

March 25, 1969

Beloved Nell,

Your note this morning makes me glad I am coming to see you, or doubly glad, because God knows I was glad enough in any case.

What you tell me about Father Dumant and the restrictions on the Montford Brothers Monastery, alas, does not surprise me. I suspect, of course, the crackdown came from the Bishop locally, and on having complaints from right wing Catholics - that is usually the case. In any event, I am glad he is going to join us there. I will look forward to knowing such a man.

Strange things are happening. In a long session with the Apostolic Delegate of Canada this week, I blasted the suppressive Bishops and the "We-Know-Best" syndrome they display particularly in handling black people. I told the delegate we have a great wealth of magnificent young priests who cannot function because of the old suppressive authoritarian attitudes. He has asked me to put all of this to the Pope, and is arranging an invitation. THIS IS COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE MOMENT, Nell. So do not mention it to a soul. At very high levels, the information is poor, fragmentary, and usually all wrong. I have persuaded them at least to distrust the old methods because they have failed unbelievably, but of course the Pope is surrounded, (and cut off) by elderly and very powerful conservative cardinals in the curia.

I pray that I do not have to be in surgery when the time comes to go. I am going to try to make the one trip serve two purposes, because I hope to go and teach at Father Pire's University. They are begging me. Since his death, we are trying to go on with his work, and this the first session needs all the strength we can give it. If I can go and teach the two sessions (or 1 week in each session) then I could use that time for the conference with the Pope also, and have told the Delegate to set it up for that time, though it may have to be earlier.

All for the moment. I lecture the 9th in NY, the 10th (evening) at St. Bernards High School, New London, Conn. Will come to your place on Friday, April 11th, stay Sat. Sun, and perhaps leave on Monday for Harrisburg, Pa.
Best love, and best Easter,

John

there comes a time when
silence is betrayal. - martin luther king

SECRET