many to be overbearing and authoritarian. There is no question he, himself, has experienced a great deal of pain in this situation. I believe he might even be willing to be moved to another parish now and perhaps this can be considered, although that might present other problems. His Sunday collection, in this parish which is probably the most affluent in the Archdiocese, is only \$900.00. At the request of about fifteen or twenty parishioners, we recently have initiated the Spiritual Development Program and Monsignor has been most cooperative, but we know there will be difficulties.

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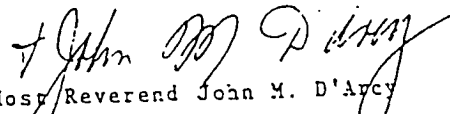


I am afraid that this assignment has complicated a difficult situation. If something happens, the parishioners already angry and divided, will be convinced that the Archdiocese has no concern for their welfare and simply sends them priests with problems. On the other hand, if Fr. Geoghan is now removed, parishioners will quickly claim that once again Monsignor Rossiter cannot live with other priests.

I have had helpful and constructive conversations on this with both Fr. Banks and Fr. Oates. Both are keenly aware of the problem and, as you well know, they are hoping to set up some kind of structure so that we can handle this in a better way in the future. I am concerned about further scandal in this parish and further division and more misunderstanding by this assignment. I am anxious to help you in any way I can to relieve the difficult pastoral situation there and it is my obligation to keep you fully informed at this time so you would not be "blindsided" later on. While no parish can handle these shocking situations that we have witnessed recently, this parish is most vulnerable. I wonder if Fr. Geoghan should not be reduced to just weekend work while receiving some kind of therapy.

You know how grateful I am to you for your constant concern about this region and the constructive steps you have already taken in several parishes here. Many thanks.

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,


Most Reverend John M. D'Arcy

copies: Rev. Robert J. Banks
Rev. Thomas Oates