

February 23, 2004

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information, Contact:

Bud Bunce (503) 233-8373

bbunce@archdpdx.org

Statement Concerning Father Baccellieri lawsuit

The Archdiocese of Portland has learned of lawsuits alleging sexual abuse by Father Joseph A. Baccellieri 30 years ago. Since 1992, the Archdiocese has had no reports of misconduct by Father Baccellieri with minors or others. Father has been a faithful and productive priest since his return to ministry in 1994 and subsequent retirement.

About twelve years ago, the Archdiocese first became aware of allegations against Father Baccellieri concerning incidents with teenage males dating back to the 1970's. These men wished their names to remain confidential, but came to us through their attorney. At that time Archbishop William Levada took immediate action by removing Father Baccellieri from ministry. He was placed on leave for counseling and intensive therapy. After two years of therapy and after consultation with his therapists, Father Baccellieri was allowed to return to ministry on a limited basis, with close supervision, in 1994. The conditions of his limited ministry included:

- continuous counseling and therapy;
- regular reporting by his therapist to the Archdiocese;
- close monitoring by the Archdiocese;
- limitations on ministry activities; and
- residence outside a parish setting or under the vigilance of other priests familiar with his situation.

--- More ---

We believe Father Baccellieri shows that one can deal with serious problems and move beyond the past to become a stronger, better person. Father confronted his problems, dealt with them and served productively an additional eight years in closely supervised ministry.

During the past twelve years, Father Baccellieri's status has been reviewed on an ongoing basis. When Archbishop John G. Vlazny arrived in December 1997, he reviewed all clergy files. Archbishop Vlazny allowed Father Baccellieri to continue in his limited ministry because of consistently positive reports on Father Baccellieri from his therapists and others. The Archdiocese received no reports of any inappropriate behavior with minors by Father Baccellieri since his return to ministry in 1994.

Despite its positive evaluation of Father Baccellieri, the Archdiocese's involvement in cases relating to child abuse in decades past caused Archbishop Vlazny to reevaluate various policies and practices. In July 2001, Archbishop asked Father Baccellieri to study Canon (Church) Law at Catholic University. In July of 2002, after the United States Catholic Bishops decided upon a policy of "one strike and you're out," Father Baccellieri, who was in ill health at the time, was retired.

As Archbishop Vlazny wrote to his people last week: "I assure you once more of my commitment: to promote healing and reconciliation with victims of child sexual abuse; to effectively respond to allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Archdiocesan personnel; to ensure compliance with the procedures we bishops adopted in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*; and to protect the faithful in the future."

###

PERSONAL RECORD OF REV.

Joseph
Baccellieri
(First Name)

Anthony
(Middle Name)

Baccellieri
Joseph
(Family Name)

(CONFIDENTIAL)

Father's Name Frank Baccellieri

Mother's (Maiden) Name Marianna Ferrante

Birth Date and Place July 6, 1940 Portland, Oregon

Present Citizenship United States of America

If Naturalized, Date and Place _____

Seminary High School—Dates and Places graduated from Central Catholic High School 1958.

College—Dates and Places Mt. Angel Seminary College, 1958-1962; St. Benedict, Ore.

Seminary—Dates and Places St. Thomas Seminary, 1962-1966; Kenmore, Wash.

Post-Graduate Work—Dates and Places University of Portland, 1966-1975
Portland, State Univ. 1967, 1970

Degrees—Dates and Places BA Phil, 1962, St. Benedict; MA Education 1975, Portland.

Ordination—Date and Place May 11, 1966 — 5/14/66 according to records.

Ordaining Prelate Most Rev. Edward D. Howard, DD

Ordained for What Archdiocese or Community Portland in Oregon

If Incardinated in Archdiocese of Portland, Date _____

If Not Incardinated, Date of Arrival in Archdiocese _____

What Foreign Languages Can You Speak? Italian, Spanish.

Name and Address of Nearest Relative or Friend _____

List of Ecclesiastical Dignities and Date of Reception none

State Any Special Work or Assignment and Give Dates Director, Central Catholic High school, March 1, 1975

*Migration from
Central March 1, '78*

TO: File

FROM: P. Peri

RE: Attached

I spoke with this woman by phone. The issues seem to boil down to Fr. Baccellieri making a personnel decision that she and certain others do not approve. Apparently Fr. B. did not rehire the Sister, Lynn Marie, as principal and that is the central issue.

I told the woman that I would speak to Fr. B. about the letter if she would allow me to use her and her husband's name. She said no. She just wanted the AB to know the situation in the parish.

I told her that I would not intervene in the situation because the hiring of personnel is a local issue.

I encouraged her to try and be reconciled with Fr. B. rather than making a fight in the parish.

2/2/86

**HUMAN RESOURCE MOTIVATION
SMALL BUSINESS AND INDIVIDUALS**

Portland, Oregon 97232

April, 1986 APR. 21 1986

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri
1260 NE 132nd Ave.
Portland, OR 97230

re: St. Therese Parish, Portland, Or.

Dear Father Joe:

It is with mixed emotions that I have just finished reading your letter of April 11, 1986. Without any reservations, your leaving St. Therese Parish is clearly our loss. After having had the opportunity to work closely with you for the past three years, I believe I have gotten to know you quite well as both a very professional pastor and close personal friend. In you, I have found a man who is dedicated to his work. One who only has the best interests of his Church and Parish in his heart. You have given this assignment all you have to give, and we have benefited by your integrity, dedication, and compassion for your fellow human beings. In my view, you represent the best our Church and Archdiocese of Portland has to offer in its clergy. It is unfortunate, however, that many with whom you were required to work with were incapable of responding to your efforts in like manner.

Yes, my heart is heavy with this news. Yet I recognize it as a selfish emotion. Your efforts and accomplishments while serving as Pastor of St. Therese have made us all proud. I only regret that your leadership will be unavailable to us as we strive to complete many of the projects and goals you have initiated. Yet, at the same time, I honestly feel that the good Lord has recognized your efforts, and, as part of His master plan for you, has decided it is time for you to take the next step. It is with this thought in mind that the dominant part of my emotions surface.

As our Pastor, you have taught and reinforced our belief that ours is a compassionate and loving God. I think He is proving you right once again. I believe that through this reassignment he is rewarding you for a job well done. He is giving you the opportunity to step back, breathe in new and fresh air and to refresh and renew your spirit, humor, and enthusiasm in order to more properly prepare you for the new task ahead. I hope and pray that during this transitional period you will be able to capitalize on this opportunity for refreshment. You have earned it!

continued

PD0003PA

page two
Father Baccellieri

You stated in your letter that a greater need for your services has been recognized at St. Mary's. Here again, the compassion of Our Lord is evident. He has acknowledged that need and has found a way to fill it. I predict it will not take long for the new parish to recognize their good fortune.

Good luck in your future endeavors, my friend. YOU will be missed! Please know that you are in my prayers throughout the years to come.

With warmest personal regards,

JH;m
cc: Archbishop of Portland
April 17, 1986

PD0004PA

St. Therese of the Child Jesus

CONFIDENTIAL

Church and School

1260 N.E. 132ND AVENUE
PORTLAND, OREGON 97230
TELEPHONE 256-5850

MAR 22 1986

CONFIDENTIAL

March 19, 1986

Rev. Paul Peri
Personnel Director
2838 E. Burnside
Portland, Oregon 97207

Dear Paul,

This letter is to confirm our telephone conversation of March 13 and 17th. 1986.

When you first called me, I understood you to say that no one had applied for S. Mary's parish in Eugene and that you wanted to know if I would be open to discuss the subject. You also felt that I had qualities which would be of benefit to that parish. I replied that I was not seeking another parish and that due to the events which had just occurred in S. Therese eg. the reassignment of the principal (in which I have had to undergo criticism etc.), plus the area school study which would require someone to guide and oversee its proper development, I felt it was not in the best interests of the the parish for me to consider a move. Also, a move could be interpreted by parishoners as my running away from a sticky situation which presently exists.

I also added that I would not apply for a parish, but in the event the Archbishop would assign me to S. Mary's, I would accept and obey him, as I promised I would do at the time of ordination. I also stated that I wanted to go on record that I no longer wanted to be in a parish which had a school. I have spend 12 years at Central Catholic and 8 years at S. Therese, and had had enough of administering Catholic schools. I would like to spend my next 20 years in pastoral efforts, not administration of schools. You told me St. Mary's did not have a school as such but a special area school arrangement.

On March 17, 1986 I returned your call and said basically that my position had not changed. However, since I was going to the ACCW convention April 5th, I would stay at S. Mary's and talk to Fr. Kies. We also discussed associates and the problem of confidentiality with regard to the possibility of my moving and the effect it may have on the parish at this time. I also restated my position with regard to not applying and yet obeying my bishop. I also discussed with you that this move in no way involved removing me from the parish due to the unpleasant circumstances of the past two months, and you assured me that definitely this was not the case. I would call you after I returned from Eugene, and then the Archbishop would inform me of his decision.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Joseph Baccellieri
Rev. Joseph Baccellieri

PD0005PA

St. Therese of the Child Jesus

Church and School

1260 N.E. 132ND AVENUE
PORTLAND, OREGON 97230
TELEPHONE 256-5850

July 1, 1986

Archbishop Cornelius Power
2838 East Burnside
Portland, Oregon 97214

Dear Archbishop Power,

On March 19, 1986 I wrote Fr. Paul Peri, the personnel director a letter, in which I stated that "I wanted to go on record that I no longer wanted to be in a parish that had a school." At this time I want to underscore that statement. I would also go further and state that I would not even want a parish that had an area school. I cannot emphasize the seriousness of this enough; after having served 20 years in school situations, 12 at Central and 8 at St. Therese.

I realized that I was almost moved this year to a parish that had an area school, and it was quite upsetting. I did agree to go under obedience to you as my Archbishop; and only under those terms did I agree to go. I hope that was made perfectly clear.

If I were to be moved into a parish with a school or with an area school, at this time in my life, I would not be able to predict what might happen to me emotionally or even perhaps physically. I feel that emotionally, if I had to undergo the crises which schools present, I might just break. I don't feel that would help the church or myself. This past year has been nothing less than traumatic, with people writing you, and some leaving the school and parish and my good name slandered.

If my future holds catholic schools in it, then I am obliged to do something about my future in order to preserve myself. Perhaps, I would have to consider other types of priestly ministries in the diocese, perhaps I would have to spend a year in a sabbatical, I really don't know. But the future would not bode well.

I will be making a special retreat this year; God the Holy Spirit will guide me. I know that with your prayers and support, I will be able to continue to labor in the Lord's house. This coming year could be a difficult one, with the reorganization process taking place, but I have a strong support group here, an excellent staff and many loyal friends. I do not foresee serious difficulties for this coming year. If I do feel extreme pressure, I will let you know, back off a bit to recuperate, if necessary and finish this year.

Your servant in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Baccellieri
Father Joseph Baccellieri

cc. Fr. Paul Peri

July 10, 1986

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri
1260 N.E. 132d Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97230

Dear Father Baccellieri:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 1st, in which you state clearly that any future appointment should be to a parish without a parochial school, or even an area school. I note that a copy of your letter was to be mailed to Father Paul Peri, Personnel Director, and I am sure that he will keep your letter on record so that any future assignment will respect your wishes.

I personally realize that you are totally dedicated to Catholic education, both at the high school level and the elementary level, and I also recognize that you have had some unique and unusual problems at St. Therese School during the 1985-86 school year. I hope the latter will not be repeated in the future. I foresee smoother waters up ahead.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes, I remain

Fraternally yours in Christ,

+Cornelius M. Power
Apostolic Administrator



COPY

Wilsonville, Oregon
97070

August 11, 1992

Rev. Charles Lienert
Vicar for Clergy
2838 E. Burnside
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

Dear Fr. Lienert,

My wife and I just returned from a trip East and discovered upon our return that our Pastor, Rev. Joseph Baccellieri has taken a leave of absence.

I understand that communicating with Fr. Joe directly, is not at this time permissible, however as an old friend (Fr. taught two of my sons at Central Catholic) I would really appreciate you contacting him and offer him our sincerest best wishes and hopes for a speedy recovery. Also please tell him that he will be in our prayers as always.

When at a future date it will be permitted to contact Fr. Joe personally, I would truly appreciate a note from someone alerting me to that fact.

Thank you Father for your consideration regarding this.

Sincerely,

EXECUTIVE APPROVAL OF SICK LEAVE

I hereby grant the indicated leave to the

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri

Latest Assignment St. Francis, Sherwood

Date of Approval 2-24-93

+ William J. Levada
Most Reverend William J. Levada

Sick Leave

1) Effective Date January 1, 1993

2) Period of Leave ~~Indefinite~~ 6 months/review

3) Compensation (check where appropriate) NOTE: First two months are obligation of parish/institution*:
19 and 19

X Monthly Salary Amount \$1,038.09

N/A Car Allowance Amount _____

X Room and Board @ \$ _____ per month To be negotiated

X Health Insurance Amount _____

X Retirement Premium Amount _____

Other This will be in effect until Fr. Baccellieri finds a secular job.

*c.f. Personnel Manual, Ch. XIV, I, B

Copies: Original - Priest's Personnel File
Archbishop
Director of Business Affairs
Controller
Vicar for Clergy Personnel



COPY

Vicar For Clergy

MEMORANDUM

TO: Archbishop Levada
FROM: Father Charles Lienert
SUBJECT: Father Joseph Baccellieri Working with Father Frank Knusel
DATE: August 24, 1993

I met with Father Frank Knusel and Father Joe Baccellieri to follow up on the idea I had presented to you of Father Baccellieri helping Father Knusel with the financial administration at St. Patrick.

Both of them are agreeable to have Father Baccellieri assist with the finances in the parish. We determined four immediate tasks with which Father Baccellieri could assist.

- 1) Prepare all the material necessary for the pending Archdiocesan audit.
- 2) Prepare the financial reports requested by the Archdiocese.
- 3) Review the current accounting systems and set up a chart of accounts for a double entry accounting system in accordance with our administrative manual.
- 4) Do an inventory of the property of the parish.

Father Knusel agrees that all of these items would be very helpful to the parish. Father Baccellieri will meet sometime this week with Father Knusel at the parish to go over the physical location of records and so forth. He will also speak with Rex Ryan about what is needed for the audit and Larry Van Dyke about the reports required by the Archdiocese. He will begin actually working on these projects after September 10.

I asked Father Baccellieri to keep track of the amount of time his work at St. Patrick takes. I told him we would continue to pay his salary and would reimburse him for mileage traveling to and from St. Patrick. He asked me about housing allowance, and I told him that we were still working on a policy. Father Knusel said the parish could not afford to contribute anything.

CJL:gg

Monastery of Our Sorrowful Mother

8840 N.E. Skidmore Street

Portland, Oregon 97220

August 24, 1992

Archdiocese of Portland
Pastoral Center
2838 E. Burnside
Portland, Oregon

CHARGES FOR FR. JOSEPH BACCELLIERI

Room and Board from July 29 to August 24, 1992

26 days at \$40 per day \$1,040.00

Room
Three meals per day
Refreshments and full kitchen access
Laundry
Telephone

OK CJA

Please make payment to: **Grotto Monastery**

Sent to Linda 9/5/92



A Place of Solitude, Peace, and Prayer

The National Sanctuary of Our Sorrowful Mother

Staffed By The Order of The Servants of Mary • Post Office Box 20008 • Portland, Oregon • 97220 • Office: (503) 254-7371

AUG 25 1992

August 25, 1992

Rev. Charles Lienert
Vicar for Clergy
Archdiocese of Portland

Dear Chuck,

As you requested, I am sending your the bill for
Fr. Joseph Baccellieri's stay at the Grotto Monastery.
If you have any questions please let me know.

I am also sending you a copy of our "fees" for the use
of our facilities for your information.

Hope Joe was happy with his stay with us.

With best regards,

Fr. Jack Topper, O.S.M.
Executive Director

PD0013PA

Tualatin, OR 97062

August 31, 1992

Reverend Charles Lienert
2838 East Burnside Street
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

Dear Fr. Lienert,

I am a parishioner at St. Francis Parish in Sherwood. Yesterday there appeared in the Sunday bulletin a request to send a "cheery" note to our pastor Fr. Joe who is on sick leave right now. I've been thinking of writing one but do not know what to say since we, his parishioners have been told nothing about his health problem or how he's doing. This has really bothered me. If we are his community and his family and are asked to care then it is our right to know something about what he is going through. Up to now, we have received no updates. We've been asked to pray which I do, but it is hard to keep praying when we do not know if our prayers are being answered. I understand his right to privacy, but I also understand my right to be included in this if we are indeed family. It's hard to care when we are kept on the outside and not included. I pray that you will prayerfully consider including us and let us know, his family, what is wrong and just how he is progressing. It is my belief that we as a parish are very frustrated about this. I also believe Fr. Joe will receive much more support from parishioners if they know what is wrong and are given updates as to his condition. Please consider this request and if there is a reason why this cannot be done, I would like those reasons outlined to me by letter. I care but do not know how to respond. Thank You.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

PD0014PA

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri
3803 N.E. Hassalo St.
Portland, OR 97232
December 14, 1993

Rev. Chuck Lienert
Pastoral Center
Portland, OR 97214

DEC 14 1993

Dear Chuck,

This letter is to let you know that the four goals that were established regarding my work at St. Patrick's Parish, Portland, have been met. As per our meeting with Fr. Knusel on August 24, 1993 the four following goals were established:

1. Prepare current reports requested by the Archdiocese
2. Prepare the parish for the audit
3. Review the current accounting and financial reporting system and set up a standard chart of accounts, using the Archdiocesan finance package for parishes found in the administrative manual.
4. Prepare a complete inventory of the Church, rectory, hall.

As mentioned above, these items are complete. I have been working in concert with Rex Ryan.

If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know, and I would be happy to meet with you.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri

Rev. Joseph Baccellieri

COPY

Vicar For Clergy



December 20, 1993

Reverend Joseph Baccellieri
3803 N.E. Hassalo St.
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Joe:

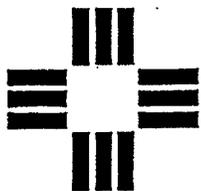
Thank you for your good work at St. Patrick Parish. Rex Ryan told me that you have been very helpful preparing the parish for an internal audit. I only hope that Frank will be able to carry out what you have set up for him. I will keep in touch.

Have a Merry Christmas!

Sincerely yours,

Reverend Charles J. Lienert
Vicar for Clergy

CJL:gg



ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

COPY

Office of the Archbishop

June 15, 1994

Reverend Joseph Baccellieri
4055 S.E. Salmon St.
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Father Baccellieri:

With this letter I am pleased to appoint you parochial vicar in the parish of St. Matthew Parish, Hillsboro, Oregon. This appointment is effective July 1, 1994, for a period of three years in accordance with our archdiocesan clergy personnel policies and the provisions of Canon Law. (Cf. Clergy Personnel Manual, Ch. VI, Sec. VI.)

By reason of this appointment you will possess all the faculties required to fulfill your new office. Enclosed you will find a copy of the Archdiocesan faculties for pastors and parochial vicars.

You will be expected to undertake the duties and responsibilities as well as enjoy the rights and privileges accorded parochial vicars as outlined in the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law (Cf. Canons 545-552), Archdiocesan clergy personnel policy, official letters and approved custom.

Asking God's blessings upon you and your work in your new assignment, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend William J. Levada
Archbishop of Portland

WJL:gg

cc: Reverend Carl Flach

Hillsboro, OR
(Washington Co.)
Argus
(Cir. 3xW. 13,831)

JUL 21 1994

832 New pastor joins Catholic church

The Rev. Joe Baccellieri, new assistant pastor at St. Matthew Catholic Church, says he hopes to be present in the community and assist people in a prayerful way.

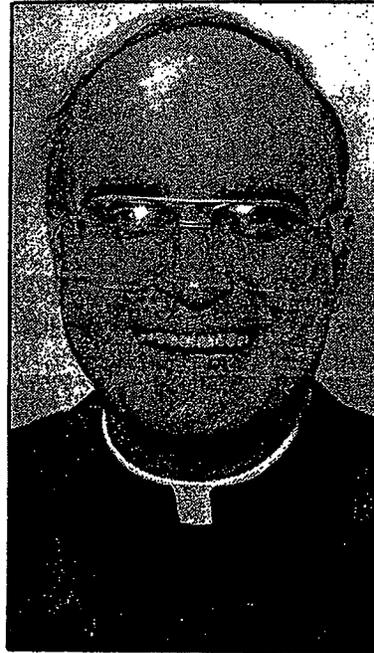
Baccellieri joined St. Matthew July 1. He pastored for the previous four years at St. Francis in Sherwood and St. Cyril in Wilsonville, as well as serving a Tualatin parish.

A native Oregonian, Baccellieri was born and raised in Portland and graduated from Central Catholic High School. He later came back to Central Catholic, where he was a teacher for nine years and a principal for three years.

He also served as pastor of St. Therese in northeast Portland for 10 years.

Baccellieri holds a bachelor's degree from Mt. Angel Seminary, a divinity degree from St. Thomas Seminary in Seattle and a master's in education from the University of Portland.

His duties with St. Matthew will include hospital and nursing home ministries and weekend duties, as well as preaching, serving at masses and offi-



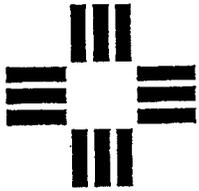
JOE BACCELLIERI

ciating at weddings and baptisms.

Baccellieri takes the place of Dino Montiero, who is now pastor of St. Boniface in Sublimity.

St. Matthew serves about 1,400 families, under the direction of the Rev. Carl Flach.

COPY



ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

Office of the Archbishop

June 9, 1995

Reverend Joseph Baccellieri
Austin House
4055 S.E. Salmon St.
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Father Baccellieri:

With this letter, I am pleased to notify you of your appointment as co-pastor of Holy Cross, Assumption, Queen of Peace and Blessed Sacrament Parishes. You are appointed as one of a team of priests assigned to these parishes in solidum in accordance with Canon 517, Par. 1. Father Cathal Brennan is pastor and moderator of the team. In accordance with the same Canon, it is the responsibility of the moderator to direct the combined activity of the team and answer for it to the Archbishop. This appointment will be effective July 1, 1995, for a period of six years and is renewable once, in accord with our archdiocesan clergy personnel policies and the provisions of Canon Law. (Cf. Clergy Personnel Manual, Ch. IV, Sec. VI; Can. 522.)

By this appointment you assume the duties and responsibilities and enjoy the rights and the privileges accorded to co-pastors on a team of priests, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law (Cf. Canons 517, Par. 1, 542 and 543), official letters and approved custom. The special faculties for co-pastors in the Archdiocese are enclosed.

Please make an appointment to see me to make your Profession of Faith and Oath of Office. We will plan an installation which will be suited to the unique needs of the North Portland Catholic Community.

As you are no doubt already aware, Canon 534 requires that all pastors offer the Missa pro populo on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The obligation, however, is to apply one Mass for all the people in the four parishes entrusted to the pastoral team (Canon 543, Par. 2). In accordance with Canon 543, Par. 2, you are to establish through common counsel an arrangement by which one of the three priests on the team will be responsible for the Missa pro populo on each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation.

Praying God's blessings upon you and your work in your new assignment, I remain

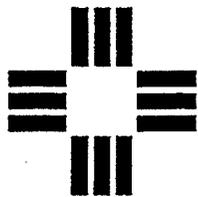
Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend William J. Levada
Archbishop of Portland

cc: Reverend Cathal Brennan

2838 E. Burnside Street, Portland, Oregon 97214-1895 503/234-5334

PD0019PA



ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

COPY

Office of the Archbishop

June 4, 1998

Reverend Joseph Baccellieri
Assumption Parish
7506 N. Smith St.
Portland, OR 97203

Dear Father Baccellieri:

With this letter, I am pleased to notify you of your appointment as administrator of Sacred Heart Parish, Portland, Oregon. This appointment is effective July 1, 1998.

I commit to you the full care of souls in the above stated parish and I grant you all the faculties necessary for you to fulfill this office. Enclosed, then, you will find the faculties of the Archdiocese for Pastors and Parochial Vicars.

You will bear the duties and responsibilities and enjoy the rights and the privileges accorded to administrators, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law, official letters and approved custom.

You will find enclosed forms for your Profession of Faith and Oath of Office. At your early convenience you should make your Profession of Faith and take the Oath of Office in the presence of any priest enjoying the faculties of the Archdiocese. The forms should then be forwarded to the Clergy Personnel office for filing.

So as to facilitate the substitution of your signature for that of the outgoing pastor, we are enclosing herewith a letter certifying to the bank that you are the duly authorized, newly appointed administrator, and that your signature should accordingly be honored henceforth.

I assure you of my gratitude for your ministry at the North Portland Catholic Community these past three years, and pray God's blessings upon you and your work in your new assignment.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend John G. Vlazny
Archbishop of Portland

Enclosures

Squeezing out the tunes

The Rev. Joe Baccellieri revels in the universality of music and in the classic accordion repertoire

By BETHANYE McNICHOL
of The Oregonian staff

TUALATIN — The songs roll across the lake, echo against the walls, dive through the crawfish fountain, swirl around the vegetable stands and drift off over the city.

*"Neapolitan Nights,"
"Mack the Knife,"
"Waltzing Matilda."*

A flaxen-haired toddler bounces on his little sausage legs. Toes tap in the table-runner and baby-bootie booth. One by one, visitors to the Saturday Lakeside Market drop dollar bills into the accordion player's tip jar.

*"Hava Nagila,"
"Yellow Polka Dot Bikini,"
"Dark Eyes."*

Joe Baccellieri sits in the shade, toes in black wingtips tapping and back muscles flexing under his polo shirt as he forces air through the huge bellows of his vintage Petosa accordion. The elegant black-

and-white instrument was custom-made for him in Seattle in 1963. You can't get accordions like it anymore. They use a different wood for the reeds now.

It's been 52 years since Baccellieri first picked up an accordion. Back then, he was a 6-year-old growing up in Southeast Portland's Italian neighborhood and taking lessons from Frank Baldino and Joe Parente. He remembers famous accordion players — Anthony Galarrini and Jorgen Sundquist — packing them in at the Civic Auditorium.

"Accordion was THE instrument in the U.S. in the '40s and '50s," he recalled. "When rock 'n' roll came in, accordion took a nose dive."

Baccellieri, though, kept playing. He was ordained as a priest and taught band at Central Catholic High School. He played at fairs and festivals. He became known as the Swinging Priest. In addition to his duties as administrator of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, where he's known as Reverend Baccellieri, he

formed a dance band with former students — the Gemtones, — a trio comprising accordion, drum and saxophone.

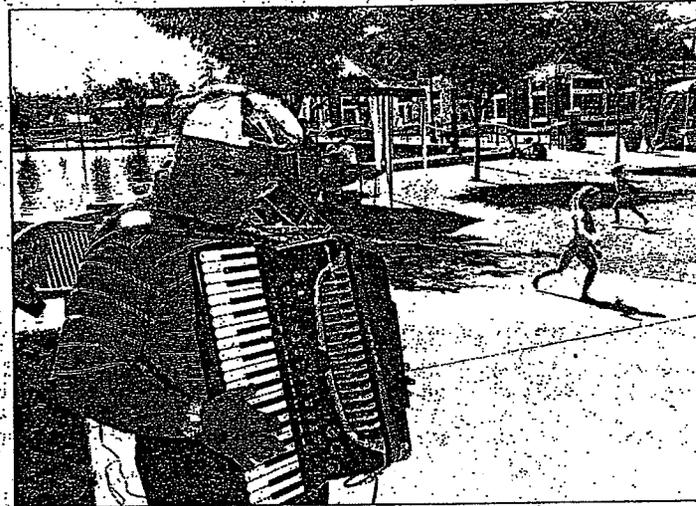
"I don't need a bass or a guitar — it's all right here," he said of the rhythmic notes and chords he plays with his left hand.

*"Besame Mucho,"
"I Love Paris in the Springtime,"
"Malaguena."*

About five years ago, accordion players started getting together again. Now, there are clubs all over the place, although, he said with a chuckle, "you have to be 50 or more years old to qualify."

By this he means accordion songs are old songs, songs people remember from some other time and place.

"I'm playing stuff I never thought I'd play again," he said, and wafted the opening bars of "Accordiana" out over little girls screaming in the fountain, a man riding a bicycle, a woman in a pink housecoat watering the planters on her lakeside deck.



The Rev. Joe Baccellieri, the Swinging Priest, plays one of the thousands of tunes he knows by heart.

BOB ELLIS/The Oregonian

"Play 'Edelweiss,' " a woman requested as she dropped a dollar in the tip jar.

As the wistful melody curled forth from Baccellieri's Petosa she seemed to drift off, her mind a thousand miles away.

"People have said music is a universal language and I've experienced it," he said afterward. He remembered the time he and fellow priests were traveling in Germany. A tour boat they'd hired departed

with a drum, a drummer and an accordion, but managed to leave the accordionist behind.

Although he knew few German songs and even less of the language, Baccellieri consented to play. Although he and the drummer didn't understand each other's language, "We played for an hour and a half," Baccellieri remembered. And when it was over, "he kissed my hands."

"Up a Lazy River."

"Danke Schoen."

"Beer Barrel Polka."

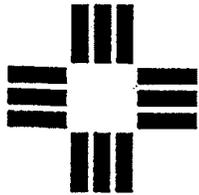
How many songs does he know? Thousands. All by heart.

Although the logo on his red, green and white cap reads "Italia," Baccellieri plays Irish songs, Greek songs, Scottish songs, Russian songs, Mexican songs.

"I never learned to dance," he said. "I've always played. I love music, whatever it is."

OREGONIAN

9-14-98



ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

COPY

Office of the Archbishop

June 9, 1999

Reverend Joseph Baccellieri
Sacred Heart Parish
3910 S.E. 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97202

Dear Father Baccellieri:

With this letter, I am pleased to notify you of your appointment as pastor of St. Agatha Parish, Portland, Oregon. This appointment is in addition to your assignment as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. This appointment will be effective July 1, 1999, for a period of six years and is renewable once, in accord with our archdiocesan clergy personnel policies and the provisions of Canon Law. (Cf. Clergy Personnel Manual, Ch. IV, Sec. VI; Can. 522.)

I commit to you the full care of souls in the above stated parish and I grant you all the faculties necessary for you to fulfill this office. Enclosed, then, you will find the faculties of the Archdiocese for pastors and parochial vicars.

You will bear the duties and responsibilities and enjoy the rights and the privileges accorded to pastors, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law, official letters and approved custom. You are not obliged to celebrate a second Missa pro populo on Sunday.

I have asked Father Stephen Bossi, CSP, to represent me in receiving your Profession of Faith and Oath of Office, and to preside over the ceremony of your installation, which should take place within a month from the date of your appointment as pastor, if at all possible.

To facilitate the substitution of your signature for that of the outgoing pastor, I am enclosing a letter certifying to the bank that you are the duly authorized, newly appointed pastor.

I am grateful for your willingness to assume this additional responsibility and pray for God's blessings upon you and your work in your new assignment.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend John G. Vlazny
Archbishop of Portland

JGV:gg

ST. AGATHA'S CHURCH

1403 S. E. NEHALEM STREET
PORTLAND, OREGON 97202

JAN 26 2001

Rev. Chuck Lienert
Pastoral Center
2838 E. Burnside
Portland, OR 97214

January 19, 2001

Dear Fr. Lienert,

With this letter, I am asking to be relieved of my duties as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Portland, Oregon, effective July 1, 2001.

I do not feel that I can do the job of pastor at both Sacred Heart and St. Agatha parishes. The effect is that neither is being properly or effectively served.

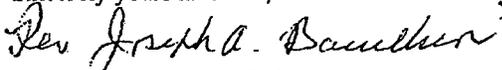
I do this with great sadness because I love the people of Sacred Heart, and I truly enjoy celebrating the sacred liturgy together with the people, who truly pray at mass.

Sacred Heart is now in a strong position: the debt is retired, monies exceeding seventy thousand dollars are in savings, leased facilities are bringing in \$3750 per month, and over 100 thousand dollars of repairs have been made to a much needed facility previously in disrepair.

The parish has a well organized pastoral council and administrative council, and an excellent pastoral associate as well as a book keeper-secretary. A master plan is close to completion awaiting the approval of the archdiocesan building commission.

I think there is a future for such a parish and I sincerely hope that with prayerful discernment, that future may become a reality.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Joseph A. Baccellieri
Pastor: St. Agatha/Sacred Heart