

Tuesday, July 9, 1996

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Clayton Emmer
6321 Yosemite Avenue
Excelsior, MN 55331

Dear Archbishop Flynn:

It was good to see you at the Couple-to-Couple League Convention at Bethel College a couple of weeks ago. I appreciated your homily on vocation as well as your presence at the Convention during the morning.

Before Mass, I was anxious to try to get an opportunity to speak with you about life at the seminary. Ever since the beginning of May, when I began to reconnect with the seminary, I have wanted to speak with you about my own experience of Saint Paul Seminary and some very troubling things I perceive to be happening in the institution. When I spoke with you briefly at the Convention, however, I suddenly felt at peace about the whole situation and did not feel I needed to speak to you immediately about seminary life. I had the sense that you were aware of the struggles going on in the seminary community and that things were going to be okay. I cannot tell you what peace that has given me. You have a very calming presence, akin, I imagine, to the presence of Christ for the apostles.

Nevertheless, I wanted to write to you to share my thoughts and observations about Saint Paul Seminary. I understand that you took the time this spring to sit down with every seminarian studying for the Archdiocese for a personal interview. Since I was on leave-of-absence, I did not meet with you, but I would like to write you a letter as a way of offering some comments. I don't believe I will be telling you much of anything new, but for my own sake, I am writing to you.

I have been working on a letter for nearly two weeks now, but have not yet completed it. My best guess is that I will need another week before I will find the time to finish it. In the meantime, I have decided not to wait until the letter is complete before sending you a book that I recently picked up. The book—written by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and entitled *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today*—has been a helpful resource for me as I try to understand what is happening in the seminary and the diocese. To be honest, I have not yet read the whole book, but I began by reading the epilogue entitled "Party of Christ or Church of Jesus Christ?" For me, this epilogue serves as a wonderful examination of conscience, one to which I know I will need to return again and again.

At any rate, I offer it to you for your reflection.

Congratulations on receiving the pallium from the Holy Father in Rome recently. I hope your time in Rome was personally and spiritually refreshing for you. Be assured of my prayers for you and your intentions as you continue to serve this Archdiocese.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Clayton Emmer
Theology II

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

226 Summit Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-2197

Office of the Archbishop

August 12, 1996

Clayton Emmer
6321 Yosemite Avenue
Excelsior, MN 55331

Dear Clayton,

How pleased I was to have received your letter of July 9, 1996. I also express gratitude to you for giving me the book written by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and entitled Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today.

Clayton, I apologize for being so late in responding to you. However, I was on vacation and then I gave a retreat to the priests of Davenport. I am just now getting to my mail.

I would appreciate it if you would call Mert Lassonde at 291-4408 and get some time when it would be convenient for you to come in and sit down with me for a visit. I would like that very much. I would certainly reflect on any comments that you might have which might be helpful. But I would want you to know that as a seminarian studying for this Archdiocese I will be most respectful to any suggestions you might have.

You honored me by writing to me and I am grateful.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Flynn

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

8/19
Called Mert Lassonde
Pls call in
Jan. when
you return.