

Dear Ray,

5604

Thank you very much for your letter. I am sorry you could not reach me, but I left Newport on April 1st, and here at my house, the only way is by mail.

Your letter arrived yesterday, but I went to see my mother, and the P.O. was closed when I got back. Thus, I did not receive it until today.

I will not be coming down to Manchester. The last time I came, I was received very cordially, but I still do not understand why I was asked to come. I came away knowing nothing — having gone down looking for some light.

The next thing I know, I have lost my job in Newport. So, why should I come and be made to look foolish again.

Furthermore, the Bishop wrote me a letter in which he insinuated many things which

are quite simply false. I realize he was ⁵⁶⁰⁵ misinformed, and that I was slandered, but why would he not take the trouble to learn the truth before pronouncing judgments?

Anyway, his letter hurt me very deeply - and you don't kick an old dog and then expect him to come running.

The brakes on my car are gone, and frankly, I have not had enough money to have them fixed. I would not risk driving down.

Monday, the 7th, I have to go to work to make ends meet. I have received no salary since Jan. 31st, and have been without a roof over my head or any assurance of another meal coming. The Bishop has known all this since February 18th - the day after I was evicted from my "home" by his ranking an ority here in Newport. So now he would like me to come + see him. Well, I am

5606
Sorry to disappoint him, but frankly,
past events have left me convinced that
coming down would do very little good.
To put it in a nutshell, human faith
has failed.

With regard to Newport, you can
tell the Bishop he has nothing to worry
about from me. I am no longer there.
I don't happen to believe in Schism.

With regard to me, personally, all I can
say is that I have been wounded so deeply
that all I crave is privacy, peace, & quiet.
I am in no condition to work at the
present time. I don't mind the personal
suffering - we all have a certain amount
of that in life. But I certainly cannot be
expected to hold any position of trust from
a man who believes of me what he does.
If it's the truth he wants, why not suggest

to him that he consult The Church of
Newport, and he will probably get it. And ⁵⁶⁰⁷
you might point out to him that The Church
of Newport is not Thos. Donnelly. It would
do him very little good to ask me - he probably
wouldn't believe what I said anyway.

My door here is always open, if he or
any priest he sends wants to come. My
house is on Rte. 114 - a mile + a half north
of Rt. 103. My sign is on The road. I'm
usually here, and certainly would be if some-
one were coming. And you may always
write - you have my address.

Please tell The Bishop that I hold
nothing against him. I just wish he
would serve my people a little better.
This latest arrangement of his has left
them shocked, confused, & angry. But he
is The Bishop, and that is his problem,

not mine . But I do not think he
can help them now from behind his ⁵⁰⁰⁸
desk in Manchester .

He can take away my faculties if
he wants , but what's the difference , I
cannot use them now anyway .

Please excuse this letter . I'm rushing
to get it into the mail .

Thank you Fay,
Sincerely,
Bob _____

June 3, 1969

Rev. Robert J. Densmore,
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire

Dear Bob,

At the Bishop's direction, I am enclosing a check for four hundred and fifty dollars (\$450.) which should cover the salary you have not been paid for the months of April and May.

If there is anything I can do for you, please feel free to call on me at any time. You know that I live at St. Mary's rectory in Manchester and the telephone number there is 622-4615.

Take care and God bless.

Fraternally in Christ,

Rev. Raymond G. Lapointe

Enc.

C
O
P
Y

DENSMORE, ROBERT
(FILE)

June 3, 1969

Bishop,

Fr. Hannigan called this morning. He had spent one and a half hours talking with Fr. Densmore.

He wishes to inform you that Fr. Densmore absolutely refuses to come in to see you or accept any assignment other than being re-instated as assistant in Newport.

There is no basis to the rumor that he is working in a sawmill in Newport.

Fr. Hannigan claims that it is no longer possible to speak with him.

Ray

5611

DENSMORE, ROBERT

June 17, 1969

Fr. Hannigan contacted by telephone. He will check this out with Fr. Donnelley and Fr. Densmore.

RGL

June 6, 1969

Bishop,

All three of us feel that Fr. Densmore has provided an 'out' of this particular situation.

cf. "If the Bishop.....assigns me to preach the Newbury Mass (or any other Mass in the Newport parish) for the summer, I will consider the matter resolved, as far as I am personally concerned, and I will gladly agree to a change in the fall.

OK.
Aunt
Fr.

to
Hampden Fr. Densmore
Contact
Fr. Annally this?

June 5, 1969

Dear Ray,

5613

Thank you very much for your letter and the enclosed check. Please convey to the Bp. my very deep appreciation.

However, I am returning it. The Bishop does not owe me any money - I want to make that clear. Furthermore, I'm sure I do not qualify as a worthy subject for a grant from the Clergy Fund. I know that the Bp. has many demands made on his financial generosity, and I certainly don't want to be a part of that.

I hope, however, that you will emphasize the fact that I do not for a moment intend, by returning the check, to insult his generosity. My returning the check is certainly not meant as an insult - it is simply what I feel I must - in justice - do.

If the money were to come to me from
St. Patrick's - the parish where I earned it -
I would probably accept it. Or maybe I would
even then return it - I don't know. As I've
said before, the money is so unimportant. Be-
sides, (to be a little bit corny) I always
worked for love, and not for the money.

Thank you, also, for your continuing offer
of rendering help. But I am afraid there
is little you can do. If the Bishop restores
my title to me, and assigns me to preach-
ing the Newbury Mass (or any other Mass in
Newport parish) for the coming summer,
I will then consider the matter resolved, as
far as I am personally concerned, and I will
readily agree to a change in the fall.

So, if he feels he cannot do this, I certainly
will not hold it against him. After all,

April 1st.

5615

The salary that is owed me is for
January and March, when I was still
Asst. Pastor of St. Patrick's, but when I got
no salary.

June 19, 1969

Bishop,

Fr. Hannigan called this morning. He had just visited Fr. Densmore, as per your instructions, to check out the possibility of his accepting another assignment in the Fall if Fr. Donnelley agreed to have him service the mission church of Newport.

Fr. Hannigan reports that Fr. Densmore did and does not mean "any assignment". If he were re-instated in Newport that would justify his position. However, in the Fall, he would not accept an assignment to a city parish and any assignment he accepted would be conditional. He would have to be consulted and the assignment would have to suit him.

Fr. Hannigan really believes that Fr. Densmore is sick and that his faculties should be suspended.

RGL

File this
DENSMORE, ROBERT

June 5, 1969

Dear Ray,

5617

Thank you very much for your letter and the enclosed check. Please convey to the Bp. my very deep appreciation.

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of rendering help. But I am afraid there
is little you can do. If the Bishop restores
my title to me, and assigns me to preach-
ing the Newbury Mass (or any other Mass in
the Newport parish) for the coming summer,
I will then consider the matter resolved, as
far as I am personally concerned, and I will
gladly agree to a change in the fall.

If he feels he cannot do this, I certainly
do not hold it against him. After all,

5619
He may have good reasons, of which I am ignorant, and I cannot judge fairly. But if he does not, I am not sure what I will then do. Who can predict the future? - that is in the hands of God. All I can predict with certainty now is that I will be a priest always, that I shall try to serve the Church constructively, and that I shall try never to hurt anyone. Who can say more?

Drop by here if you're up this way, Ray. I deeply value your friendship.

Sincerely, Bob

P.S. You designated the check as salary for April and May - I just noticed. This is an error. I am not owed any salary for April and May - I was not working then. I was relieved of my ministry in Newport on

April 1st.

5620

The salary that is owed me is for
January and March, when I was still
Asst. Pastor of St. Patrick's, but when I got
no salary.

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF MANCHESTER
CLERGY FUND
MANCHESTER, N. H. 03105

NO. 1629

June 4, 1969

54-6
114

pay to the order of Robert J. Densmore \$450.00

THE SUM 450 DOLLARS 00 CTS

Dollars

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF MANCHESTER
CLERGY FUND

To The Amoskeag National Bank
Manchester, N.H.

Robert J. Densmore

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5622

June 29, 1969

Dear Tom,

Thank you very much for your continuing interest in my situation -- your visits, calls, etc. I am very grateful for all the time and effort you have expended in my behalf.

I am writing to you now in your capacity as chairman of the Personnel Board. I think I should set down for you my ideas about the future.

To begin with, I believe that there must be further personnel changes in the church of Newport. However, this is not my concern, since I no longer have my status in that church, having been deprived of my duties there on April 1st. In due time, usually, all things work out for the best, and I am sure that they will in Newport. The Bishop, faced with continued discontent and unhappiness there, will undoubtedly do something to alleviate the situation.

As for myself, I cannot predict with any certainty about the future, no more than anyone can. But I am now sure of certain decisions which I have taken over the past few months.

FIRST, I will never live in another man's house again -- unless it is strictly a business arrangement, and I can rent my quarters on a business-like basis. The life of sub-human and juvenile dependence which I have suffered on three occasions in the past in pastor-curate-story situations was such that I would never knowingly enter into that type of arrangement again. (That is one reason, among many, that I did not go to St. Mary's, Claremont -- the situation there is an outstanding example of all the worst features of this system). I have no objection to working in association with another priest, or in working under his direction. I have always welcomed knowledgeable direction. But I can't see why I should also eat and sleep in his house, so that I end up selling my soul to him.

SECOND, I would never again leave this area permanently. Reasons for my feeling this way are many. My people have lived in Sullivan County for over 150 years, and their graves are everywhere in this county -- Charlestown, Unity, Acworth, Claremont, Newport, Cornish. Roots like these may mean very little to some, but to me they are a necessary source of strength and permanency which I would never care to sever. People living here are my kind of people -- people I became a priest to serve -- and I would not care to serve strangers elsewhere. Jesus, too, refused to go to strangers, and said that he must remain with his own people of Israel. Furthermore, from an ecclesial point of view, I know these people's mentalities, manners, and attitudes well, and I think that it would be insensitive and uneconomical of the Church to send me elsewhere to strangers, and to send another stranger here. Finally, I have only so many years left in this world, and quite frankly, I do not care to spend them away from here -- and I will not if I can help it.

Having stated these two premises, I will go on now to say that I intend to live and die a priest. I have no other desire in this world except to serve people in that special capacity to which I have been ordained, and I am absolutely convinced that this, and only this, is what I am cut out to do. If the Bishop, having recognized as legitimate the two premises outlined on the previous page, cares to utilize my services, I will be grateful, because he will be giving me the opportunity to do what I think I can best do, to the advantage of all. But if he is not willing to do so, then I will not complain, because I will look upon my forced inactivity as a valuable form of suffering which can serve the Church, in the long run, just as effectively as an active ministry of preaching could. ("Unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die.....") I don't know how I would survive in these circumstances. I suppose I would find some means of support which would be removed from the public eye, and that I would live as quietly and inconspicuously as possible. It would not be an active priestly existence, such as the public ministry of Jesus was, but at least it would be carried out in basic human and Christian dignity.

Having said these things in general, I will now get a bit more specific. You are perhaps wondering what sort of concrete ministry I could be given to, taking into consideration the two basic premises outlined beforehand. Please permit me to outline a few ideas.

I intend to remain in this area permanently. However, there are twenty-three towns in this area, any one of which I would be glad to live and work in. Of these twenty-three towns, there are parishes in only four of them (Claremont, Charlestown, Newport, New London) -- not a very high ratio. What I would like to do is mission work in these remaining nineteen towns. I have no desire to infringe upon another man's ministry or interfere in his territory. What I would like to do is to go into any of these nineteen towns, gather the scattered Catholics who are there, and build them into a worshipping and witnessing community, which I could serve by a priestly ministry. The objective would be not only providing a service to these people, but also developing a Catholic presence in these towns -- not by building buildings (they are too few and poor for that), but by meeting together for worship and community activity, and by the residential presence of the priest among them.

These nineteen towns, with their population figures, are as follows:

Acworth	-	371	Newbury	-	342
Alstead	-	843	Plainfield	-	1071
Bradford	-	508	Springfield	-	283
Cornish	-	1106	Stoddard	-	146
Croydon	-	312	Suanpee	-	1164
Goshen	-	351	Sutton	-	487
Grantham	-	332	Unity	-	708
Langdon	-	338	Warner	-	1004
Lempster	-	272	Washington	-	162
Marlow	-	350			

Their total area is 716 square miles; total population is 10,150.

It might be noted that in only one of these nineteen towns is there a mission church presently functioning (Sunapee), and that in four others Mass stations are presently held in public buildings (Warner, Alstead, Newbury, Plainfield).

I would gladly accept a commission from the Bishop to serve Catholic congregations in any group of these towns, and I would be glad to commence such a ministry immediately, no matter how poor the living, how small the community, how remote the town, how de-Christianized the area. I believe that a start must be made towards commencing this type of ministry in our State, and I would be glad to be the priest who begins this type of work. I believe that I am sufficiently qualified for this work by temperament, past experience, rapport with the people involved, natural inclination, and particular talents.

* * * * *

Finally, as an alternate proposal, I would also be glad to remove to Claremont, for either of the two ministries outlined below:

- 1.) To serve the foundation and establishment of the new parish to be located in the southern section of the city.
- 2.) To reside in Claremont, serve as hospital chaplain to Claremont General Hospital and Sullivan County Home-Hospital, Unity, and/or care for the needs of shut-ins, and/or work with the more than 1,000 students of Stevens High School in any capacity (CCD, counseling, etc.), and serve worshipping congregations in the peripheral areas surrounding Claremont: West Clmt., Unity, Cornish.

* * * * *

If nothing comes of these proposals, I cannot say at the present time what the future would find me doing. The world is big, and no doubt I could find some corner of it in which I could support myself in human, Christian, and priestly dignity. In any case, the future is very much in the hands of God.

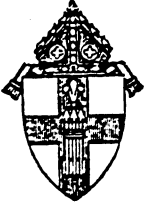
Thank you, Tom, for reading this letter, and for all your help in the past. I am confident that you will present my point of view where it will do the most good toward getting me to work again.

Yours sincerely,

Bob

R.J. Densmore

Box 52
Bradford, N.H.
03221



CHANCERY OFFICE
153 ASH STREET
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
03105

5625

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

September 16, 1969

Special Delivery

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

Before leaving for Washington the Most Reverend Bishop asked me to make arrangements for you to see him. This is a very busy month for him since he has several commitments outside the diocese and he will be in his office on a very limited basis for the next couple of weeks.

Would it be possible for you to come into Manchester to see the Bishop at his office in the Administration Building on Monday, September 22, at 12:30 in the afternoon? If so, would you kindly let me know at your earliest convenience either by mail or by telephone.

With every good wish, I am

Faternally in Christ,

Rev. Raymond G. Lapointe
Assistant Chancellor

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Y

INSTRUCTIONS TO DELIVERING EMPLOYEE

Show to whom, date, and address where delivered
 Deliver ONLY to addressee
(Additional charges required for these services)

RECEIPT

Received the numbered article described below.

REGISTERED NO. **5783**
CERTIFIED NO. _____
INSURED NO. _____
SIGNATURE OR NAME OF ADDRESSEE (Must always be filled in)
Robt. M. Pennington
SIGNATURE OF ADDRESSEE'S AGENT, IF ANY

SHOW WHERE DELIVERED (only if required)

DATE DELIVERED
7 1963

Wednesday

5627

Dear Ray,

Rec'd your ltr. today. (Too bad you used all the extra postage - there's no such thing as special delivery up here!)

See you Mon. @ 12:30.

Thanks.

Sincerely,
Bob

Answered Feb 25th
File

117 Sunapee St
Newport

Right Rev. Bishop; - N. H.

I am going to ask you
to please place Father
Wensmore. He may be has
not done just right. But
in Our Faith Forgive.
You have no idea the
good he has done for
old folks. I am 79 yrs
and he has gave all
his strength, doing acts
of charity. Will you please
try to let him have a
second chance. God
Bless you. Thank you
Mrs Elizabeth M^{rs} Granahan
Kennedy (Chief's Sister

5629

May 11, 1970

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire 03222

Dear Father Densmore:

More than a year has elapsed since your transfer from the parish of Saint Patrick, Newport, New Hampshire, to Saint Mary Parish, Claremont, New Hampshire. During this period you have refused to accept any appointment proposed and reports, well authenticated, indicate that you have established yourself as a roving priest in the Newport area. This has been for many a cause of scandal, especially since it is public knowledge that some of your activities have been unauthorized.

In spite of repeated attempts to prevail upon you to accept an appointment in the diocese, you have insisted on doing what you pleased without reference to diocesan authority. This can no longer be tolerated.

This letter is to notify you that, unless you agree to take an assignment prior to June 1, 1970, you will publicly be suspended from the exercise of all priestly faculties.

With the sincere hope and prayer that you will accept this in true priestly spirit and understand the position of your bishop in this very serious matter, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

BISHOP'S HOUSE
657 RIVER ROAD
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
03105

5630

May 11, 1970

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire 03221

Dear Father Densmore:

More than a year has elapsed since your transfer from Saint Patrick Parish, Newport, New Hampshire to Saint Mary Parish, Claremont, New Hampshire. During this period, you have refused to accept your appointment and have established yourself as a roving priest in the Newport area. This has been the cause of scandal, especially since it is completely unauthorized. *Public knowledge that some of your activities have been unauthorized.*

use upon
In spite of repeated attempts to prevail upon you to return to the active ministry in the diocese, you have insisted on doing what you pleased without reference to diocesan authority, or to your bishop. This can no longer be tolerated.

Please accept this letter as a notice that, unless you agree to take an assignment prior to June 1, 1970, you will be *publicly* suspended from the exercise of all priestly faculties. *ask notify you that*

Should you refuse to accept an appointment, either formally or by your silence, you will be immediately suspended. A record of this suspension will be publicly read in the churches of the Newport area and printed in the papers of the region.

with and prayer
With the hope that you will accept this in the true priestly spirit, I am *and understand the position of your bishop in this very serious matter* Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

any PROPOSED

reports, well authenticated indicate that you have established yourself as a roving priest in the Newport area.

use upon

Box 52
Bradford, N.H. 03221
May 15, 1970

Rev. Robert J. Densmore

5031

Dear Bishop,

Thank you very much for your letter. Many said you would never write, but I believed otherwise.

Your insinuations and inferences in your letter (as well as those in your letters of September, 1967, and March, 1969) I found painful, and considering the implications involved, it is a mystery to me why you should want me to work for you at all. Either you are "putting me on," or else you are simply acting with consummate charity. Well, I won't puzzle over these things. I well know that you are not in full possession of the facts, and I readily forgive you for any adverse opinions which you may entertain. Not being a climber, I have never gone out of my way to strive for the good opinion of the bishop -- but only of the people I have served. And that, I know I enjoy.

With regard to your promise of a suspension, I would strongly advise that you do not take that step.

First of all, I am an old-fashioned priest in the respect that I always considered that there is no authentic ministry unless it proceeds from the bishop, God's anointed coordinator of all legitimate church activity, from whom all authoritative sacramental ministry must proceed. Therefore, I can see no need of a suspension in my regard. Since April 1, 1969, when I was suspended from my most beloved ministry in Newport, I have celebrated no Mass for any of our people, granted no sacramental absolution in confession, held no babies in baptism, officiated at no marriages, anointed none of our sick and dying, buried no dead, preached the Gospel never. You may have heard otherwise, but now you are hearing the truth of the matter from me. I say that there is no need of a suspension, simply because I would never use my faculties unless and until I had an authentic and permanent ministry from you in which I could do so.

(In making the above statement, I except the two periods when I was in Hanover, at the legitimate invitation of the pastor there.)

Secondly, a suspension, while it would not cramp my style (simply because I have no style to cramp) would gravely hurt me, and those I love and who love me. You would hurt a lot of people, Bishop, including this priest. Thousands of people know me to be a good, relevant, concerned, efficient, and generous priest. Can you imagine what their feelings would be?

Thirdly, if your purpose is to intimidate me and coerce me into compliance, surely you should know by now that you are barking up the wrong tree. I am a free man, living in a free State in a free country, and in what gives good promise of being a free Church, and I do not fear. I would consider it base and unbecoming to comply from the motive of fear.

Finally, I urge you not to do this for your own good. People know me, and what I am, and what I stand for, from personal experience of me. You they know only as a distant authority in Manchester. They have no

my own hills and mountains, and deriving strength from them. Suddenly it seemed good to be close to my fathers' graves. Suddenly it seemed good to be able to call my mother on the phone often, and to visit her regularly and adequately see to her needs. Suddenly it seemed good to be able to visit my lifelong friends when they were sick or in need. Suddenly it seemed good to be the "Father" of 1,000 children--most of whose fathers and mothers I had known in my youth. Suddenly it seemed good to be able to relate so perfectly to an entire community, because I knew so well the antecedents, blood lines, mental attitudes, mentalities, and fixed positions and relationships of each individual therein. Suddenly it seemed good to be a 24-hour priest to 100% of the people.

I vowed that I would never leave my own country again. I felt that I had good authority to do so -- Jesus Himself avowed that He had come to serve only His own.

I am still of the same mind. And I have no fear to tell you that the only thing which would ever possibly change my mind would be the will of my own people to be rid of me. If they were of that mind, I should not care what alien countryside I went to. So far, I have had no indication that my own people wish me to leave. In fact, I have every indication to the contrary.

Furthermore, with regard to the other 299 priests in the State, I am certain that I am not poaching on another man's preserve. This part of the State is considered undesirable by all our priests, and none of them wish to live and work here. This you know well.

A further reason for my wishing to serve in my own land is that I know, from experience, that I cannot be happy elsewhere. Maybe my criteria for happiness are too restricted. Perhaps they are, for your taste. But the fact remains -- outside my own country, I am filled with a misery so sweeping and so profound that it vitally affects my total effort. It is only within my own country that I find I can serve with equanimity and serenity.

For the above reasons, and many others, I will not ever again leave my own land. If you wish me to participate in the active ministry, you shall have to give me a job here.

I have listed on a separate sheet of paper, which I will enclose with this letter, some potential jobs for me. Possibly you can think of others within the same context. I can assure you that I will accept any one of them with alacrity, and will fulfill it with distinction. You shall get your money's worth, and more than your money's worth, because it is ministry -- not money -- that I am interested in.

I am sorry if I am causing you distress by what I have said. But I do believe it is a distress to which you have no right. The healthy future of the priesthood and the Church in this State demands that certain reforms be made. This you well know. May you know, I have the courage to stand in the direction of these reforms, at the risk of losing all opportunity to exercise my ministry. Thus do I hope to make my small contribution for the total good of the Church.

I wish to close, Bishop, by telling you one final thing. You will never, never drive me out of the priesthood, no matter what you do in my regard, or what you leave undone. I do not mean this in the nature of a threat--only a simple communication of fact. I have been ordained "a priest forever," and that is precisely what I shall be, with or without

experience of your pastoral concern for them. I fear that if you were to suspend me, you would greatly damage your own image, and greatly impugn your own authority and credibility.

And so, you wish to suspend me. Bishop, I beg you to consult the Holy Spirit of God, and then to do whatever you think best for the good of the Church. I am confident that you will do this.

And now, dear Bishop, we come to the crux of the matter. Am I willing to work again??

Yes, Bishop, I am not only willing, but most eager, to work again. I am a priest, ordained to serve God's people in my peculiar capacity, experienced and talented in my profession, never regretting for a single moment that I am what I am, firmly convinced that I am good at what I am, irrevocably resolved never to be anything else.

For 13½ months, as you know, I have been inactive. At any time in this period, I could have undertaken another job; at any time, I could have married. I did neither because it is a priest I want to be, and I well know that, at the present time, both are incompatible with the active exercise of the priesthood.

I have been willing to suffer the deprivation of my ministry for what I believed was right, and for what I believed to be the ultimate good of the Church.

If you wish me to become active again, (and I have reason to believe that you do), you must respect my principles. With regard to any prospective assignment, they are simple, and they are TWC:

- 1.) I will not live as an inmate in a rectory.
- 2.) I will not settle outside my own part of the State -- the West.

(These things I have told you before--they are not new to you.)

First of all, with regard to the rectory living. I believe that rectory living is the greatest possible barrier between a priest and his people. I believe that a grown man should not be compelled to eat and sleep and forcibly fraternize with the man he works for. I believe that rectories, as we know them here, scandalize our people because of their opulence and the luxury of life within them. I believe that the Church should begin to take immediate steps to dispose of all rectories in this State, and abolish them as a fixed ecclesiastical institution.

For these reasons, as well as for others, I would not live ever again in a rectory. I cannot single-handedly abolish this cancer on the Church, but by refusing to live in one, I can, at least, light my own little candle and thus curse the darkness. I don't dispute anyone else's right to so live if he wishes.

And secondly, with regard to my predilection for the West, I offer the following observations:

In 1967, when you transferred me to Newport, suddenly I was as if in heaven. Suddenly it seemed good to be speaking my own language again in my ministerial contacts. Suddenly it seemed good to be looking at

pulpit and altar. Many have worked for the priesthood, and have derived work from it. I have suffered for it, and suffered from it--let this be an indication of my resolve. I shall never oppose you actively, or work against you, or against your duly-constituted ministers, because, as I said above, I believe that you are God's anointed shepherd of our Church. If you do not respect my specifications with regard to the active ministry, I shall live passively and quietly, in my own house. I shall say my prayers and suffer the lack of what I cannot do, and I shall try always to live in accordance with the three-fold injunction of Micah, which is to paraphrase the two-fold law of Jesus. But I do not promise not to outlive you.

Sincerely,

R. J. Dunsmore

1. Curate in Claremont, if there is a vacancy. (Understood: residence outside the rectory.)
2. Curate in Newport, if there is a vacancy. (Understood: residence outside the rectory.)
3. Priest to a new parish for Sunapee and Newbury.
4. Priest to a new parish in Newbury alone. It could be self-sustaining, and there is land bought on which to build.
5. Priest to a new parish composed of Cornish and Plainfield, with optional additional chaplaincy at Claremont Genl. Hospital, which is very close to Cornish.
6. Priest to a new parish composed of the Warren and Orford churches, with chaplaincy at Glenclyff State Hospital.
7. Priest to a new parish composed of Hopkinton and Warner. (Church at Contoocook, and present Mass station at Warner.)
8. Priest to a new parish centered on the Potter Place church, with option to build an additional mission at Boscawen.
9. Priest to a new parish in the southern half of Claremont.
Chaplain at Mary Hitchcock Hospital, Hanover, if G. Auger moves.
11. Priest to a "mission district", with Mass centers at Unity-Lempster, and Alstead, a summer Mass station at Washington, and chaplaincy at Sullivan County Hospital, Unity (now in process of expansion).
12. Priest to a "mission district", with Mass stations at Gilsum and Marlow, and summer Mass stations at Nelson and Stoddard.
13. Priest to a new parish composed of Chesterfield-Westmoreland, church at Spofford Lake (Chesterfield,) station at Westmoreland, and chaplaincy at Cheshire County Hospital, Westmoreland.
14. College ministry to 1200 students at New England College, Henniker, and assist Fr. Butler with his mission at Contoocook and his Mass station at Warner.

May 26, 1970

Rev. Thomas J. Hannigan
St. Menis Rectory
8 Sanborn Road
Hanover, N.H. 03755

Dear Father Hannigan:

The Most Reverend Bishop has asked me to make the following request of you: Would you kindly make every effort to prevail upon Father Robert Densmore to appear before the Personnel Board at its regular meeting on Tuesday, June 2nd, 1970. If you are unable to prevail upon Father Densmore would you kindly inform me of this at your earliest convenience.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Raymond G. Lapointe
Assistant Chancellor

5637

Wed., June 3, 1970
Box 52, Bradford, NH

Dear Odore,

Thank you very much for the personal interest you took in me yesterday. It was so good to find someone who would listen--even though I am sure you do not entirely agree.

I have been doing some heavy thinking since I came home. The meeting of the Board was very enlightening to me, and I feel now that I am in a better position to seek a solution. I did not find the Board members overly sympathetic, but I do not in the least blame them. I am sure I must have given them an unfavorable impression of myself.

I am extremely troubled. Certain facts have become apparent to me:

1.) The Board will not, I think, make a recommendation about me which will be acceptable to me.

2.) The Bishop is going to give me an ultimatum. Either accept the post of his choosing, or suffer suspension. The post he proposes will, in all probability, be one which I feel, in my present stage of mind, I cannot take.

3.) I would have to say no.

4.) He will suspend me publicly.

These are facts, as I see them.

I think we are at an impasse. I do not believe he is going to work along lines I suggested to him as best for me, in my letter to him. On the other hand, if he publicly suspends me -- and it will be a sticky and unpleasant business, certainly as unpleasant for him as for me -- then I shall consider my name and reputation further sullied, and my honor and human dignity called into question. It is a blow from which I should find it very hard to recover, and in my heart it would mean the state of war between the bishop and me. There would be the risk of this state of thinking causing me to reflect my bitterness publicly. It would not be a good situation. I think that after that, I would consider nothing but complete reinstatement in Newport as a satisfactory restitution. Thus, further and deeper impasse.

As you see, it is a real problem, -- but I would like to propose an irenic solution, and you have my authorization to go to the bishop and present this, if you will be so kind as to act in behalf of this deeply troubled priest, whose mind you know sufficiently well, and who now begs your help.

If the Bishop is not willing to give me a post along the lines I suggested to him, then I propose the following:

I petition the bishop to be relieved of all priestly duties, and to be granted a leave of absence, for personal reasons, effective immediately.

If the Bishop is willing to do this, then, for my part, I give him my sincere promise never to speak or write anything against the Church, himself, or any priest, or with regard to my personal history or situation. I give him my promise never to discuss the situation with anyone (except my mother, and a mature priest, like yourself, for reasons of counseling.) I give my promise not to become involved in any type of controversy over any church situation, and to maintain complete silence on all these issues. I would promise never to embarrass the Church, or my profession, by any word or deed to the contrary, and to live as exemplary a Christian life as I possibly can. I would promise to dress in clerical dress, or not, as he decided. I would promise to live quietly, in my own house, and I would promise never to take secular employment where I am known as a priest. Naturally, I would promise never to use any of the priestly faculties. With regard to all of these promises, the bishop would have my solemn word.

For his part, the Bishop would agree to release publicly an irenic, restrained, and dispassionate statement something like he did with regard to [REDACTED] I am not presuming to put words into his mouth, but I would respectfully propose something along the following lines as being completely acceptable to me, and not lacking in honor:

"Rev. Robt. J. Densmore, of Sutton, N.H., has, for personal reasons, petitioned Most Rev. Ernest J. Primeau, Bp. of Manchester, that he might be relieved of his priestly duties, and that he might be granted a leave of absence from the active priestly ministry. The Most Rev. Bishop has acceded to Fr. Densmore's request."

As I said before, I am not trying to dictate to the bishop. I am merely saying that a statement worded such as the above would not further alienate me.

If the Bishop wishes to know what the personal reasons are, you are at liberty to share with him the thoughts which I unburdened onto you yesterday, and to speak for me. However, I do not desire to see him. I find it very difficult to communicate with him, I am most uncomfortable and most troubled in his presence, and I feel that it will accomplish no good. I think he can understand that.

There is another factor, Odore, which I did not disclose yesterday. I have emphysema, and it's getting worse. I have seen too many people die of it in my ministry--it is an awful death. I am certain that this is partially responsible for my psychological state of mind, my reluctance to be locked up on certain jobs, my panic and confusion, etc. You may mention this to the bishop if you wish, but only in strictest confidence, as I wouldn't want it to get out. I doctor for it. If the Bishop is willing to release me, and if the sample statement I composed is agreeable to him, he is at liberty to substitute "for reasons of health" in place of "for personal reasons" if he so desires.

I am sorry that it has come to this pass, but I think you know me well enough to know that maybe, given all present factors, this course is the best for all

concerned just now. What I desperately feel I need is a breathing period, where I will be relieved of all the tension and heartbreak of the past sixteen months, and during which I can try to get my thoughts straightened out, and my feet on the ground. I crave peace. It's an awful thing to say, but I have the feeling that I am being constantly harassed by the Church, and I crave a period of peace and quiet during which this will not be so. I just want to live quietly, read and think, say my prayers, and be no bother to anyone. Of course, I would have to work to survive, and I also think it would be good for me mentally. My house is in a country town, only 25 miles from Concord. I am not known at all in Concord, and I thought I would go down there and look for something I could do, which would bring in the necessary income. I don't need much, thankfully.

I would hope, someday, to be able to exercise the priesthood again, with distinction and dedication, but for the present, with things as they are, I feel I should put all thought of that right out of my mind.

I will be most grateful if you will go in to see the bishop and present this proposal to him. Please drop me a line and let me know what's going on--I am in the dark. Sometimes I feel I am in a dark tunnel, and can see no light at the end. All I have is hands reaching out in the darkness, like your own, to point the way.

Sincerely,

Bob D.

June 18, 1970

Rev. Thomas J. Savage
St. Patrick Rectory
32 Beech Street
Newport, N.H. 03773

Dear Father Savage:

I wish to inform you that the Reverend Robert J. Densmore, a resident in the territory of St. Patrick Parish, Newport, New Hampshire, has requested a leave of absence from all priestly assignments and duties for a period of one year. I have granted Father Densmore's request as of this date, Thursday, June 18, 1970.

This leave of absence relieves Father Densmore of all priestly duties and the ordinary faculties of the Diocese of Manchester, including the celebration of private Mass and the wearing of clerical attire.

This action is taken in accord with Father Densmore's own desires and the leave of absence is granted to him for personal reasons.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

C
O
P
Y

PLEASE FURNISH SERVICE(S) INDICATED BY CHECKED BLOCK(S).
 REQUIRED FEE(S) PAID.

Show to whom, date and address where delivered Deliver ONLY to addressee

RECEIPT
 Received the numbered article described below.

REGISTERED NO. **4625** SIGNATURE OR NAME OF ADDRESSEE (*Must always be filled in*)
 CERTIFIED NO. **Roll - Joe. Doremus**
 INSURED NO. SIGNATURE OF ADDRESSEE'S AGENT, IF ANY

DATE DELIVERED **JUN 19 1970** SHOW WHERE DELIVERED (only if requested)

025-10-71248-11 347-088 GPO

from this date. This leave of absence ^{is for} agrees you of the ordinary faculties of the Diocese of Manchester, ^{and you} It is my understanding that the action accords with your own desires and that you seek that leave of absence for personal reasons. ^{no} churchman,

It is my earnest wish and concerned judgment that for the general welfare of the Church you will be kind enough to obtain from all activity in the Newport area.

MEMO

from Thomas Savage

5643

To Mr Tom Hannigan Date _____ Time _____

15 Sept 70

decided in best interest
many not to publish in
media the Bishop's decision
- take Densmore's faculties
in watching closely.
enclosed. He was in
circulars.

Tom S.

Reply Initial and return See me

I hope you are well, and enjoying your work. No need for you to answer this personally--I know you keep very busy.

I am in good health, thank God. My chief worry is the terrible debt which these years of inactivity have plunged me into. But again, thank God, I have somehow been able to meet my obligations on time. It has been almost miraculous, and I live in a lively confidence in the good providence of God.

The past three years have been a time of intense suffering for me, but we are enjoined to "serve the Lord in gladness," and since I have never doubted that this suffering was His design for me, for the good of the Church, I have lived in a kind of joy. I have been willing to suffer in silence for the sake of what I believe to be the authentic objectives of our beloved priesthood. So strongly do I believe this to have been the will of God that I hardly dare write this letter, for I fear to obstruct the purposes of God. But I have prayed, and the answer seems to come: "Write, and hope always in the Lord!"

I'm not interested in any sort of little--that would probably be rocking the boat too much, I suppose. I'm just interested in the opportunity to serve, under conditions where I believe I could serve in serenity. I'm not interested in "getting" anything--I am quite interested in "giving" myself.

5644

Thank you so much for your kindness
in relaying this letter, if you think that
to be wise.

Yours sincerely,



(Rev.) R.J. Densmore

Box 52
Bradford, N.H. 03221

July 4, 1971

Dear Core,

Densmore, Hobbs

I am sending this to you because
I don't know who else to send it to,
and perhaps you will be kind enough to
see that it falls into the right hands

I read in the paper that Fr. Brac
was leaving New London. I live, as you
know, in New London parish--(my home is
in Sutton).

Since I am probably the only
person here, besides himself, in the
priesthood, I just want to say that I
would be glad to work in his place.

As a young priest, ten years ago,
I worked in New London parish, and I
liked it well.

Leonard Rochfords⁵⁶⁴⁵ Observe 40th Year

NEWPORT — Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Rochford of 1A Syndicate St. celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary with an open house at their home.

Prior to the event, the couple renewed their marriage vows and received the Papal Blessing at St. Patrick Church. The Rev. Thomas Savage officiated and the couple's son, Edward Rochford of Newport, their granddaughter, Kelley Rochford of Newport, and Mrs. Rachel Walker of Claremont were attendants.

The open house, arranged by the Rochfords' sons and their wives, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rochford and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rochford of Peterborough, and by Mrs. Walker, was attended by more than 250 guests.

The buffet table was highlighted by a bouquet of white gladioli flanked by white candles and crystals. The house was decorated with white wedding bells and flowers.

Attending the guest book were Miss Louise Groux of Nashua and Miss Ann Whitney of Newport.

Mrs. Rochford's sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Graves of North Hampton, and Mr. Rochford's niece, Mrs. Richard Niemi of Newport, were in charge of the punch bowl.

One of the gifts presented to the honored couple was a model airplane decorated with silver dollars and money to be used on a five-day trip to Washington, D.C.

Another special gift was the couple's enrollment in the Union of the Precious Blood in Manchester.

Family members attending the affair included another granddaughter, Kerry Rochford of Newport; Mrs. Rochford's sisters and brothers-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Lord and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hebert of Manchester; a brother, Thomas Graves; Mr. Rochford's sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Abies of Burlington, Vt.; his brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Rochford of Springfield, Mass.; and another brother, Paul Rochford of Goshen.

Other guests, including the Rev. Robert Densmore and the Rev. James Maloney, attended from Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.

Mr. and Mrs. (the former Virginia Graves) Rochford were married Sept. 1, 1930 at St. Mary Church by the late Rev. Arthur L. Marsicotte. They were attended by Mrs. Glen



MISS SCHRICKER

Engagement Announced

August 17, 1971

Rev. Robert Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, N.H.

Dear Father Densmore:

The Most Reverend Bishop has asked me to make the necessary arrangements for you to meet with him next week.

I have taken the liberty of making an appointment for you to meet with Bishop Primeau in his office in the Diocesan Administration Building on Friday, August 27, 1971 at 11 o'clock in the morning.

Should this date and time not be convenient for you, would you kindly contact me at your earliest convenience and other mutually agreeable arrangements will be made.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

Raymond G. Lapointe

5647

Box 52

Bradford, N.H.

August 1, 1971

Dear Bishop,

Thank you very much for
your nice letter. It was so
nice to hear from you.

I will be very happy to
come and see you anytime —
just let me know when will
be a good time for you.

Yours sincerely,

Father W.

SENDER: Be sure to follow instructions on other side

PLEASE FURNISH SERVICE(S) INDICATED BY CHECKED BLOCK(S)
(Additional charges required for these services)

Show to whom, date and address where delivered Deliver ONLY to addressee

RECEIPT

Received the numbered article described below

REGISTERED NO.

9092

SIGNATURE OR NAME OF ADDRESSEE (Must always be filled in)

1 Robt. L. Williams

CERTIFIED NO.

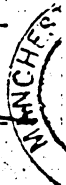
2 SIGNATURE OF ADDRESSEE'S AGENT, IF ANY

INSURED NO.

DATE DELIVERED

JUL 20 1971

3 SHOW WHERE DELIVERED (Only if requested, and include ZIP Code)



5649

July 16, 1971

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

I am writing to you today for two reasons. First, I wish to express, once again, my concern for you as a brother priest. My concern continues to be for your welfare, both spiritual and material. Secondly, I wish to remind you that the leave of absence which you requested expired on June 18, 1971.

It was my understanding that you requested a one-year leave of absence from your duties and responsibilities as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester to enable you to make certain decisions concerning the ministerial priesthood.

In view of this, I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and discuss your plans for the future in the light of your experience during this leave of absence.

May I request that you contact my secretary, Monsignor Lapointe, and make arrangements to meet with me during the week of August 15, 1971.

With the assurance of the support of my prayers, I
am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

Densmore, Robert

(Send return receipt requested--
Date July 16
3 carbons)

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Father Densmore:

On June 18, 1970, ~~the~~ I granted your request for a leave of absence for a period of one year effective as of that date.

In my letter, I asked that you contact me as soon as you had reached a decision concerning your future status in the Diocese of Manchester. As of this moment, I have not received any correspondence from you stating your intentions.

Not followed

In view of the fact that your one year leave of absence has expired, I request that you advise me immediately regarding your intentions ~~vis-a-vis~~ your status as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester. Unless word is received from you within a reasonable period of time, that is before August 1, 1971, I will presume that you no longer wish to exercise your priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic Church.

Pleased be assured that I am willing to meet with you at a mutually convenient time to discuss this matter. You may be certain of the support of my prayers.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,
DM

July 4, 1971

Dear Odore,

I am sending this to you because I don't know who else to send it to, and perhaps you will be kind enough to see that it falls into the right hands.

I read in the paper that Fr. Bracq was leaving New London. I live, as you know, in New London parish--(my home is in Sutton).

Since I am probably the only person here, besides himself, in the priesthood, I just want to say that I would be glad to work in his place.

As a young priest, ten years ago, I worked in New London parish, and I liked it well.

I'm not interested in any sort of title--that would probably be rocking the boat too much, I suppose. I'm just interested in the opportunity to serve, under conditions where I believe I could serve in serenity. I'm not interested in "getting" anything--I am quite interested in "giving" myself.

The past three years have been a time of intense suffering for me, but we are enjoined to "serve the Lord in gladness," and since I have never doubted that this suffering was His design for me, for the good of the Church, I have lived in a kind of joy. I have been willing to suffer in silence for the sake of what I believe to be the authentic objectives of our beloved priesthood. So strongly do I believe this

to have been the will of God that I hardly dare write this letter, for I fear to obstruct the purposes of God. But I have prayed, and the answer seems to come: "Write, and hope always in the Lord!"

I am in good health, thank God. My chief worry is the terrible debt which these years of inactivity have plunged me into. But again, thank God, I have somehow been able to meet my obligations on time. It has been almost miraculous, and I live in a lively confidence in the good providence of God.

I hope you are well, and enjoying your work. No need for you to answer this personally--I know you keep very busy.

Thank you so much for your kindness
in relaying this letter, if you think that
to be wise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob D.", written in dark ink.

(Rev.) R.J. Densmore

Box 52
Bradford, N.H. 03221

SENATE OF PRIESTS
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
P. O. Box 310
Manchester, NH., 03105

5654

July 14, 1971

Re Robert J. Deveman
Box 52

Bradford, N.H. - 03221

Dear Bob.

Good to hear from you.
I am sorry I am late to acknowledge
receipt of your letter. I was away
for a week.

I will give the letter to
Monaghan P. J. Kennally who is the
Chairman of the Personnel Board
and although I believe the position
has already been filled, it is good
for him to know of your interest.

Best wishes -

Sincerely,
John ...

July 16, 1971

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

I am writing to you today for two reasons. First, I wish to express, once again, my concern for you as a brother priest. My concern continues to be for your welfare, both spiritual and material. Secondly, I wish to remind you that the leave of absence which you requested expired on June 18, 1971.

It was my understanding that you requested a one-year leave of absence from your duties and responsibilities as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester to enable you to make certain decisions concerning the ministerial priesthood.

In view of this, I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and discuss your plans for the future in the light of your experience during this leave of absence.

May I request that you contact my secretary, Monsignor Lapointe, and make arrangements to meet with me during the week of August 15, 1971.

With the assurance of the support of my prayers, I
am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

July 16, 1971

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
Box 52
Bradford, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

I am writing to you today for two reasons. First, I wish to express, once again, my concern for you as a brother priest. My concern continues to be for your welfare, both spiritual and material. Secondly, I wish to remind you that the leave of absence which you requested expired on June 18, 1971.

It was my understanding that you requested a one-year leave of absence from your duties and responsibilities as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester to enable you to make certain decisions concerning the ministerial priesthood.

In view of this, I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and discuss your plans for the future in the light of your experience during this leave of absence.

May I request that you contact my secretary, Monsignor Lapointe, and make arrangements to meet with me during the week of August 15, 1971.

With the assurance of the support of my prayers, I
am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

September 10, 1971

Rev. Robert J. Densmore
c/o Our Lady of Fatima Rectory
Main Street
New London, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

Subsequent to our discussion several days ago, I wish to inform you that your leave of absence from your duties and responsibilities as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester is terminated as of this date.

Consequently, I grant you the use of the faculties of the Diocese of Manchester and I grant you permission to exercise your ministry within the parish of Our Lady of Fatima, New London, New Hampshire, on a temporary basis and according to the needs of the parish as determined by the pastor, the Reverend Thomas E. Keenan. For canonical reasons, I am appointing you as associate pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, New London, effective as of this date.

In the light of this experience, I expect to review your position as a priest of the Diocese of Manchester no later than January 1, 1972.

You may be assured of the support of my prayers and any other assistance I can offer as you renew the exercise of your ministry in the Diocese.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

OUR LADY OF FATIMA RECTORY
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

September 17, 1971

Dear Bishop,

Thank you very much for your letter.

I have been here in N.L. since last Saturday. It has been most pleasant. As a young priest, ten years ago, I began the ministry here, as you may recall, and there are many here who remember me, which makes it nice.

Fr. Keenan left Monday, and I am "holding the fort", as they say. The people have been most helpful--they seem to run things pretty much themselves here. Right now, they are all busy getting the C.C.D. program for the year going.

As you say, I will be in close association with Tom throughout the next weeks. I think that is a very nice arrangement. Most probably, I will be doing a lot of work in the other end of the parish. Our church there could probably use a little T.L.C., and I believe Tom's idea is to have me concentrate over there and give them some special attention. They are a small congregation, and widely spread through four townships, but they love their church. The first Mass I ever said in the ministry, here in N.H., was in Immaculate Conc. Church over there. I look with enthusiasm upon the prospect of going back. I will, of course, also help Tom here, to the extent of my ability, probably with C.C.D. work, hospital, and work with the shut-ins.

So, all in all, I am very happy and content, and if the time comes to make a change, I trust it will be to something affording equal contentment and happiness. We shall leave this in the hands of God.

Hope you're well, and getting your zip back

5659

OUR LADY OF FATIMA RECTORY
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03257

after surgery. It's a shock to the system, and takes some months before you feel yourself again, I know. May you go, as David says, "from strength to strength!"

Sincerely,

Father D.

R.J. Densmore

(Please excuse errors--not used to this elec. machine--it gallops too fast for me.)

September 10, 1971

Rev. Thomas E. Keenan
Our Lady of Fatima Rectory
Main Street
New London, New Hampshire

Dear Father Keenan:

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter I have addressed to the Reverend Robert J. Densmore.

As per our discussion several days ago, it is understood that Father Densmore will be permitted to exercise his priestly ministry in Our Lady of Fatima Parish, New London, according to the needs of the parish as determined by yourself. For canonical reasons, I have appointed Father Densmore as associate pastor of Our Lady of Fatima, New London, effective as of this date.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to call on me. I would request that this appointment not be made public at this time.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

Enc.

COPY

Box 52
Bradford, N.H. 03221
December 9, 1971

5001
Dennis, Robert

Rev. Msgr. P.J. Kenneally
Chairman, Personnel Board
Box 310
Manchester, N.H. 03105

Dear Monsignor:

I should like to be considered as a candidate for the Henniker pastorate.

I am in my fortieth year of age, and have completed ten years in the priesthood.

Henniker is almost exclusively a college town, and it would seem that the parish priest should be someone who is sympathetic to the particular needs of college students. With regard to myself, I can say that I have done a great deal of counseling work with college students in the past years, and that I have enjoyed a certain success in attracting them to a continuing practice of their Faith, as well as in helping them in their personal needs.

I was born and raised in this western part of the State, and for the past three years I have lived ten miles from Henniker. Due to background and mentality, I believe that I have a good knowledge of the particular conditions which exist there, and of what the most pressing needs for the future are.

More than five of my ten years in the priesthood have been spent in parishes to which "mission churches" were attached. Thus, I feel that I have a good knowledge of the particular problems of Catholics in our mission churches, and that I could be properly sympathetic to the particular pastoral needs of the people in the Hopkinton (Contoocook) church.

If called to this Henniker pastorate, my objectives would be:

- a. to attempt to carry on in the same spirit of dedication and compassion which characterized Father Butler's long-time pastorate there
- b. to be completely available to all people at all times
- c. to stress especially the educational program in the parish, both on the adult and on the youth levels
- d. to provide the appropriate liturgical services in accordance with the letter and the spirit of current directives
- e. to strengthen the work of the parish Council in the two churches, so that it might function effectively for the good of parish and community
- f. to collaborate as closely as possible with the work of the campus ministry at New England College, and to make the facilities of the parish available to this ministry
- g. to develop, to the best extent possible, parish life in

the dependent church at Contoocook, and also, to look eventually to the needs of the growing Catholic communities in Warner and in Weare.

Finally, as you know, Canon 453 states that the office of pastor should be conferred on a person "in sacro presbyteratus ordine constitutus,.....bonis moribus, doctrina, animarum zelo, prudentia, ceterisque virtutibus ac qualitatibus praeditus." I would hope to have my candidacy for the Henniker pastorate judged according to the qualifications listed above, and not according to the non-existent qualification of seniority.

Always grateful for your past kindnesses, and for your kindly consideration in this matter, I remain

Yours sincerely,



(Rev.) R.J. Densmore

Densmore

5063

December 10, 1971

Very Rev. Hector O. LaMontagne, V.F.
St. Mary Rectory
32 Pearl Street
Claremont, New Hampshire 03743

Dear Father LaMontagne:

In accordance with your request as dean for a clarification of the position of Father Robert Densmore, I have consulted His Excellency, the Most Reverend Bishop. He has informed me that he has personally arranged for Father Densmore to assist Father Thomas Keenan of the New London Parish on a temporary basis. This is mostly for week-end work. I understand that both parties are pleased with the set-up and we have had no complaints from the parishioners.

With cordial good wishes, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

Thomas S. Hansberry
Vicar General

CONFIDENTIAL

March 13, 1972

Rev. Thomas E. Keenan
Our Lady of Fatima Rectory
Main Street
New London, N.H. 03257

Dear Father Keenan:

Subsequent to our conversation in Concord last Friday, may I request that you send me, at your earliest convenience, a written evaluation of the Reverend Robert J. Densmore's ministry since permission was granted him to assist you at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in New London.

I would appreciate receiving this evaluation as soon as possible. Kindly include all the points mentioned during our discussion.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

