



CONGREGATIO
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano,
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

19 December 2006

460/2003-24019

PROT. N.

(In responsione facta merito huius numeri)

CONFIDENTIAL

Your Excellency,

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith received, on 14 November 2006, your correspondence in the case regarding the alleged sexual abuse of minors by Reverend Francis G. DELUCA, a priest of your diocese. In your *notum* which accompanied the case you request an *ex officio* dismissal from the clerical state.

After a careful examination of the case the Congregation is inclined to agree with your request. It was noted, however, that there is no reference to a response from Reverend DeLuca concerning your decision. Before a request for dismissal from the clerical state is presented to the Holy Father, it has been the practice of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to allow the cleric himself to ask for a dispensation from the obligations of priesthood, including celibacy. I would ask you to arrange a meeting with Reverend DeLuca allowing him to know the seriousness of the penalty you are requesting. Knowing the difficulty he has experienced living the obligations of priesthood Reverend DeLuca may choose to request a dispensation from them himself. A request for such a dispensation should denote that the cleric recognizes it as a grace granted to him. His letter to the Holy Father should indicate he understands the seriousness of the matter and is penitent for his actions.

Before proceeding further with this case we will await the results of your consultation with Reverend DeLuca. Once you have had the opportunity to arrange a meeting with him please notify this Dicastery.

With prayerful support and best wishes, I remain

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

✠ Angelo AMATO, SDB
Titular Archbishop of Sila
Secretary

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Michael A SALTARELLI
Bishop of Wilmington
Post Office Box 2030
Wilmington, DE 19899-2030
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA