

August 19, 1954

His Excellency,
Most Reverend Thomas E. Molloy, S.T.D.
Archbishop - Bishop of Brooklyn
241 Clinton Avenue
Brooklyn 5, New York

Your Excellency:

Permit me respectfully to offer the following comments on the letter of August 17th that was sent to Your Excellency by Mr. Romano ("Ramon") J. Ferraro of 8158 Bay 16th Street, Brooklyn 14.

He has expressed a strong desire to enter First Philosophy at the Seminary in September, 1954, and he has expressed an equally strong reluctance to pursue his philosophical studies at a Catholic College outside the Seminary. According to the fourth paragraph of his letter, he seems to think that he is qualified to enter the Seminary at this time merely because he has been informed that Philosophy is given in English in the Seminary. It may be true that most, if not all, the lectures are given in English. It is equally true that some of the textbooks may be in English. However, I believe that the majority of the textbooks are in Latin.

This student is now 20 years of age. He was first interviewed by me on November 3, 1952. He stated that his parents were married only civilly and that they separated about 1938. The father would now be about 67 years of age and the mother about 60 years of age. They are both apparently Italian Catholics. The candidate resides with his mother. The father resides in the vicinity. The candidate does not know whether or not his father goes to Church. There are 10 children in the family. No reconciliation seemed possible in 1952 and neither parent had remarried.

At the time of this interview in 1952 this candidate presented a letter from his Pastor, Monsignor Scanlan, of St. Finbar's Parish, in which he recommended him as having excellent spir-

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August 19, 1954

itual qualifications. He then added rather adroitly: "I am not sufficiently acquainted with his mental abilities or with certain other aspects of his family history to speak of them here. But I have urged ... him to be utterly frank with Your Reverence." I assume that the points that Monsignor Scanlan was reluctant to investigate or report were developed during my interview of the candidate.

On June 18, 1954 Monsignor Scanlan issued another letter of recommendation for the candidate. He stated: "I have always believed that he has a vocation to a religious life. I have not known whether it is to the Holy Priesthood."

The candidate attend public elementary school and New Utrecht Public High School from which he graduated in January, 1952. For the next 8 months he worked locally as a mail clerk. During the summer of 1952 he attended Erasmus Hall High School and in an accelerated program he took First-Year High School Latin. In September, 1952 he entered St. Francis College, Brooklyn. During that scholastic year he attended Washington Irving Evening High School for Second-Year High School Latin. At the end of the year he passed the Regents Two-Year High School Latin examination.

During his Sophomore Year at St. Francis College from September, 1953 to June, 1954, he had one year of Latin and one year of Greek.

On June 22, 1954 during an interview at The Chancery I pointed out to him that he had had only three years of Latin and that the usual minimum requirement for a candidate for First Philosophy was approximately five years of Latin (although the Cathedral College graduates have six year of Latin.) Accordingly I recommended that he continue his studies at St. Francis College where he might take formal Latin courses together with his Philosophy courses. I pointed out that such formal Latin courses are not given at the Seminary, and that he could be more successful in Philosophy at St. Francis College and better prepare himself there in Latin to qualify for admission to First Theology in 1956.

His transcript from St. Francis College on June 28, 1954 shows that he completed Sophomore Year successfully with 65 credits and that his average was between "B" and "C". His Latin mark was "D" in the Second Semester of the 1952-1953 scholastic year and "C" in each semester of the 1953-1954 scholastic year.

August 19, 1954

As indicated above, the candidate cannot, without dispensations, be admitted to the Seminary (Canon 1363, §1) and later be admitted to Holy Orders (Canon 984, n.1).

In the testimonial letter from St. Francis College he is rated as "Recommended."

Last week Mr. Ferraro called me on the telephone and told him that he had just completed an accelerated summer course at Fordham and would receive the equivalent of one year's credit in Latin. During our interview on June 22 when I told him that he had had only three years of Latin, he did not tell me that he planned or hoped to have the equivalent of another year of Latin by August 15th. He admitted this when I brought it to his attention in our telephone conversation. At any rate, he still has only the equivalent of four years of Latin.

Thereupon he contended that his application was equivalent to that of James Leone of St. Francis College who has been accepted by Your Excellency for First Philosophy at Huntington. However, I find that Mr. Leone has a somewhat better record than Mr. Ferraro. Mr. Leone speaks Italian fairly fluently and some French. He attended St. Augustine's High School for four years. He had two years of Latin during his High School course; one and one-half years during his College course; and the equivalent of one year in the accelerated summer course at Fordham University during the summer of 1954. This gives him a total of four and one-half years of Latin. He also had one year of Greek. In the testimonial letter from St. Francis College he was rated as "Highly Recommended." His average was between "B" and "C". (Mr. Ferraro also has some facility at speaking Italian).

I do not know why Mr. Ferraro is so reluctant to return to College, and why he is so insistent that his Philosophy studies should be made in the Seminary. I suggested that he might apply to Niagara University or even to Niagara Seminary without adoption. I believe that I also suggested that he might apply to St. Bonaventure Seminary without adoption. (Recently Doctor Plassmann telephoned The Chancery to ask whether this Diocese intended to send any more students to St. Bonaventure Seminary where there still are several reservations pending.) I told him that he might apply to this Diocese again in 1956 when he would have completed his Philosophy studies and would have taken another year or two of formal Latin courses. This would seem to be the recommendation to be given to him at this time in view of the fact that his own pastor cannot decide whether he has a vocation to the Holy Priesthood. Perhaps closer supervision over this

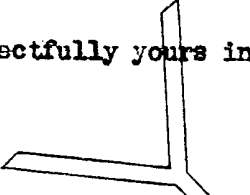
Archbishop Molloy - 4

August 19, 1954

candidate at a Seminary or a boarding college would help to settle this doubt insofar as the Diocese is concerned.

I remain, Your Excellency,

Respectfully yours in Christ,



JOHN J. HENEGHAN
VICE - CHANCELLOR

JJH/mg

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