



CONGREGATIO
PRO CLERICIS

Vatican City, 8 November 2013

Prot. N. 20130486

Ms. Catherine Caridi

[REDACTED]
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Dear Ms. Caridi,

I am writing in reply to your letter of 18 October 2012, which was forwarded to this Congregation earlier this year by the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, regarding the correct application of can. 281, §1, since your question concerns the application of the law and not its interpretation. This Dicastery can respond only in the abstract, with the awareness that every individual case is affected by the particular circumstances which surround it.

Your letter highlights the confusion that often exists between sustenance and remuneration. The two are not the same (cf., for example, the reference to both in cc. 230, §1 and 281, §3). Sustenance is the more fundamental of the two, providing for a cleric's essential needs, such as food, shelter, and adequate medical care. Honest sustenance is a basic right rooted in incardination and is not dependent upon a cleric being dedicated to ministry.

Remuneration (cf. c. 281, §1) provides more amply for a cleric's needs in such a way that it frees him for the work of ministry which he is about to undertake, and thus it is dependent upon his dedicating himself to sacred ministry. The right to remuneration is not absolute, and may be lost entirely under certain circumstances. Understanding the clear distinction between sustenance and remuneration can clarify many of the situations which you describe in your letter.

Thanking you for your inquiry, and with assurances of prayers and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Mons. Antonio Neri
Undersecretary