



CONGREGATIO  
PRO CLERICIS

Vatican City, 15 December, 2010

Prot. N. 20103597

The Most Reverend Jerome ListECKI  
Archbishop of Milwaukee  
3501 South Lake Drive  
P.O. Box 070912  
Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912  
**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Your Excellency,


This Congregation has received a request for hierarchical recourse from Rev. Jerome Lester, a cleric incardinated in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Rev. Lester informs the Dicastery that he is living a life of prayer and penance, and that he was recently informed by the Vicar for Clergy that as of 1 October 2010 he would no longer be receiving "charitable assistance" in the form of payment of insurance premiums for Medicare Advantage, dental and vision coverage, as well as the benefit of the Health Reimbursement Account.

It is not clear to the Congregation if Your Excellency is aware of the termination of benefits to Rev. Lester, and if Your Excellency concurs in such termination. The Dicastery therefore kindly asks for Your Excellency's own opinion, as well as any relevant information which may help to shed light on this matter. Of particular interest would be an explanation as to how the above mentioned insurance benefits are applied to the priests of the Archdiocese in general, and how these benefits can to be considered as "charitable assistance" in the case of Rev. Lester, and not as an obligation of the Archdiocese, according to the norm of c. 281 §2. It does not seem that he has been dismissed from the clerical state, and thus c. 1350 §1 would appear to be operative.

Furthermore, the Congregation is surprised to learn from the letter of the Vicar for Clergy that the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is experiencing financial difficulties. The last information which the Dicastery has received concerning the financial status of the Archdiocese was in conjunction with the last *ad limina* visit in 2004, in which there was no indication of any difficulty in providing for the clergy. Given its competence in this area, the Congregation would be most appreciative if Your Excellency would send an updated report which highlights the financial difficulties of the Archdiocese. Lastly, the Dicastery would call to Your Excellency's attention the priorities for the use of ecclesiastical goods, as established in c. 1254 §2, noting that the support of the clergy ranks second in importance only to divine worship.

I take this opportunity to renew my sentiments of esteem and with every best wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Mauro Cardinal Piacenza  
Prefect

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