

100K T12  
Newport 5545  
Feb. 17, 1969

DENSMORE, ROBERT

Most Reverend & dear Bishop,

This is to tell you that I am no longer in the rectory in Newport.

Fr. Donnelly, whom you sent here to administer this parish, has for the past eight months made life for me a living crucifixion.

He has informed me that he wanted to get rid of two people here - Mrs. Hutchinson and me, and that he has succeeded in getting rid of one, and he will not fail with the other!

The events of the past few days have forced me to make this move:

On Saturday evening and Sunday, at Masses which I celebrated, and during those Masses, he has subjected me to a deliberate and cruel harassment.

For the past three days, I have lost every bit of food which I tried to eat, because he has so upset me.

Monday morning he laid hands on me and tried to push me into a corner. Not wishing to strike him, I ducked, and evaded him, and went out.

He ripped the cable connection on my T.V. out, so that I could no longer use it, and he has forbidden me to answer the phone when he is in the house (which is most of the time), and he has informed me that my phone will be disconnected. (Both the T.V. and the phone were installed by Fr. Hutchinson before I came.)

He has castigated me verbally about dealings I had with an elderly woman to whom I take Communion — I could say nothing because of the Sacramental Seal.

He has tried (unsuccessfully) to blacken my reputation and my record in the eyes of the parishioners by what he has said to them about me. He has done this for several months now. These things come back to me.

I could go on + on, but I have other things to say.

First of all, I never wish to see him again. It is overwhelming by apparent to me that he has mercilessly goaded me into leaving voluntarily, so that he can tell

you I deserted him. The events of the past eight months add up to a sort of psychological warfare which he has waged relentlessly against me. In his twisted mind, he never could realize that I was not working against him, but rather for God and God's people here. It seems to me that if he had also been working for the same objectives - rather than for his personal aggrandizement - harmony would have prevailed.

But I am not a deserter. I am right here. Last night I had no place to go, but a cousin took me in. Tomorrow an elderly couple here are leaving for Florida, and they have given me their house. Everyone in town knows where I am. I am on the street, visiting the hospital and the shut-ins, and participating in community activities as usual.

I do not want you to think that I have walked away from my ministry here. I love the towns and the churches and the people here, and I have reason

to believe that they return that love. I have tried very hard to be a good priest to them and to serve them in the great tradition of some wonderful priests we have had here in the past. I have reason to believe that God has worked through me to bring about much good here.

But I say to you - without intending any disrespect or defiance - that I never intend to see this man again in this world. So, please don't ask me to go back to association with him, because I will have to firmly refuse. I will not again subject myself to his cruel and inhuman treatment.

However, a larger issue is here. My own personal feelings matter very little. After all, I am just one unimportant person. What really matters is that this parish is being subjected to a program of eventual destruction. This man, because he is hopelessly incompetent, inhuman, ruthless, over-ridingly dictatorial, and, I believe dangerously psychotic - this man

Should be relieved of his duties here at once. He is a sick man, with many fundamental + essential human and Christian qualities missing. I pity him, but I pity our people here even more. What you are to do with him is your problem - not ours. But we are stuck with him now, and he is, by his ignorance and his methods, shattering all organized Christian life here.

I am prepared to submit to you particular details. But I hesitate to do this. If you will quietly + speedily remove him, then these things need never be said. But if you leave him here much longer, I will, in conscience, have to tell you what is going on here - and worse still, what is not going on here that should be. As bishop, you ought to be informed truthfully.

I am staying out of the rectory for a few days until I see what will happen. He has blown up all bridges of communication between himself and me - what is the use of my seeing him again? I

Cannot eat at the table with him - I cannot retain the food afterwards. There is no lock on the door to my two rooms, and when he is on one of his rampages, he quite simply violates my privacy without observing the usual polite amenities. Frankly, in his present state of mind, I am afraid of him - of what he might do.

I feel sorry about the Masses, but what can I do? I certainly cannot offer Mass in Newport after what he put me through last Sunday - in the eyes of all our people. I would not mind offering the Masses in Sunapee, and at the Sunapee Ski Park (one daily and four <sup>Saturday and</sup> Sunday) if I were guaranteed that I could do so in peace. I will leave this matter up to your judgment.

It is not my intention to split the church, initiate a schism, start a movement, push a public petition, foment a rebellion, attract a following, or anything like that. I do not believe that these things serve

the good of the Church. I do believe that a bishop has the authority to oversee the condition of his churches, and to make dispositions which will provide compassionate service to his people. This is what I am asking you to do. I am sorry to burden you with additional problems, but I simply do not have the authority or the competence to do anything. And neither do our people. Only you do.

I am sorry if I have seemed to assassinate this man's character. True, he is a priest. But I cannot stand by silently and watch the destruction going on here. In my humble opinion (and I could be wrong), he is not the shepherd here, and he is not even the hireling - he is the wolf who is ravenous and destructive. I beg you to remove this intolerable burden from my people here, (and from me.)

I am right here and will await your word. I am all right, and I have enough money to eat until the end of the month. I am hopeful

that all will be solved by then, so  
I am not worrying. Meanwhile, I  
am trying to do my work here in  
the parish. You can write me  
here in Newport - I have a  
box.

Dear Bishop, please help us all.

Yours sincerely,

R. J. Sensmore  
Asst.

P.S. Please excuse writing - I have  
no immediate access to a typewriter.



We, the undersigned, parishioners of St. Patricks Church (Newport, New Hampshire) vitally concerned with the welfare of our religious community and most satisfied with the inspirational moral leadership of Father Robert Densmore do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power to see to it that Father Densmore returns to St. Patricks Church so that he can continue to serve with great dedication his God, his Church and his people.

John Kelly	Tom Penning
Timothy Tibbeant	William [unclear]
Joseph F. [unclear]	Gary C. Dizon
Pharis [unclear]	Mrs. Charlene A. Dizon
Anta Dubreuil	Mark Dizon
Edward P. Towne	Carl [unclear]
Emily Jello	Mary Hryza
Mr and Mrs Richard [unclear]	Wanda [unclear]
Moderne Kennedy	[unclear]
Edward M. Kennedy	Arthur St Cyr
Jean Hogue	Verna St Cyr
William [unclear]	Jan Aeneas
Sharon L. Budd	Drene W. Safford
[unclear]	Elizabeth Allene
[unclear]	Barbara G. Butler
[unclear]	Mildred L. Cartwright
[unclear]	[unclear]
[unclear]	Louis J. Henault

We, the undersigned, parishioners of St. Patrick's Church (Newport, New Hampshire) vitally concerned with the welfare of our religious community and most satisfied with the inspirational moral leadership of Father Robert Lenamore do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power to see to it that Father Lenamore returns to St. Patrick's Church so that he can continue to serve with great dedication his God, his Church and his people.

Patrick Mulhern  
 Mr. + Mrs. Paul Seidler  
 Mrs. Anna Malloy  
 Rose Simpson  
 Gladys Guttin  
 Nancy Seiden  
 Mrs. John Cipar  
 Joseph La Vesque Jr  
 Randy Wilcox  
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph La Vesque, Sr.  
 Stephen J. Cipar  
 Mary Mulhern  
 Mr. + Mrs. John Mulhern  
 Nellie Lovejoy  
 Bill + Helen Curson  
 Mr. + Mrs. Frank Thibodeau  
 Mr. + Mrs. Mike Staskiewicz  
 Mr. + Mrs. Al Dorak  
 Fletcher + Norma Clarke  
 Mr. + Mrs. Howard French  
 Mr. + Mrs. Joe Kruck  
 Mr. + Mrs. Joe Lozau  
 Mr. + Mrs. John Hockett  
 Mr. + Mrs. Geo. Clark  
 Mr. + Mrs. Bob Caswell  
 Mr. + Mrs. Roswell Boney  
 Agnes Sloane  
 Bob + Peggy  
 Bernette Strange  
 Mrs. Egidio Stronza  
 Eva Roberts

Kyllis H. Bond  
 Loretta Carson  
 Mr & Mrs Richard Potter  
 Mrs & Mrs John W. Boyle  
 Mrs & Mrs Richard T. Johnson  
 John & Catherine  
 Helen Kurf  
 Mrs. [unclear]  
 Mrs. Burton Gardner  
 Mrs. Henry Allen Jr.  
 Dr. [unclear]  
 E. La. Law  
 Allen Hemmingsway  
 John H. [unclear]  
 Al Trybulski  
 D. Wirta  
 Maurice Beauchaine  
 Robert Jones  
 Irene [unclear]  
 Jeannette Kelly  
 Dennis A. Mosow  
 Kenneth Bennett  
 Mr & Mrs Victor [unclear]  
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward [unclear]  
 Herbert Beauchaine  
 Kenneth Richard  
 Mr & Mrs Charles [unclear]  
 Mrs. Brenda Webb  
 Alexander J. [unclear]  
 Geraldine Bagley  
 Phelisa A. Smith

5555  
 William H. [unclear]  
 Alice M. [unclear]  
 Mrs. Richard [unclear]  
 Mrs. Al Trybulski  
 Walter Trybulski  
 Anna Targ  
 Jean Beauchaine  
 Sarah Muecke  
 Mary [unclear]  
 Shady [unclear]  
 Susan Riley  
 Bernadette Altst  
 Loretta Lasson  
 William [unclear]  
 Mrs. Mrs. Ernest Babbitt  
 Miss Lucille Babbitt  
 Miss Corale Babbitt  
 Mrs. Mrs. Richard Babbitt  
 William [unclear]  
 Gertrude [unclear]  
 Mrs. Mrs. Raymond Johnson  
 Mrs. Alice [unclear]  
 Mrs. [unclear]  
 Mrs. & Mrs. [unclear]  
 Dennis [unclear]  
 Joseph Davidson  
 Ann V. Davidson  
 Mrs. Mrs. Gerard [unclear]

Charles J. Henault

Adela Henault

Margaret Marcotte

Jack Marcotte

Kathleen O'Neill

Kevin O'Neill

Pauline O'Neill

Valerie O'Neill

Margaret Bushway

Cynthia Blessier

Kenneth Dresser

George E. Veyo

Eric Bradburn

Gene E. Bradburn

Leslie H. Bradburn

Alvin Bradburn

Mary Bradburn

Fred Bradburn

We, the undersigned, parishioners of St. Patricks Church (Newport, New Hampshire) vitally concerned with the welfare of our religious community and most satisfied with the inspirational moral leadership of Father Robert Densmore do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power to see to it that Father Densmore returns to St. Patricks Church so that he can continue to serve with great dedication his God, his Church and his people.

Arthur Bergeron

G. Kulesza

Mary E. Taylor

Marjorie P. Loucy

Catherine Woodward

Frances Galotta

and G. F. S. S. S.

Mr & Mrs. Andrew S. S. S.

Patrick Zullo

Earl Kenston

Mr & Mrs Robert Bate

Mrs Richard E. S. S.

Bruce S. Patton

Hazel Lyette

Kenneth Lyette

Jack & Irene Boyle

John E. Tarullo

Pauline C. Fortune

The Rev. Paul Bonner

Mr & Mrs. S. S. S.

Mr & Mrs. Alfred St. Martin

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Holland

May S. Campbell

John Stokland

William H. Thurlow

Carole Joyce

Joseph G. Mulkern

Joseph Sullivan

Alma M. Androsca

Mr & Mrs. Oliver Zullo

Orlando C. Indaco

5558

Thos Duran

Jay Cheney

Ed W. Simon

Anna C. Morris

~~Ed Jones~~

Juanne C. League

Mania Tanello

We, the undersigned, citizens of the Town of Newport,  
New Hampshire, who know Father Robert Densmore to be a genuine  
Christian human being and a most valued member of our community  
do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power  
to see to it that Father Densmore returns to St. Patricks Church  
so that he can remain here and continue to be a vital force in  
the spiritual growth of our town.

Sen. Harry V. Spanoz

Mr. & Mrs. Salou Kanakis

Mrs. & Mrs. Christy Hasevot

Mr. & Mrs. Remington B. Hoodhull

Mr. & Mrs. Lynn H. Whitman

David L. Campbell

Thomas Balbo

Mr. & Mrs. Benedict G. Zukauskas

Maryann Parker Gove

William L. Hewell

Jean W. Paton

Peggy K. Conroy

Jesus M. Lake

The Rev. Robert B. Conroy

Delaney H. Redator

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hardy

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Willis

The Rev. Robert Jacobson, Rector, Church of the Epiphany,

President Hughes, <sup>Tasmanian</sup>  
 Mr & Mrs Raymond J Barrett  
 Kenneth Andler, lawyer.  
 Dolores M. Andler  
 Mr & Mrs Cleo Franklin  
 Mr & Mrs Nick Coudakis  
 Mr & Mrs R H. Scoble  
 Albert J. Duggan  
 Irene Pike  
 Judith T. Shepard  
 Mr. & Mrs. J. S. Winch  
 Donald C. Egerton  
 Jean Egerton  
 Donald W. Martin  
 Legend of King  
 Donald W. Martin  
 Jacquelyn E. Martin  
 Mr & Mrs. C. V. Hackett  
 Al Jones (Principal - Elementary Schools)  
 (Richards - Towle)  
 Bessie Jones  
 Paul W. Cheney  
 Mr. & Mrs. Gordon B. Clark  
 Peter R. Pollard  
 Carol A. Ballard  
 Representative James A. S. Egerton  
 Ch. Suggs



We, the undersigned, citizens of the Town of Newport,  
New Hampshire, who know Father Robert Densmore to be a genuine  
Christian human being and a most valued member of our community  
do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power  
to see to it that Father Densmore returns to St. Patricks Church  
so that he can remain here and continue to be a vital force in  
the spiritual growth of our town.

Russell L. Allen  
Robert W. Underhill  
Goldena P. Heulbut.  
Harold Scullion  
Jay Stewart  
Richard Vankolm  
Mr. + Mrs. Tony Maiola  
Thomas G. Quinn  
Clara M. Brown  
Gene W. Cain  
Grace E. Beaulieu  
Daniel Beul  
John C. Cronin  
Lita C. Cronin  
Richard J. Cronin  
Archie Codakis  
Mrs. Kiki Codakis  
Georgia Codakis

George A. Blight  
Robert A. Cappelletti  
William Ketcher  
Quonice Rich  
Arthur C. Lee  
Dorothy Silver  
Jack Silver  
Ellen Paimont  
Paul D. Payne  
Robert E. Thibault  
Nicholas Kanakis  
Mrs. Chris Arman

We, the undersigned, citizens of the Town of Newport,  
New Hampshire, who know Father Robert Benson to be a genuine  
Christian human being and a most valued member of our community  
do hereby petition Your Excellency to do all within his power  
to see to it that Father Benson returns to St. Patrick's Church  
so that he can remain here and continue to be a vital force in  
the spiritual growth of our town.

Raymond Packard  
 A. G. Souin  
 R. S. Brown  
 J. C. Latou  
 W. C. Longo  
 Richard Nichol  
 L. L. J. Higgins  
 James W. Walsh  
 Phyllis M. Woodhull  
 Elona M. Sutton  
 Wilfred Hanson  
 Joyce Vint  
 Lillian J. Niemi

Erving Smith  
 Ruth Page  
 David Munchie  
 Edna Mayhew  
 Harriet Avery  
 Rebecca Simpson  
 Mrs. Mrs. Edwin Charrier Sr  
 Elaine Whiffen  
 Corisella Hebert  
 Nancy Niemi

DENSMORE, ROBERT *File*

March 3, 1969

Rev. Robert Densmore is presently living at the following address:

Rev. Robert Densmore  
% Mrs. Kay Lee  
67 Church Street  
Newport, New Hampshire

Tel. 863-3057

RGL.

March 26, 1969

Reverend Robert J. Densmore  
c/o Mrs. Kay Lee  
67 Church St.  
Newport, New Hampshire

Dear Father Densmore:

You are hereby appointed assistant to Very Reverend Armand Provost, V.F., pastor of Saint Mary Parish, Claremont, N.H. effective on April 1, 1969. This assignment has been made necessary by the impasse reached between you and Father Donnelly.

I am sending you to a parish where you can work with several priests in the hope that it will temper your tendency to place your apostolic activities on a strictly personal basis.

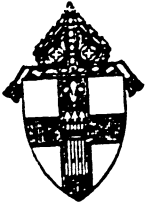
We have in the diocese an effective personnel board and other means of discussion and settlement of grievances. Your by-passing of these both in Salem and Newport has not been in the spirit of the renewal in the diocese. Your inclination to walk out of the rectory and to set up separate quarters for yourself has also been a cause for scandal.

With a blessing and the hope that you will be happy in your new post, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

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CHANCERY OFFICE  
153 ASH STREET  
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
03105

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DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

March 31, 1969

Re: Reverend Robert Densmore

We received word from Father Armand Provost, V.F., pastor of Saint Mary Parish, Claremont, N. H. to the effect that he had just received word from Father Robert Densmore that he did not intend to report for duty on April 1, 1969 in accordance with his assignment from Newport to Claremont.

I spoke with the Most Reverend Bishop about this and he said that he could not understand Father Densmore's action because he had told him in their conversation before the transfer that he knew he would be expected to leave Newport and that he hoped he would be assigned to a nearby parish so as to be near his mother.

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Comment

This strange behavior on the part of Father Densmore is in the same line as his previous action when he was in Saint Joseph Parish, Salem, N. H. at which time he disappeared without a "by your leave" to the pastor and, while allegedly in the hospital, was found to have gone elsewhere.

Historically, his independence may be traced in part to the attitude of his first pastor, Father Frank McMullen, who allowed him to operate independently in the parish -- which would normally have been a good thing for a young priest but which in his case spoiled him for future assignments where he would be obliged to follow the directions of a pastor.

The death of Father McMullen shortly after his appointment to the new parish in Salem was a terrible shock to Father Densmore and it may have had an effect upon him which is still felt.

*J. H. Densmore*  
*June 1969*

April 1, 1969

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

Dear Father Densmore:

Upon receipt of your letter of March 30th, the Most Reverend Bishop asked me to contact you and ask you to come in to see him as soon as possible. I have tried unsuccessfully all afternoon to reach you at the following numbers - 863-3057 and 963-1613. Since it was not possible to reach you by phone, I thought it advisable to send you this special delivery letter and ask if it would be possible for you to come in and see the Bishop tomorrow, Wednesday, April 2nd, either at 2:00 in the afternoon or at 3:30. If this is not possible, may I ask you to call me sometime Wednesday afternoon.

With every good wish,

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Raymond G. Lapointe  
Assistant Chancellor

C  
O  
P  
Y

March 30, 1969

His Excellency,  
Most Rev. E.J. Primeau, STD  
Bishop of Manchester  
Box 310  
Manchester, N.H.

Most Reverend and dear Bishop:

I received your letter on Friday.

I shall consider my ministry in Newport terminated on Tuesday, April 1st, and shall leave Newport on that date..

However, I must tell you that I will not commence a ministry in Claremont according to the plans which you made. I would very much like to live and work there -- but certainly not under the management which is presently in force at St. Mary's. My going there could only make for greater problems later on.. I think it is better not to enter into an arrangement which does not have the least chance of success..

I have told Fr. Provost that I will not be coming.. I would have told you, too, had I known sooner -- the news was in the local papers the same day your letter arrived.

I am going on Tuesday to live in my own house, in Sutton.. I will not bother you or interfere with any of your operations. Please do not approach me to work again unless you have in mind some viable situation, located in this area, in which I would be able to live in basic human dignity, and be free to render maximum and efficient ministerial service.

Yours sincerely,

*R. J. Densmore*

Robt. J. Densmore

Rev. R.J. Densmore  
Box 52  
Bradford, N.H. 03221

ST. DENIS RECTORY  
POST OFFICE BOX 109  
HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03755

5588

April 15, 1969

Dear Bishop:

I had a long session last Friday, the 11th, with Bob Densmore. He is either a very mixed-up kid or totally lacking in humility or perhaps a combination of both.

He is convinced that a great injustice has been committed against him by his removal from Newport. Evidently he considers himself so popular with the people that a further injustice is suffered by them if he is not around to serve them. I'm afraid these feelings would not be limited to Newport but would apply anywhere. His refusal to go to Claremont also included a refusal to accept any other assignment.

Before my meeting with him he had planned to just sit at his camp and work out the problem for himself. I convinced him or at least he said he agreed with me that this was completely wrong, that he should write to you and be ready to sit down with you and talk this thing out.

I talked to some of his layman friends and tried to persuade them to point out to him that he was going about this in the wrong way. I hope that they will help us out.

This is the substance of our meeting, however, I'll be present at the one o'clock meeting of the Senate next Monday and will be glad to fill you in on the details.

Respectfully,

Thomas J. Hannigan



Box 52  
Bradford, N.H. 03221  
April 18, 1969

Dear Bishop,

I spent three hours with Fr. Hannigan last week. He strongly urged that I write to you and open myself to you completely--tell you what is on my mind. I find it hard to believe that it will do a great deal of good, but I promised him that I would, and if it will help any, I am happy to do it.

I did not go to Claremont for several reasons -- all of them objectively good and valid. Given all the present circumstances -- the situation in Claremont, my own particular situation, etc., it would have been the worst possible place for me. These reasons are as follows: (briefly)

- 1.) After what I had been through in Newport in the immediately past weeks, I was in no condition, either physically or emotionally, to undertake a new ministry in a new situation.
- 2.) St. Mary's Parish gives the impression of being rather stagnant, pastorally. I feel I would have been powerless to exercise any sort of real or effective ministry there.
- 3.) There is very little rapport between the priests and people of Claremont. Knowing the place and the people so well, and being myself known so well, I would have been inserted into a situation which would have proved intolerable and unfair to the other priests.
- 4.) The atmosphere in the rectory there strikes one as archaic, stifling, and paternalistic in the worst sense. It seems to be maximally an institution and minimally a house-home.
- 5.) One gets the impression that the parish is run more for the purpose of maintaining the structural status quo rather than for the purpose of seeking the most effective means of preaching the Gospel.
- 6.) The parish is too big, and the consequent result is little or no sense of community. It could be divided tomorrow into three respectably sized parishes.
- 7.) I have always felt that Fr. Provost was not exactly the man for the job there--a sentiment in which I happen to be joined by a majority of the thinking parishioners. I had no desire to be a part of his team -- no one wants to play on a losing team.
- 8.) Living in that house, I would have felt like a "kept man." I wouldn't have objected to the work I had to do--only to the work that I would have been kept from doing. I am convinced that any rectory -- but especially that one -- is the greatest possible barrier to our work.

All of these things I would have told you if you had only mentioned to me that you were contemplating this move. But I was hardly

in a position to be able to discuss anything with you. The same afternoon your letter arrived, I got a call from the local paper that the presses were already running the story. I do not think that that was the right way to do business.

But, at the head of any list of reasons why I did not go to Claremont must stand the paramount reason that the transfer would not have been an honorable one. I could not, in conscience, be a compliant party to a maneuver which was so overwhelmingly unjust -- both to the people of Newport, and to me. There are times in the life of a man when he is backed up against a wall by extraneous and hostile circumstances, and when he must turn and say NO -- even when he knows that he is well-nigh powerless, even when he knows that by so doing he will bring suffering upon himself. The past two months have been agonizing for me -- I have walked through each day with fear, misgiving, and despair at my side. Each day -- several times each day -- I have probed my conscience. Always, always, the answer comes up the same: "Stay, stand fast, resist, fight if necessary." To do less, I believe, would be for me to do evil.

First of all, it was unjust to the people of Newport. I know that the people are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with your administrator, and I am told that they have tried, both individually and collectively, and upon several occasions, to move you to remove him. For almost a year now, I have watched silently the destruction which this man has wreaked upon this parish, and I have seen the parish disintegrating and going down the drain. And I think that, being here so close to it all, I know why the people feel as they do. The man is incurably ignorant, hopelessly incompetent, and dangerously psychotic. And yet you -- choosing as you did to view the whole thing as a simple difficulty between two individual priests, instead of recognizing the real and deeper issue at stake -- you thought to solve it by moving me. And I say that this is not a just solution, that you have not done justice to our people. You have done the direct opposite of what your people asked of you; you have treated them in a totally contrary fashion. It has been difficult enough for them to live with the deprivations of this man for a year, but they looked to you to right the situation. Time and time again, I heard people say "Where is our bishop? Is he asleep? Why doesn't he do something? Does he care about us? Why doesn't he come and help us? Etc., etc. And, since reading of my "transfer," people have said to me, "Do you go along with this? Are you going to be a part of this? Is this the price we have to pay for trying to approach our bishop -- losing you?" And sentiments in that vein. I have tried to sustain their faith -- a difficult job when my own was wavering so. But the only weapon I had at hand was my non-compliance.

Secondly, it was unjust to me. You have chosen to solve this problem by trying to remove me. Your letter to me, based as it was upon gross misinformation, and filled as it was with insinuations based thereupon, left me with no doubt that you felt I was totally responsible for the entire difficulty. Instead of placing the blame where it probably really belongs -- on yourself, for allowing this man to proceed unhindered to do his damage -- you have tried to make me the scapegoat. For eighteen months I have lived and worked among these people, and I have reason to believe that they were happy with my efforts. There was never any trouble between them and me -- but there was great love, and it was mutual from both sides. And suddenly, you try to effect a transfer which casts

aspersions upon all my efforts here -- upon my approach, my ministry, my preaching, my outlook, even my fundamental human worth. I submit that you have tried to dishonor me to whitewash someone else, and what you have done so without justice. (It is a tribute to the honesty of the people of Newport that your attempt has done me very little damage in their eyes.)

First of all, for the immediate present, I ask only two things. (I ask, because I have reason to believe that you desire a solution to all this.)

- 1.) I ask reappointment as asst. pastor of St. Patrick's.
- 2.) I ask financial remuneration for the two months that I stayed here and worked after I had been evicted from the rectory and was receiving no pay.

1.) With regard to reappointment, I feel that you owe this to this parish, and to me, in justice to us both. I will not be inclined to go on to any other position under you unless you first of all right this fundamental wrong. I don't ask any apology, public or private, for the way I have been used, or for the suffering which has been inflicted upon me, by you, by your letter, or by your administrator here. Your reappointment of me will speak volumes to all concerned, and it will restore me -- at least technically -- to a position in which I was happy, at which I was doing well, and of which I was unjustly deprived.

I certainly won't return to that rectory as long as that man is there. I live in no man's house as an unwanted roomer and boarder. I plan to stay right in my own house in Sutton until fall. I have emphysema, and I have a job lined up for the summer which will keep my out-of-doors, doing physical labor. The doctor says it will be of great therapeutic value, both because of the fresh air and exercise involved, and also because I smoke very little when busily occupied with hard work. With regard to pastoral duties, however, I will be content to take care of the Newbury Mass during the summer. It is held in the South Newbury Union Church -- three miles from my house -- and I will be free on weekends to do this. You will have to send a third priest to this parish anyway, as you did last summer, for weekend work, and there is no reason why it shouldn't be me. I will require no salary for doing this, and I'm sure that the arrangement will be satisfactory to the administrator here, because he measures everything in heaven and earth in terms of dollars and cents. If all goes well, and he makes no trouble, I will voluntarily resign my position as asst. pastor on September 1st, if, at that time, you are still of a mind to retain the other two priests here. To sum all of this up, then, I will be content if you will re-assign me as Asst. pastor of St. Patrick's, to care for the Newbury Mass during the summer, and I will resign said post of Sept. 1st if you wish it.

2.) With regard to remuneration; On February 17th, I was forcibly evicted from the rectory in Newport by your administrator. For the two months of February and March, until my relief on April 1st, -- during which time I stayed on the job doing my work, without roof over my head, never knowing where the next meal was coming from, I received no salary. I would say "Forget it." But I could use the money to meet my obligations incurred during that time of financial loss. I am not wealthy, and have payments to meet on car and house each month. The \$450.00 involved would go a long way

toward straightening out my affairs, and I do not feel that I am asking for something which is not justly owed to me. I ask that you direct your administrator in Newport to send me a check for 50.00.

And so, Bishop, if you are willing to do to me the minimum justice of meeting these two conditions as outlined above, I will consider that the honor of my people, and my own honor, has been adequately vindicated, and that adequate reparation has been made. If you are not willing to do this, then I will bear you no grudge -- I try to give every man the benefit of the doubt and to believe always that he is acting according to his own best lights. No, I will bear you no ill-will, but I will not work for you. I will continue to live as a silent witness to the truth of all the facts in this matter, and I am prepared to wait -- even years, if necessary -- until you, or your successor straightens things out.

During that potential interval, I would try to live according to the Gospel (and would probably suffer according to it) even though I could not preach it publicly. I would try to hold myself in readiness for the future, and try to do nothing which would impair my chance to preach again. Because, I have never for one day regretted that I am a priest, and I am absolutely convinced that this is what I ~~wanted~~ was cut out to do. And, although it is the most important thing in life to me, still, I would voluntarily abstain from it if the price I had to pay was human life and human dignity itself. A half-man cannot be a whole priest.

I must confess to you that my faith in you, and in the workings of the Church, has been sorely battered. But, my faith in the Lord is strong -- I believe that all things work to His purposes, ultimately. This conviction is what has sustained me through all of this period of trial. And, I believe that He is Lord of the future, and I believe in that future. I also want to believe that you are his sincere and devoted servant, and thus, I dare to hope that you will do His justice.

*Yours sincerely  
R. J. Deusmore*

P.S. With regard to ministry after September ~~1st~~ 1st, I have a few ideas, and a few reservations, but they are not clear in my mind yet. Could we not wait till then to tackle them??

April 30, 1969

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

Dear Father Densmore:

Father Hannigan has been to see me to apprise me of your discussions with him. I have also received your letter.

I feel that nothing really can be accomplished by correspondence and for that reason may I suggest that we get together and discuss the matter. Would you be kind enough to get in touch with Father Lapointe and arrange for a meeting which would be mutually convenient for both of us.

With prayerful good wishes, I remain

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

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Dear Bishop,

Thank you very much for your letter. Thank you, too, for reading my last letter.

I find it rather impossible to come to Manchester just now. I have to get up at six every morning to go to work - am working out-doors, and by nightfall, I am exhausted. I don't mind the work and I think it's doing me a lot of good - both physically and mentally. But, not having done this for so long, it's hard to get used to it, and it leaves me drained.

Besides, my car is falling apart, and I don't dare take it out-of-town. I would trade, but can't afford to just now.

You are right - little can be accomplished by writing. However, I wonder what good it would do to come down. Last time I came down, nothing happened for a month - and

then all the wrong things happened! 5575  
I have told you everything I can think  
of. Perhaps what you should do now is to  
talk with the Church of Newport. How you are  
to do that, I don't know - no doubt, you  
could develop a way.

Meanwhile, I am well, and would be  
glad to work again - as I outlined to you  
in last letter. Or, if you could think of a  
better solution, I'd be glad to consider it.

Bishop, if you're up this way, please  
feel free to stop in. I've got plenty of  
room, and you can stay as long as you want  
I'm on Route 114 - two miles north of Route 103

Yours sincerely,

Robt. J. Deansmore

Box 52

Bradford 03221

May 9, 1969

C  
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Y

Mrs. Muguette A. Saxby  
Main Street W.  
Bradford, New Hampshire 03221

Dear Mrs. Saxby:

Please excuse my delay in answering your letter of April 16. The past several weeks have been quite hectic and I am a little late in answering my correspondence.

Permit me to say that I was very much impressed by your letter. Your thoughts and comments were made in all Christian charity and with understanding and sympathy.

I appreciate the time you took from your busy schedule as the mother of a growing family to write to me. You may be assured that I will take your comments under serious consideration.

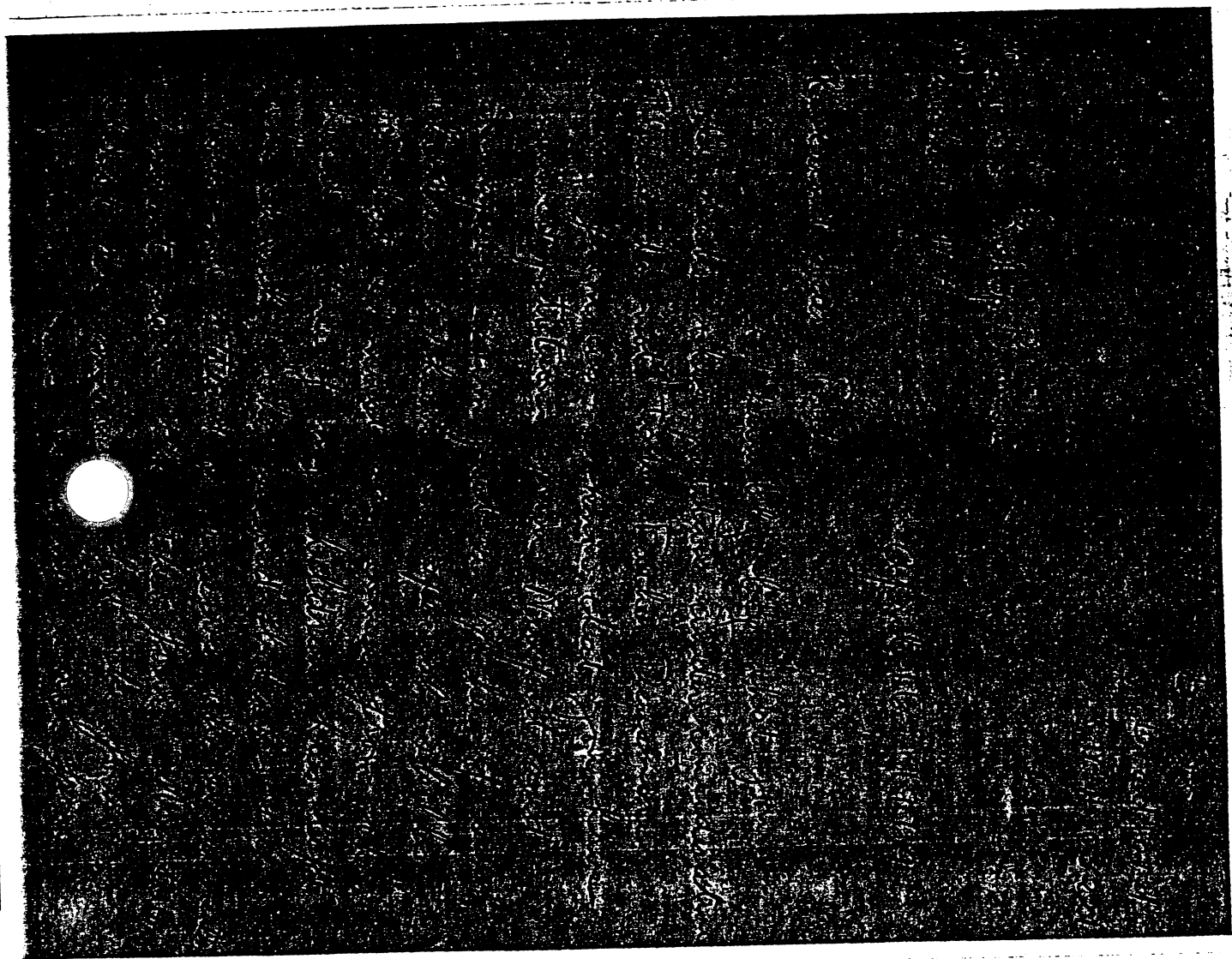
Please pray for me as I do daily for all those whose spiritual welfare has been entrusted to my care.

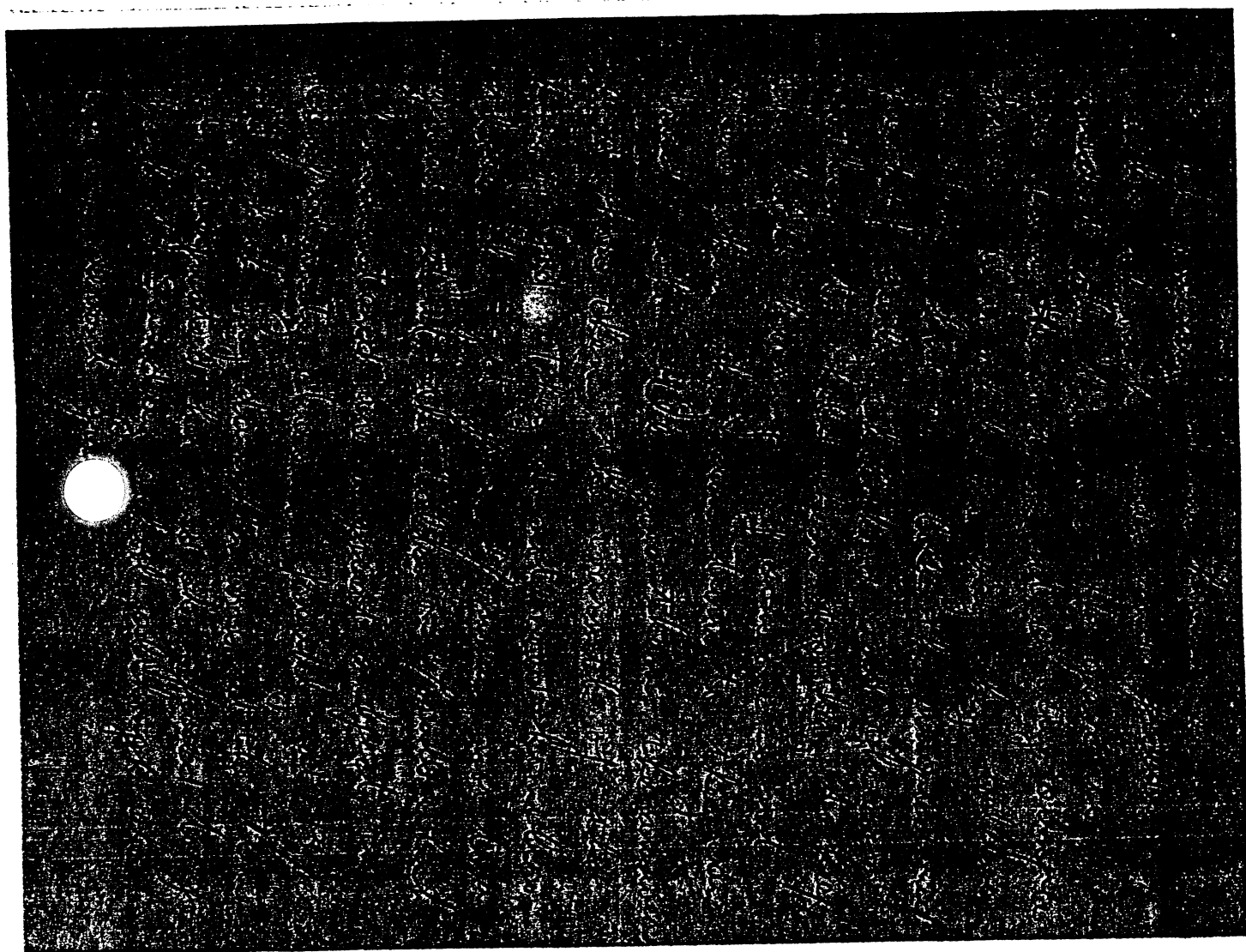
With every good wish and blessing to you and your family, I am

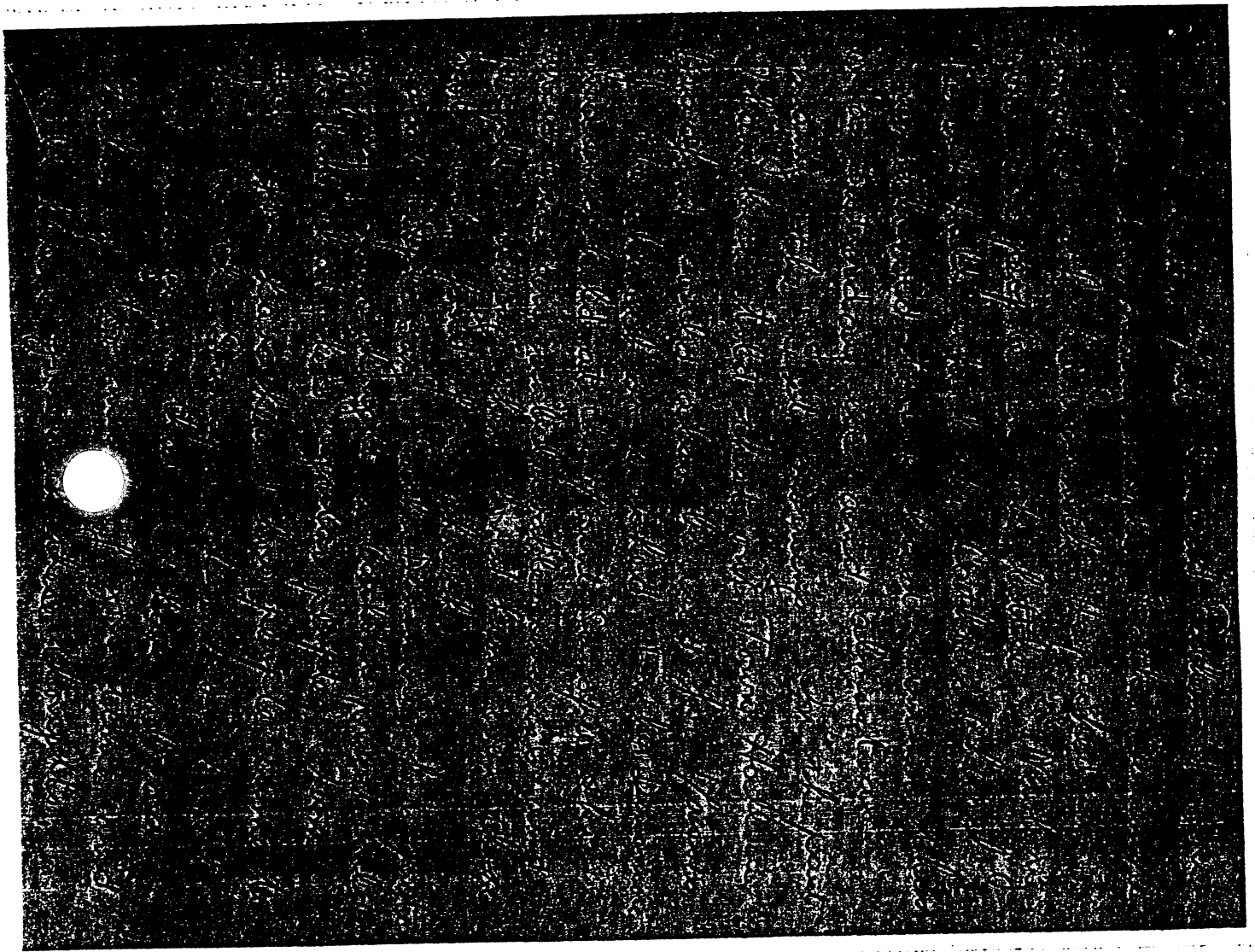
Cordially in Christ,

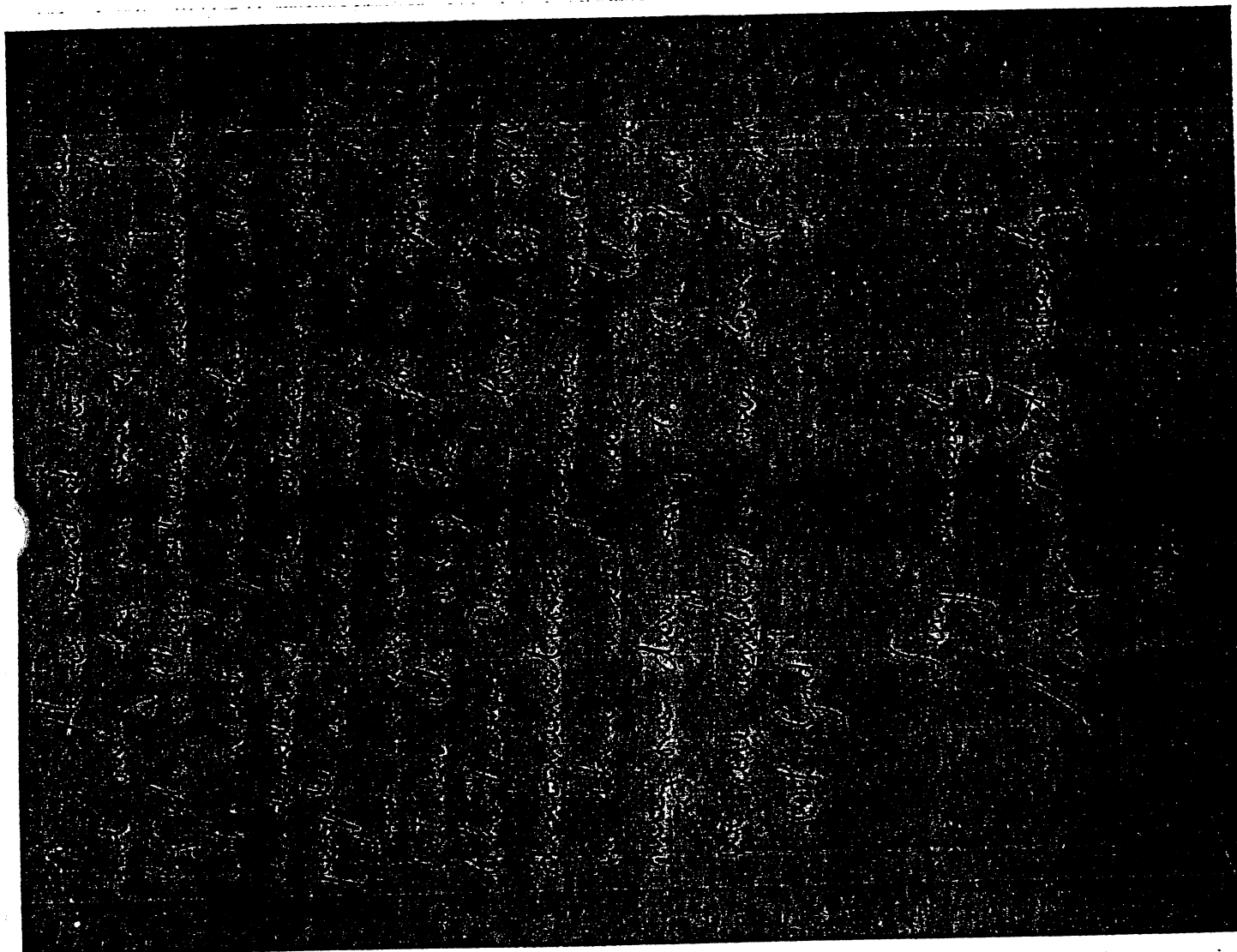
Bishop of Manchester











SPECIAL DELIVERY

May 23, 1969

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

Dear Father Densmore:

Bishop Primeau has asked me to make arrangements with you for an appointment on Monday morning at 11:00 to discuss your financial situation and the prospects of an appointment. If this is convenient for you, would you please contact me at your earliest convenience either at the Chancery Office, Telephone 669-3100 or at St. Mary's Rectory, Tel 622-4615. If it is not convenient for you, would you kindly contact me and make arrangements which will be convenient for you?

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Raymond G. Lapointe  
Assistant Chancellor

Thank you very much for your letter, which arrived today. Also, I will ask you to extend my thanks to the Bishop, whose interest in me, I am sure, was behind your writing to me.

I am sorry that it will not be possible for me to come down on Monday - I am working at that hour. And I will not suggest a time for my coming, because, as I have said before, I fail to see what good it would do.

You mentioned my financial situation. Since (~~May~~) April 1<sup>st</sup>, when I was replaced in Newport, I have been supporting myself. It is true that there is owed to me, in justice, two months' salary from St. Patrick's. But I venture to suggest that that will be forthcoming only when the Bishop directs his administrator in Newport to pay it. Since I do not write the checks, I cannot see what this has to do with me.

Besides, the money is not important - and I will

which is involved.

5583

Secondly, you mentioned "The prospects of an appointment." There is only one appointment for me, and that is reinstatement in the position which was taken from me - Asst. Pastor, St. Patrick's Newport. I made this clear to the Bishop, and I even suggested to him a way in which he could do it gracefully if he was not inclined to remove Fr. Donnelly. I believe I was quite insistent on this point at the time I wrote - and I feel this way even more so after what transpired in Newport last Sunday. The Bishop must be well aware of what his priests there did last Sunday - it was not "Christ sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father" who was preached. After the character assassination which was carried out against me last Sunday, my reinstatement in Newport becomes even more necessary to me than it was before - if it can be possible.

I sympathize deeply with the present plight of

regard to Newport; and I believe that he realizes<sup>5584</sup>  
"No one holds this against him - least of all I.  
He is only one man, with a huge far-flung Church  
to oversee, and mistakes will occur. However, what  
I believe is upsetting the people of Newport - and  
certainly upsetting me - is his refusal to rescind  
these mistakes, and do justice where injustice has  
been done. It is not hard to understand where  
the trouble lies. The people of Newport and I got  
a bad start from the start: As for poor Fr.  
Donnelly, he incited their contempt almost from  
the first week he came. And, Jimmy Maloney,  
I am told, is well on his way toward following  
in the other one's footsteps. So, you can see,  
it is only natural to understand why the Church of  
Newport is unhappy. If the Bishop still doesn't  
believe the truth of this, he has only to ask  
the people of Newport. I doubt he has done this,  
and, of course, I can understand how it would  
be hard for him to do so when no present lines



7  
With regard to Newport, I venture to suggest <sup>5585</sup> that The Bishop will continue to be troubled from that direction until he sees fit to remove from the backs of The people There the intolerable burden he has placed upon them - namely, the present administration there. But he - and only he - can do this. He put them there - it is he who must remove them. I have no part in this task.

With regard to myself, I have no desire to come to Manchester as "a man without a country." The day the Bishop sends me a letter stating that he once more recognizes me as Asst. Pastor of St. Patrick's, then I will come down - on my knees, if necessary. I will also - if he wishes - voluntarily resign the position, if he feels that it is in the best interests of the Church of Newport. All this I have told him. But unless - and until - this happens, I cannot see any advantage to anyone in my coming. Besides, I have to work hard to keep bread in my mouth, and I would find it difficult to travel

Much of anyone - these days.

5586

I am very small, very unimportant, very insignificant - but I am wielding the only weapon I possess - I guess you would call it a sort of non-violent non-compliance. But, it's all I've got. When I was in Newport, I tried to serve my people there by preaching, by teaching, by encouraging, by consoling, by sympathizing, by fraternizing, by helping, etc. Now, I can only serve by being alone, being lonely, being silent, and suffering. But I still believe that this, too, is a valid form of service, and that it will bear rich fruit in the end.

I know that you will share these thoughts with the Bishop, and I thank you again for writing. I wish you the joy and consolation of tomorrow's sea, throughout the coming week and always.

Sincerely,

Bob

May 24, 1969

The Most Reverend Ernest Primeau  
 Bishop of Manchester.  
 Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire  
 Manchester, New Hampshire

Dear Bishop Primeau,

I don't wish to add to what I know must be a distressing circumstance for you, but may I please take a few minutes of your time to respectfully ask that you review the situation at St. Patrick Parish in Newport?

Our parish is divided and disturbed by the recent events here which culminated in the transfer of Father Densmore from St. Patrick's. He is a priest who is loved, admired and respected in this small town. His warmth is one of his finest qualities--and he has many--and is the one which is most sorely missed at St. Patrick's. He has a genuinely loving approach to all people, he communicates well and easily with people of all ages and he has practical and progressive ideas that would greatly benefit our Church.

But Bishop, his great ability to reach people is most evident when he officiates at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. I wish I could accurately describe the wonderfully fine and happy feeling he inspires as he brings us the "good news of salvation" for those brief 50 minutes. Nineteen hundred years of holiness, beauty and tradition come alive for every person who participates in his Masses--he just makes one so very glad to be there.

I fervently hope that I'm not one of just a few who will write to you regarding Father Densmore. It is a sad and deplorable fact that many Catholics in large numbers are in fear and awe of their Church leaders--many have told me they simply don't dare to send a letter to you, despite their affection for Father Densmore and their desire to have him returned to St. Patrick's. I know, Bishop Primeau, there are great numbers of our parishioners who want Father back in Newport (and Sunapee).

Our parish needs Father Densmore--he accomplished so much that was good here during Father Hutchinson's long illness; his many attempts to bring the church to the people in diverse but always-loving ways were understood and appreciated by all with whom he came in contact.

I truly do thank you for reading this letter.

Sincerely yours,  
*Cecilia F. Wiggins*  
 Mrs. Frank Wiggins  
 Box 104, Guild, N.H.

June 2, 1969

Mrs. Frank Wiggins  
Box 104,  
Guild, New Hampshire

Dear Mrs. Wiggins:

I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 24 and the comments you made in all Christian charity.

I ask for your prayers since, undoubtedly, you realize the responsibility which has been entrusted to me as bishop of this particular section of the People of God. You may be certain that I pray for you, your family and all those I must lead to a greater love of God and neighbor.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

June 2, 1969

Mrs. Robert N. Bates  
153 Cheney Street  
Newport, - New Hampshire

Dear Mrs. Bates:

Please excuse my delay in answering your letter of May 7. The past several weeks have been quite hectic and I have had some difficulty in answering my correspondence.

You may be assured that I appreciate the comments you made in your letter, especially since they were made in all Christian charity.

I ask you for your prayers since, undoubtedly, you realize the responsibility which has been entrusted to me as bishop of this particular section of the People of God. You may be certain that I pray for you, your family and all those I must lead to a greater love of God and neighbor.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

153 Cheney St.  
Newport N. H.  
May 7, 1969

My dear Excellency,

I write this letter with some misgivings for fear you shall think me disrespectful of your handling of "our situation" here in Newport but my conscience will let me avoid writing no longer.

I and many others deplore the fact that our Father Benson is sitting idle. In this day and age when there is so much conflict, rebellion, and change, there is a deep and vital need for priests of Father B's caliber who can restore, with simple words at Mass, our being to some sort of order and give us renewed energy to pursue our battle in life.

You cannot possibly imagine the number of times I've gone

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Mass "in pieces" over personal  
 problems and come away whole  
 again with my inadequacies  
 made to seem unimportant after  
 listening to one of Father K's talks.  
 He reaches people and it is exactly  
 this type of spiritual leader we  
 need today. As a mother of six  
 ranging in age from 3 to 18 and  
 married to a non-Catholic my  
 needs are simple. I need to be  
 made whole again when I go to  
 Mass. The sacraments can make  
 soul whole but I also need to "be  
 reached" by my priest and confessor.  
 I don't feel we benefit much from  
 a sermon on the merits of giving  
 more generously to extra collection  
 for improvements although I  
 fully realize that some people do

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need to be reminded occasionally of  
 their financial duties to those who  
 are less well off. I can honestly say  
 that in my entire 39 years and  
 in the 16 years I've been a  
 communicant at St. Patrick's I've  
 never come in contact with another  
 priest who could restore my state of  
 mind (which borders on a state of  
 despair many times) so quickly and  
 make me feel worth while again.  
 Quite frankly and I'm afraid  
 this may be the general consensus  
 of opinion, I feel that Newport has  
 been sadly neglected over the years.  
 Whenever we've had a priest we  
 thought we were going to like he  
 was soon snatched away. This is no  
 to say that we haven't had good  
 priests but we have to be reached



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and if we are assigned shy, retiring types who perform their duties but cannot communicate what have we gained? Father Klenmore may have lacked the dignity of some who he first came, he may have seemed impulsive, he may have treated <sup>em</sup> subjects too lightly but with Father K. one learns to listen, to "hear" between the lines. He has much to say, this young man. His modesty and giving and sharing nature and the attentions and help particularly to the elderly and those in need is a pleasure to observe and highly commendable.

I've always been a firm and loyal supporter of all the tradition pomp and ritual of our Church but the Church has seen fit to

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dispense with much of it. We have  
 to accept these things whether we  
 want to or not because times change  
 and we must move with them.  
 We all have to attempt <sup>to</sup> understand  
 and cope if humanity is to survive.  
 The parents have a gigantic feat to  
 perform if we are to understand  
 and cope <sup>with</sup> our rebellious young these  
 days. It is not easy - I know -  
 yet we cannot banish them from  
 society at every turn, every time they  
 get out of line else they'd be in  
 banishment most of the time. I  
 feel you have similar problems -  
 young, intelligent, alive priests  
 who are in sympathy with the  
 times and perhaps with whom you  
 do not always agree. You too, have  
 to "cope". You have <sup>been</sup> blessed by God

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to minister to us with your wisdom.  
 Listen to us then. We get to know,  
 if we can, our priests quite well.  
 Instinctively we know, sometimes  
 very soon, who is right for us and  
 who isn't. Can you possibly know  
~~how~~ right Father H. was and is  
 for this community? We do not need  
 any more reserved, quiet, shy priests.  
 We need vibrant, friendly, sympe-  
 thetic priests who will help <sup>us</sup> rise  
 above our petty faults and find  
 our way to ~~being~~ being better brother  
 to each other. Can you possibly  
 know of the strides Father H. made  
 in bringing all of the churchmen  
 closer together? Can you possibly  
 know of his genuine interest in  
 the young people of this parish.  
 More than ever they need someone

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like Father R. who allows them to believe in themselves' and they respected him for it.

Father Maloney seems to be doing well here - I think he's going to be liked. Confidentially and respectfully I say this - I truly believe Father Kennelly would be better suited to organizational work. He hasn't yet managed to become closely affiliated with the parishioners here.

Please, I humbly beg you - give respect your undivided attention for a few moments. Come to see and hear for yourself. If you find you cannot give us back our Father R. please give us the satisfaction of knowing you have "coped" and that Father R. is back in "good grace".

once again and serving some "lucky"  
parish somewhere.

Sincerely, respectfully and  
humbly, your servant,

Jean Bates

(Mrs. Robert W. Bates.)

June 2, 1969

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Tarullo  
67 Beech Street  
Newport, New Hampshire 03773

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Tarullo:

I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 19 and the comments you made in all Christian charity.

I ask for your prayers since, undoubtedly, you realize the responsibility which has been entrusted to me as bishop of this particular section of the People of God. You may be certain that I pray for you, your family and all those I must lead to a greater love of God and neighbor.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

May 19, 1969

Dear Bishop:

First Sunday's announcement from the altar concerning Father Deansmore upset our family immensely.

We think highly of Father Deansmore and though the announcement made it known that Father Deansmore has failed his vows on two counts, being a human and having some pride he must feel somewhat justified for him to take this stand. His superior must have treated him without charity and tolerance. What the circumstances are we do not know.

If Father Donnelly cannot practice charity and tolerance toward his fellow man how can he expect us to listen to him and respect his sermons. This is not a healthy attitude for our parish and it is surprising that you people cannot realize this.

For us the proper Christian solution to this whole thing would have been to have gotten Father Donnelly and Father Deansmore together and had them both realize their wrongs whatever they might be and thus given them their chance to put into practice what their religion teaches us. This would have avoided all this bitterness which is mounting.

Father Deansmore has been tremendous for our children and we cannot afford to lose such a priest. Our hearts mingle right in with the children of today to help them work out their problems before these problems become too big and to help them keep their faith. He has the proper approach. He makes religion

a living thing and not something we practice  
because of fear.

My husband and I had to express  
ourselves at this time, because we do feel  
that this unhealthy situation should have  
been cleared up long before now.

Yours truly,  
Mrs Mrs Ernest Tarallo



June 2, 1969

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Pepin  
43 Pinnacle Road  
Newport, New Hampshire

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Pepin:

I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 21 containing your evaluation of certain remarks made from the pulpit in Newport on May 17 and 18.

I ask for your prayers since, undoubtedly, you realize the responsibility which has been entrusted to me as bishop of this particular section of the People of God. You may be certain that I pray for you, your family and all those I must lead to a greater love of God and Neighbor.

With every good wish, I am

Cordially in Christ,

Bishop of Manchester

May 21, 1969  
43 Pinnacle Rd  
Newport, R.I.

Most Rev. Primate:

We are writing you to tell you we were heart sick at what took place at our Saturday evening and Sunday Masses in Newport and Surry May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

Had we known that Father Donnelly and Father Maloney were going to stand on the altar before God only to discriminate, degrade and belittle our most beloved Father Robert Rensmore as they did, we never would have gone to church.

We have been Catholics for over fifty years and we have never

---

seen or heard anything like  
it.

If this is the way it's going  
to be we plan on staying  
home to pray, it's as simple  
as that.

God knows there's enough  
hate and discord in the world  
without having it prevail in  
our Parish.

Sincerely  
Mr. & Mrs. Leo Pepin

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