What Does Canon Law Say about the Quality of Sponsored Works?

By Fr. Francis J. Monaghan, OP, PhD, JCL

A clear distinction is to be made between "Catholic works" and the "works of the Church." The former are undertaken in the name of the Church (canon 138), with the guidance of the church itself. On the other hand, works of Catholic vocation are undertaken by Catholics that might have an ecclesiastical nature or might be totally secular in character.

These Conditions:

First, for work to be carried out in the name of the church, it must conditionally be:

1. Spiritual Purpose: The work must have a spiritual purpose (see canon 138). Such a purpose can be either a work of charity, a work of the apostolate, or a work of spirituality. Catholic works of good will (institutes participating in the pastoral mission of the church through the spiritual and civil works of mercy) are not difficult to see how they benefit the church's mission in these categories.

2. As an Act of Love: A work carried out in the name of the church must emanate from love. Canon 138 even speaks of a "piously useful purpose" when dealing with good will. It may be that some Catholic charities in the past were carried out not because there was a moral need, rather, "to do the good" because other groups were carrying out a similar service in the same geographic area. Sometimes in many years, the time for such similar study and cooperation passed.

3. In合规的 Works: The undertaking must have sufficient reason to act in its purpose (see canon 138, articles 4 and 450). We all know that, in many circumstances, some works are more simply unable to prosper because they lack funding.

On the other hand, we are all well aware of the motivations for which foundations of religious institutes are with about similar aims, and, through their, it is essential that the work be oriented in the direction of the society and its needs.

On this aspect, "What is does Canon Law Say About the Quality of Sponsored Works?" by Fr. Francis J. Monaghan, OP, PhD, JCL, provides a clear distinction between "Catholic works" and the "works of the Church." The former are undertaken in the name of the Church (canon 138), with the guidance of the church itself. On the other hand, works of Catholic vocation are undertaken by Catholics that might have an ecclesiastical nature or might be totally secular in character.

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