

February 13, 1973

Rev. Paul R. Shanley  
~~406 Marlborough Street~~  
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Dear Father Paul:

It has come to my attention that a number of good people have become very much disturbed about some statements which they assert you made on a recent radio program. It is claimed that you expressed views contrary to the doctrine of the Church on several points of morality, stating, for instance, that such acts as masturbation and homosexuality are not morally evil, and that the Church will change its teaching in regard to such matters.

If these allegations are true, I must express deep concern and disapproval. I can hardly believe that you actually made these statements, obviously, as they would cause scandal among the faithful. Especially in regard to young people, whose welfare I have felt was a genuine concern of yours, to express such erroneous and dangerous views can have no effect other than to lead these children of God astray in matters of basic morality. As does every Catholic priest, you have the obligation to preach and teach the doctrine of the Catholic Church in matters of faith and morality. To do otherwise, a priest would be seriously remiss in his shared calling. As the shepherd of the faithful in this Archdiocese, for whose spiritual welfare God will hold me accountable, I must ask you to refrain from making such statements in the future, if these allegations are true. If they are not true, then I would be grateful if you would review the tape of the program and correct any misinterpretation of what was said.

In either event, I would appreciate hearing from you in regard to this incident, in order that I might be better able to evaluate it.

With every blessing, I am

Devotedly yours in Our Lord,

Archbishop of Boston