

Reading Mission Priory  
Reading, Pa.  
May 11, 1962.

Most Rev. Bernard J. Flanagan, D.D., J.C.D.  
Bishop's House  
2 High Ridge Road  
Worcester, Mass.

Your Excellency, Bishop Flanagan:

Permit me to introduce myself before I go on with this letter. I am Father Benet D. Holley, O.S.B., 34 years of age and ordained a priest for four years. Three years ago, while stationed at Glastonbury Latin School in Hingham, Mass., I first came in contact with Msgr. Joseph P. Burke who is now pastor of St. Patrick's in Lawrence, Mass. Last Christmas, while visiting my sister in Medway, I stopped to see Msgr. Burke and it is he who suggested that I write to you personally.

After frequent prayer to the Holy Ghost and advice from my spiritual director, it is my sincere desire to leave the religious life to become a diocesan priest. During the past three years, I have become increasingly aware that this is my place in God's vineyard. Your diocese, Bishop Flanagan, is where I would hope to achieve personal sanctification while serving God more effectively.

I have applied to no other diocese for admission as I earnestly desire to be inculcated in Worcester. In your diocese I know that I would be happy and do good work so I pray that you may find room for me. As I noted before, my married sister lives in Medway not too far from the diocesan boundary.

Several priests in the past few years have left our Abbey and become secularized. This has made the Abbot quite angry and is the reason why I hesitated to write sooner. If the Abbot learns of my intention to secularize, it is possible that he may send me to one of the Latin American missions as he has done to the other priests before they were released. For letters of recommendation, I refer you to the following priests with whom I have worked in school and on week-ends and who have given me permission to use their names.

The Rev. Christopher J. Gibney, Ph.D.  
Immaculate Conception Rectory  
640 E. Main Street  
Birdsboro, Pa.

The Rev. Raymond J. Lechner, Principal  
Central Catholic High School  
Reading, Pa.

Msgr. Burke from Lawrence, Mass. will send a letter shortly and more detailed information will be sent if you so desire, Your Excellency, and I pray that I will receive a favorable reply.

Very respectfully yours,

*Benet D. Holley, O.S.B.*

(Rev.) Benet D. Holley, O.S.B.