

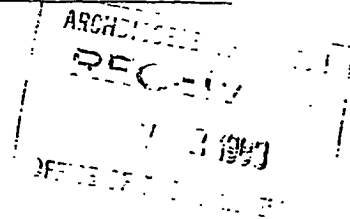
MOST REVEREND JOHN M. D'ARCY, S.T.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
Lowell Region
70 Lawrence Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

November 1, 1983

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

Most Reverend Thomas V. Daily
Administrator
Archdiocese of Boston
2121 Commonwealth Avenue
Brighton, Massachusetts 02135



Dear Bishop Daily:

On October 31 I had my regular meeting with the vicars of this region who, during this interim period, are serving as your delegates. One difficult question arose. This is the fact that Reverend Richard Buntel was assigned to this region. The vicars are aware that Father Buntel has serious problems. These problems apparently concern (1) alcoholism, (2) repeated use of drugs, and it is even alleged that he was an instrument for giving drugs to young people. It is said that at his previous parish he was called "pothead" by some in the parish - probably by young people. I am told that the drug involved was cocaine. (3) There is talk at his previous parish of homosexual activity.

I understand from previous conversations with Father Oates at the time that he came here, that Father Buntel was told about this and refused to seek help. At that time, I questioned the assignment to Father Oates, but the assignment had already been made. I believe that these allegations are true and if a man like this does not seek help, he should not be given an assignment.

I feel certain that if what has been reported is true, the same scandal will arise up here. Fr. Hudgins, who has been vicar here for a long time, tells me that while no town is good for this, Westford would be especially bad. One of Father's concerns is if the Chief of Police in that town. As you know, this kind of scandal is hurtful in any parish, but most especially in these small towns. Young people are open to priests and when assaulted in this way, their souls are often irreparably damaged.

If all of the allegations about Father Buntel are true, I recommend as Regional Bishop, after consulting with the four vicars (delegates), that Father Buntel be relieved of his assignment at this time and that he be required to get help. If Fr. Buntel refuses to seek this help, I urge that he should not be given an assignment.

It is my conviction, as I believe it is yours as well, that we who are in the

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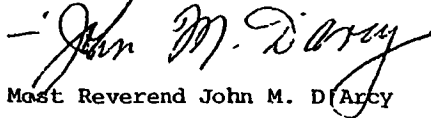
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position of responsibility have the obligation to try to prevent scandal in those cases where it seems almost definite that it will occur.

The present staff at Saint Catherine's, Westford presents an added reason why it is important to follow the line that I have recommended.

I very much appreciate your attention to this matter, despite your very difficult schedule these days. I promise prayers for you.

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,



Most Reverend John M. D'Arcy

copies: Rev. Eugene Curtin
Rev. Thomas Hudgins
Rev. Maurice O'Connor
Rev. Thomas Oates
Rev. Alfred Puccini

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