

LETTER FROM CARD. RE

Congragatio Pro Episcopis

Vaticano November 27, 2006

Prot. N. 519/1988

To: Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo

Your Excellency,

The Holy Father has received your letter of the 10th and 23rd October last which Your Excellency had sent to him, wherein on one hand you show a desire to preserve filial affection towards him and to preserve the unity of the Church of Christ; on the other hand, however, you contradict this same proposal, as you silently pass going into the excommunication Latae Sententiae preserved to the Holy See as foreseen in Canon 1382 C.I.C, as you consecrated four bishops on 24th of September, 2006.

His Holiness, who has suffered and still suffers with your comportment with the initiative against the discipline and the ecclesial communion which you carried out in the last June, has ordered me to plead with you not to continue any further with ordination of priests and bishops which you have planned. You are well aware that such ordinations are seriously illicit and illegitimate, they will never be accepted by the Church, and will therefore do a lot of harm to the Church and profoundly so to the People of God. At the same time you are aware that such actions will render you responsible before God loaded with such a grave sin, which will cut you away from the Church, and of course excommunication. One day each one of us will have to render account before God for such actions which will be judged according to the truth.

Forming the association of Married priests Now! Prelature, which you have founded is against the Will of Christ and is as well against the Church, which does not approve of it and will never found such an association.

Hence taking things as they are, I therefore consider it my duty to remind you that priestly celibacy, freely chosen and based on a gift of oneself to Christ, is such a valuable gift which renders a priest to carry out his love for Christ with undivided heart as he dedicates himself with total disposition to serve his brothers and sisters,

The Latin Church, as stated by the Vatican Council II in the decree, "Presbyterorum Ordinis No. 16" and "Optatam totius No. 10," faithful to the constant ecclesial tradition desires to maintain ministerial priesthood or hierarchy and celibacy because the Church considers it a good so precious and cannot be replaced by anything else.

It is once more reaffirmed, as you know, that there must never be any hope that the Church may admit once more those priests who have failed to maintain celibacy and have ended up by contracting marriage (cf. Paolo VI, Lettera al card. Segretario di Stato Jean Villot, le dichiarazioni rese pubbliche, 2 Febraio 1970; Lettera Eucliaco Sacerdotalis Caelibatus, 24 giugno 1967, nn. 14-15), dealing with those cases of priests who are now found in the conditions already foreseen by the Church.

As well known, with regard to admission of priestly ordination those married men, the general assembly of 1971 the Fathers of the Synod with clarification and decision expressed their willingness to preserve the venerable tradition of sacerdotal celibacy. More than that, the Apostolic Exaltation after the Synod "Pastores dabo vobis," taking up the proposal once again in 1990, confirmed; "The Synod convinced that perfect chastity in priesthood is a charism," leaves no doubt with regard to the will of the Church to maintain the law which demands that a candidate to priesthood freely chosen celibacy ought to maintain it forever in the Latin Rite (N. 29). Even cardinals and bishops participating at the 2001 Synod expressed the same willingness when the matter of celibacy came up again.

Will you please notice the insistence with which the Popes, Paul VI and John Paul II continuously maintain the integral discipline of ecclesiastical celibacy and not to readmit once more to ministerial priesthood "those who having put their hands to the plough have turned back (LC 9, 62), asking all the priests to faithfully maintain the word given to Christ and to the Church. The same firmness is maintained and confirmed by Pope Benedict XVI.

I hereby repeat that the way you have chosen is seriously wrong and immoral and that you have openly cut yourself away from the communion of hierarchy and with the Roman Pontiff and with the whole Episcopal College: there is no other way for the welfare of your soul other than the just way of conversion.

Dear Mons. Milingo, I once more appeal to you, come to the Old Shepherd of the Church. He implores you to reflect as to what you have done, causing serious scandal and unbelievable damages to yourself and to many souls. I pray you with all my efforts not to do any other harm to the Church with new ordinations and not to present yourself to the tribunal of God as an excommunicated Archbishop.

I once more repeat the Catholic Church will not accept such ordinations in the future.

In the past years they had confidence that you would not ordain priests and bishops; do not do anything which will keep you further away from your paternal Church. The Church asks you to have humility and courage to reconcile yourself with God and with the successor of St. Peter, to abandon yourself to the mercy of God, in order to recuperate peace and once more acquire the joy of the grace and the dignity which have been lost

I appeal to your conscience, I pray for you, confident in the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, and as well counting cordially that Christ the Good Shepherd enlightens you and brings you as soon as possible to the full communion with the Catholic Church.

With all the best wishes.

+ Giovanni Battista Card. Re.
Prefetto Congregazione per i Vescovi.

Married Priests Now! Prelature

A Roman Catholic Community

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December 13, 2006

Feast of St. Lucy

Your Holiness Benedict XVI,

Cordial Christmas Greetings to you and the Apostolic Household.

We thank you, Holy Father, for your cordial response to our letters which you sent through Cardinal Re. His letter (519/1988 dated November 27) was received today on our return from the ***Married Priests Now! Prelature*** Convocation in Parsippany, New Jersey. We had an excellent attendance of about two hundred priests and their wives and we celebrated a common renewal of wedding vows during the Holy Eucharist. More than one thousand priests in Brazil, Africa, the Philippines and India joined our proceedings via satellite. At our last convocation in September, we celebrated the priesthood we share with Jesus. At this convocation we celebrated our marriages and at the next convocation we will celebrate our wives and their voices in our lives and in the church.

We thank Your Holiness and Cardinal Re for your profound understanding that while our actions are not in accord with the last one-thousand year history of church's disciplinary decisions, we are acting in a profound matter of conscience. And as

your letter pointed out, the time is quickly coming when the Holy Father, Cardinal Re, Archbishop Milingo and his College of Archbishops will stand before the throne of Christ and answer in conscience and personally for our stewardship and fidelity to the love and the gospel we have received, as well as for our pastoral responsibilities for the spiritual welfare of others.

We truly appreciate your response to our letters but we need a way to reduce the time it takes to hear a response. The matter is urgent. We know you have many issues to handle and ours is only one of them â€“ but an important one. Perhaps, email or fax would be a better form of communication. We do want your advice and do respect and treasure your counsel. For your advice to be useful to us, the response needs to be a bit more prompt. Otherwise, we will think you are not going to respond and we do not want to be without communication.

We actually need a more vibrant dialogue and that is the important concern of this letter â€“ to facilitate such a dialogue. We are asking the Holy Father to assign a friendly, open, English speaking cardinal or bishop in the United States who may be able to speak with us on a direct level either in person or by a conference call. Perhaps the Apostolic Nuncio could assist us in identifying such an ombudsman to work with us. We clearly state that we do not intend to or want to break away from Holy Mother, the Church. We believe we have a contribution to make to the Church through the *Married Priests Now! Prelature* which will improve the lives of our priests and ultimately improve the Church in the way St. Francis of Assisi did in founding his order. We need to keep communication open such an ombudsman would help us to do that. Such a means of communication would help to re-establish a process of "listening," "awareness" and "dialogue," which Pope Paul VI identified as marks of the Church in his first great encyclical, Ecclesiam Suam and which Pope John Paul II connected brilliantly to the Eucharist in his Apostolic Exhortation, Mane Nobiscum Domine. We also request that at some time in the near future we may be able to meet with you, Holy Father, and with Cardinals Re and Hummes to discuss this issue and to help resolve our situation. We will make a report to you of our ordinations of the past year and keep you informed of the married men we call to the priesthood.

When I use the pronoun we, I refer to myself and my Episcopal College of archbishops. Since we work collegially as a team, we must respond to you as one and we must be considered as one.

Your letter does bring us some hope. You have recognized that we do want to preserve the unity of the Church and we do honor you, Holy Father, with filial devotion. But the letter is one that emphasizes the awful bureaucracy of the institution instead of the Gospel of Jesus. We hope there be more kindness and gentleness in the Curia and in the bureaucracy to reflect Him whom it represents. Is the Church to continue to be an institution of fear and punishment or will it be an institution of love and forgiveness? Your letter appears not to offer any change in the absolute and unjust obligation of celibacy as a job requirement for the priesthood. This is out of step with the needs of the people, the needs of the priesthood and the needs of the church. We do support the need of celibacy -- especially for religious order priests and for those religious, clerics and others who actually freely choose it. It can only be a free choice if it is not a requirement for an office or a job. Celibacy is fine on its own. We are not against celibacy in any way except that it needs to be free and not a requirement for the priesthood. We are in new and different times with different problems which call for different and creative solutions.

When the Apostle Paul took the Gospel to the Gentiles he confronted the Apostle Peter about the limitations he was imposing on the spread of the Gospel. Paul believed that the Gospel needed adaptation to the Gentile culture and that he would be the Apostle to the Gentiles. In the same way today, we believe that Archbishop Milingo has received a calling to reach out to the thousands of married priests and through them to the Modern World discussed at great length in the Vatican II Document, the Church in the Modern World. The Church can no longer afford to continue in denial about its failure to reach millions of people who could more easily hear the Gospel from the holy lives of married priests and their charismatic leader, Archbishop Milingo.

On a Married Priesthood Restored.

We are not looking for anything new, but only to restore what the Church originally had in the New Testament and that is: priests and bishops who were married. Christ chose married priests first. St. Peter was a married man. The first centuries of the Church had married popes, bishops, priests and deacons. The married priesthood in the Latin Rite flourished for the first twelve centuries of the church. No one can deny this. This cannot be wrong. It is the truth. The celibate priesthood also existed, and married and celibate priests worked side by side. There are currently in the church married Eastern Rite priests and Pastoral Provision priests not to mention the married

deacons in the Latin Rite who are part of the priesthood. Eastern Rite married men are now being ordained in the United States. A married priesthood would likely ease reconciliation with the Orthodox.

You reminded us that: “celibacy, freely chosen and based on a gift of oneself to Christ, is such a valuable gift which renders a priest to carry out his love for Christ with an undivided heart as he dedicates himself with total disposition to serve his brothers and sisters.” While this is the official, canonical statement of the requirement of celibacy, it does come across as a pious, flowery and idealistic description of celibacy which does not reflect the lived experiences of priests. This description of celibacy can be seen as akin to cultic brainwashing and it is not sufficiently realistic. The obligation of celibacy has become a false god, a golden calf. But, the Lord has commanded: Do not have false gods before Me. Strike down this golden calf of obligatory celibacy before it topples the whole church!

How is celibacy more valuable than marriage? Do not married priests serve the Lord with equal dedication and doesn't the married priest love God as equally as his celibate brother? The holiness of marriage enhances the priest's ministry and brings him closer to the People of God. The priest's family models for them what a Christian family should be. It is a reflection of the love of the Trinity -- the community of three Persons in Love in One.

For the priest who accepted the call to the priesthood at the young age of 23 without knowing that he did not have the charism for celibacy, it is an albatross around his neck. The charism is not as automatic as you may think it is. Celibacy is a true charism for some, but not for all. Grace builds on nature. If the priest does not have the charism for celibacy in the first place, grace is not going to bring it about. It is becoming clear to the world and to the people of the church that the requirement of celibacy for all priests is a prideful, sinful, sexual fantasy of power and control. This is not openness to the Holy Spirit. Demanding a charism, where it does not exist, is an exercise of human power contrary to God's manifest will. This is what makes our young people, seeing the failure of celibacy, flippantly describe their church as the one, holy, catholic, homosexual and alcoholic church. If they can see it, why can't the church? Strike down this golden calf before it topples the whole church!

Remember, marriage is a sacrament. Celibacy is not. Celibacy is an option. Marriage is as holy as the priesthood. They are equally sacraments. Celibacy never becomes a sacrament and it does not add anything to the priesthood. If celibacy is freely chosen, it is a great gift. But it is a gift that is separate from the priesthood.

And celibacy never becomes greater than the gift of marriage for the married priest. Marriage because it is a sacrament and because it is of God, is a higher calling than celibacy.

How can one manifestation of God's presence and love, the sacrament of marriage, stand in opposition to God's presence and love in other sacraments? How can God's call to holiness of priests stand in opposition to God's call to holiness of Married Persons? The compatibility is shown everyday in the lives of our married deacons. Our world needs the witness of faithful marriages from our priests more than ever. The 150,000 priests who have been forced to choose between marriage and priestly ministry are like lights that have been placed under a bushel basket instead of on a lamp stand (Lk 11:33). Those bishops who refuse to remove the bushel basket will be accountable before God for the charism of marriage which they have hidden at the time when the world sorely needed to know this love.

The church in the United States has seen public shame and disgrace fall on its bishops and clergy with the pedophilia crisis showing that criminal abuse of children by celibate Roman Catholic priests is at least as high as by other professionals not vowed to celibacy. This is public proof that the charism of celibacy which should be a sign of the Kingdom, is not such a sign for many but instead a discipline that has driven a shameful need to hide the truth about it. It has done immeasurable harm to the cause of Christ. The faithful no longer trust their celibate priests. The financial cost of this public scandal is far greater than what it would cost to maintain a married priesthood. The People of God have always supported their priests. They will generously support a married priesthood, since these married priests will bring them the Eucharist, which so many are currently without. This week the Holy Father's spiritual adviser, Rev. Raniero Cantalamessa urged that the time has come to call for a worldwide day of fasting and prayer and penance to seek forgiveness for the sexual abuse by some priests of "the smallest members" of the Roman Catholic Church and to "cry before God." We feel it is also time to fix the dual problem that caused the sexual abuse: how power is used in the church and the forced requirement of celibacy for priests. The cost of the pedophilia crisis in the Church has now risen to over one and half billion dollars leading many dioceses into bankruptcy. Even Pope Benedict XVI has acknowledged the toll that this crisis has taken on the credibility of the Church. Fr. Cantalamesa, has recently stated that the Church needs to do more to reclaim its credibility over this issue and express the Church's solidarity with victims of clerical abuse. Reclaiming the tradition of a married priesthood could help the Church to restore its moral credibility, which has been severely damaged by the pedophilia scandal.

In many places known to the Holy Father, priests and bishops live with wives and children, with greater or less secrecy, but generally known in society as well. Mother church seems to tolerate this situation, because of the fruitfulness and need of their priestly ministry. Where is the integrity of conscience in the Church when she cuts off the priestly ministry of those priests who publicly manifest their love for their wives and their children in a sacramental way? The Holy Father and bishops of the Synods of Bishops referenced in the letter must bear in their consciences the deceit and shame their obstinacy in this matter. You need to know that the active priests and bishops in the Global South whose marriages are now hidden and secret are preparing to declare them before the world in an open amphitheatre. Then, how will the world look upon the married priests you have thrown away like garbage in the Global North. How will the world judge the scandalous duplicity of the hierarchy? The time is coming soon.

Almighty God will call the Shepherd of Rome to account on his day of judgment for his conscience and for how he has shepherded his people. How many people are deprived of Eucharistic food for the journey because of the prideful legislation of celibacy. This discipline is contrary to the most important teaching of our Christ to “do this in remembrance of Me (Lk 22:19).” How many of the apostles around that table were married? Certainly some were, if not all. How can Mother church see her children go spiritually hungry for the Eucharist, and do nothing, and believe in conscience that this is God's will? Your Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist, expected in January, will emphasize the priest shortage because without priests there is no Eucharist. Which is more important obligatory celibacy or the Eucharist? There is a serious priest shortage. Hundreds of parishes are closing, and active priests are stretched beyond capacity. The faithful are not being comforted with the sacraments while married priests who are trained and experienced stand idle. Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, **call them back** to full ministry in the church. Strike down the golden calf before it topples the whole church!

You further stated that, “there must never be any hope that the church may admit once more those priests who have failed to maintain celibacy and who have ended up by contracting marriage” and you referenced some dated documents. Jesus would offer forgiveness and he would say, “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” (John 8:7) Your answer has possible exceptions because you well know that many divorced priests have been received back into the full ministry as pastors even if they have not provided for their wives and children. It is not celibacy that the church is concerned about at all. It is the marriage and the woman. The church denigrates and oppresses women. The re-employment of divorced priests sets a precedent. But it is an unfortunate precedent because it is only after the breakup of the marriage and family. **We do have hope** that the Holy Spirit will prevail and that married priests

who stand in honor with their wives will return to the Latin Rite. It is not priests who have broken any promise of celibacy. It is the church that has broken faith with humanity. The church has failed its priests miserably and must apologize for it, and offer a remedy for that failure. Let's put the blame where it belongs. The sin is not on the priests but on the pope and cardinals who inflict the obligation of celibacy on unsuspecting young men. Mankind has an inalienable right to marriage and it cannot be taken away by some idealized job regulation no matter how noble. The requirement of celibacy is a form of spiritual bribery and extortion. It is an inhuman job requirement. It is the church that has failed these priests and taken advantage of them for the good of the institution. Why hasn't the church signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights promulgated by the United Nations? Could it be because the requirement of celibacy for the priesthood denies rights due to every man and woman?

We gently remind you that there is another precedent for married priests and bishops to be received into the Latin Rite of the church in the person of the late married Bishop Salomao Ferraz of the ICAB of Brazil. He was received back into the Roman Latin Rite with his wife and family and he served as a bishop during the Second Vatican Council. We rightfully see a hope for a married priesthood where you wish to see none.

You also stated that the 1990 Synod confirmed: ““The Synod convinced that perfect chastity in the priesthood is a charism,” leaves no doubt with regard to the will of the Church to maintain the law which demands that a candidate for the priesthood freely chooses celibacy and ought to maintain it forever in the Latin Rite.”“ There is no such thing as perfect celibacy. That is an ideal, a dream. Cardinal Re’s words show that it is not freely chosen because the law DEMANDS it. It can only be freely chosen, if there is no law that requires it. If that is the choice for the Latin Rite, so be it, then we need a NEW Rite for Married Priests. We propose that the Holy Father establish a new rite that honors a married clergy: The Rite of the St. Peter, the Married, or an Anglican Rite with married clergy. The Synod of 2005 did have an open discussion of celibacy and several very eminent Cardinals and bishops spoke in favor of it. We suspect it will come up again at the next Synod but you may need to act before that synod.

The approval of a married priesthood cannot be decided by slavishly following the multiple previous decisions about celibacy referenced in your letter. Celibacy and the Married Priesthood are two different things. You need new references about married priesthood and not old references about perfect celibacy. Those new references may be found in several recently published, well-researched volumes which we consider

as an integral part of this letter to you. They are: *Freeing Celibacy*, by Fr. Donald Cozzens and *Married Catholic Priests* by Fr. Anthony Kowalski. Also pertinent is the document *Compatibility of Priesthood and Marriage* from the General Synod of Married Priests and Their Wives 1985.

Holy Father, you, and the other bishops and cardinals need to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the context of continual prayer so as to open your hearts to the reality of what is happening in our time. The matter at hand calls for a profound dialogue of conscience such as Peter and Paul had about the manner of proceeding with the evangelization of non-Jews. Holy Father and Cardinal Re, this is indeed a matter of personal conscience and our responsibility before God for our shepherding responsibilities. Why are past decisions quoted instead of the needs of God's people? Let us proceed with the dialogue of conscience. Ask bishops around the world to join you in this prayerful dialogue of conscience instead of closing the door on further discernment and dialogue.

The Holy Spirit is working here. It is under the influence of the Holy Spirit that Cardinal Hummes said that **celibacy is not a dogma**. And even after he was compelled to retract his true but courageous words, Cardinal Dannells used a similar phrase two days later. We would like to think that our Prelature has some influence in keeping this topic before the eyes of the Cardinals, bishops and the people and indeed before the world, but this is the work of the Holy Spirit and it will continue to seek an answer which will overpower the Holy Father and the cardinals and bishops with love.

On Your Excommunication

You claim that we have side-stepped the rumored excommunication and you are not fully right on that. We only received notice of an excommunication in the media so it is actually only on the level of a rumor. We have no document or any tangible evidence of an excommunication. An excommunication is the property of the Holy Father. We also used the media to lovingly and cordially return the rumored excommunication to him. He owns the excommunication. We do not accept ownership of it. We ask the Holy Father to reconsider this action.

The bishops of the Chinese Patriotic Church were not excommunicated even though November 30, was the third time this year they consecrated without a mandate. We can send you a list of four hundred Roman Catholic episcopal consecrations that were done in the last century without mandates and among them will be the consecration of Cardinal Husar. It looks like excommunications are very subjective indeed. Are there different interpretations of laws for the same offense?

This is the Third Millennium and an excommunication has no meaning in our times. It is a Medieval throw-back that causes ridicule to the church. The Lord tells us it is nonsense. An excommunication shows the weakness of the church. It is a sign that the church cannot solve its problems. Canon Law needs to be refined to offer a more democratic resolution of differences. This one does not work.

The excommunication does have the positive effect of confirming the validity of our consecrations and of demonstrating that we are in unity with Rome. You would not issue an excommunication to anyone outside your jurisdiction.

The Married Priests Now! Prelature

You say that the ***Married Priests Now! Prelature*** is against the Will of Christ, and against the Church. How do you know that? Jesus taught us that when two or three gather in his name, he is present there also (Mt 12:20). Jesus came to cleanse the law and told us not to be like the Pharisees who (Matt 23:4) who tie up heavy loads and put them on other men's shoulders but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger. He drove the money changers out of the temple to restore it as a house of prayer (Mt 21:12). It was Jesus' will to change what was wrong and that is what our Prelature is doing. We are doing the will of Jesus and we will be misunderstood as he was -- even by the modern day hierarchs. But that doesn't mean we are not doing the will of Jesus. Our cause is a good and noble one. It is to restore and renew the priesthood of Christ.

We very strongly believe that the ***Married Priests Now! Prelature*** is the work of the Holy Spirit. We are the Work of God being created by the Holy Spirit to renew the Church. It is not our intention to be against the church but to make the church more holy by acknowledging the marriages of its priests. We are the church. We are part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church and may become a church within a church or the new Rite of St. Peter, the Married, whichever God calls us to be. This

is the right time for ***Married Priests Now!*** and it is the right time for celibacy to become optional.

For the last forty or more years the church universal has prayed for an increase in priestly vocations. Can it be that God has refused to hear this prayer? Or is it that the bishops have not been listening to God's answer? Our prelature will bring the married priests back. The people are waiting for them. But they rightfully belong in the larger church. The tone of your letter is not one that would make priests feel comfortable to return to holy mother the church.

You have said that you will not recognize the ordinations of our Prelature. Our Catholic theology, faith and tradition recognize the ordinations of our prelature. It is a rather unusual posture for you to say you do not recognize them and it may indicate that you do not properly understand Catholic theology and ecclesiology of orders. If you deny our ordinations, you deny your own. Our orders are valid. And considering that we are acting in a matter of conscience we consider them fully licit.

We cordially ask you to listen to what we have carefully discerned is our responsibility in conscience. Do not decide ***a priori*** that our conscience is wrong because it does not conform to certain disciplinary decisions. It is in meeting the spiritual needs of our people that we are concerned. While the Gospel is the highest law, canon law acknowledges that the ***good of souls*** is among the highest laws. We are in a crisis of emergency proportions because of the shortage of priests and our faithful people's lack of trust in the priesthood as a result of the sexual abuse scandals. We are concerned about the good of souls.

Our conscience does not want a break in spiritual union with you and our mother church. But neither can our conscience turn away from the needs of the church, of the priests who have married in good conscience, and of our own call to the sacrament of marriage. Conscience is the highest moral arbiter, not canon law. This is a somewhat complex issue, but we are sure the church can resolve it as Jesus would with love, compassion and forgiveness.

Historians have acknowledged the correctness of Martin Luther's call of conscience for church reform. Lack of good communication brought about serious breakdown in church unity. Do not let communication break down about these conscience matters that need reform. Excommunication and censures break down communication and do not meet the needs of our faithful people. The time for dialogue and action for

God's people is now. "Feed my sheep" is the call that pulls at our consciences day and night until we stand before our Lord (Jn 21:17).

Finally, Most Holy Father, with your forgiveness and your permission, our Prelature is prepared to incardinate those married priests who wish to return to sacramental ministry; to select and train married men (*viri probati*) who are called to priesthood; to make them available to those Bishops who have need and request the services of married priests; and, finally in concert with the accepting Bishops, to provide ongoing supervision and spiritual direction. Initially this could be done on a demonstration basis.

As you are well aware, this has a precedent when Pope John Paul II in January, 1985, established the International Ordinariate as a Personal Papal Prelature under the guidance of the Russian Emigre Archbishop Josef DeBrulle. The stated purpose of that Prelature, although "under the radar," was to oversee the training, internship and subsequent oversight of married men (*viri probati*) for ordination to the priesthood and to make those married priests available to the Bishops. Because the Prelature was more inline with the Eastern Rite and did not have public Papal support, nothing was accomplished.

Obviously Pope John Paul II was very sensitive to the needs of the People of God for the Eucharistic Food which only a priest can provide. Can you, Holy Father, who calls for greater emphasis on the sanctifying graces derived from the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass and renewed devotion to the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, do less?

Archbishop Milingo's Pension

The Prelature is quite concerned about the morality and justice issue surrounding the earned pension of Archbishop Milingo. A person earns a pension by putting in many years of faithful service. Archbishop Milingo earned his by more than fifty years of faithful service to the Church. He is owed that pension and it is due to him without any strings attached. The pension is not a privilege, it is a right. It is immoral and unjust that his pension has stopped being issued to him. The church cannot show itself as so morally bankrupt as to deny an elderly man his earned pension as a punishment because it disagrees with him or his actions. His pension should be

returned to him immediately lest the faithful be scandalized by how the Church fails in its moral obligation as an employer, and how it is causing him to seek sustenance elsewhere. His own pension would free him from other associations.

The Rev. Stephen V. DeLeers writing of the history and theology of Catholic clergy employment compensation writes that "... it was not until the Second Vatican Council that the church officially recognized the need for a new way of support for all of its priests. The Council Fathers evidenced a change in the way of thinking about clergy compensation,

away from the benefice system. This change was signaled by their call, in the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, for the "just remuneration" of priests." He notes that the older term of "sustentatio" was replaced by the term "remuneratio" which refers to an earned salary. He writes: "In the 1983 Code (canon 281 et al.), the term "sustentatio" is dropped in favor of the conciliar term "remuneratio." A salary is to be paid to pastors, parochial vicars, bishops, seminary teachers, lay people in the employ of the church. The same term is used for all church workers, and it is "remuneration" or "salary." (The Laborer is Worthy of His Hire, 1999 Edition, The National Federation of Priests' Councils.) Earlier, the 1971 World Synod of Bishops' Document on Justice in the World declared: "Within the Church rights must be preserved... Those who serve the Church by their labor, including priests and religious, should receive a sufficient livelihood and enjoy that social security which is customary in their region." (Section 41). This statement echoed Pacem in Terris' enunciation of the "inalienable, inviolable, and universal rights: to life, work, worthy standard of living, and security in sickness, inability to work and old age."

According to the 1999 Canon Law Society of America Report on the Retirement Benefits of Retired Church Personnel the "remuneration" of canon 281 includes the provision of a pension. (pg. 19). A pension is an element of compensation for one's labors which is earned as one works. To deny it after the fact is to in effect steal something which has already come into one's possession, something to which one has an inviolable right and can be seen to be a form of elder abuse.

Holy Father, we wish you a Merry Christmas and we will be remembering you in our prayers during this holy season when we celebrate the birth of Our Savior. We, too, ask to be remembered in your prayers

In filial devotion,

+Emmanuel Milingo
Emeritus Archbishop of Lusaka

+Peter Paul Brennan

+Joseph J. Gouthro

+George Augustus Stallings

+Patrick E. Trujillo

Archbishops

Married Priests Now! Prelature

A Roman Catholic Community

Attachments (only to the Holy Father's letter sent under separate cover):

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 of **Freeing Celibacy** by Donald Cozzens (Xeroxed).

Married Catholic Priests by Anthony Kowalski (book)

Priesthood Renewed by Emmanuel Milingo (book)

Compatibility of Priesthood and Marriage: General Synod of Married Catholic Priests and Their Wives: Second Session 1985 Justino Zampini et al.(Xeroxed)

Archbishop Milingo's Press Statement in Response to Vatican Censure Sept 27, 2006

Archbishop Milingo will be moving and traveling right after December 25, please send any response to him at this address: M. Rev. Emmanuel Milingo, 151 Regent Place, West Hempstead, NY 11552 USA

Cc: Cardinal Re, Congregation of Bishops,
Cardinal Hummes, Congregation of Clergy
Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio, USA