

Fr. Perozich comments —

I was away from the computer for a week. When I logged back on my mailbox was filled with inquiries from faithful Catholics regarding Fiducia Supplicans, which promotes odd blessings, not of people to repent from sin, rather as a way to affirm sinful relationships as positive.

Since I am still active in ministry in retirement, I am asked for blessings by people who have chosen to continue to live in sin. Most of the time it is from men and women in irregular sexual relationships who are not yet willing to leave behind the physical intimacy and to return to chastity in that relationship.

I have blessed these people with the intention that God would bestow on them authentic chaste friendships, in no way leaving room for them to consider themselves as a blessed and holy couple such as are those living well Holy Matrimony.

Having worked with Courage, I know people who have left behind sexual sin, yet continue to have good holy friendships based in the truth of Jesus from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

In confession, rather than turn away a sinner, I let them voice their sins, but tell them that while I cannot absolve them because they are at the moment unwilling to convert, I will ask God to bless them with the grace of conversion, making it clear that they cannot yet receive absolution or Holy Communion.

These statements below say it much better than I can, so I'll share two short ones and then the theological explanation by Cardinal Gerhard Müller, a former head of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, a man with deep theological faith and study, unlike Cardinal Fernandez who teaches novelties not based in the the deposit of faith from Scripture and Tradition.

In today's church, men without profound theological formation have been given authority in positions to promote ideologies, the very thing that Pope Francis decries, yet seems to allow or even to promote. Ideologies condemned by him seem to be ideas which do not agree with his personal thoughts.

These men change language, ignore truth of Jesus' doctrine through a back door called "pastoral" in order to promote their own personal teachings and thus to supplant true doctrine with their new doctrine without calling it doctrine, disguising it as "pastoral" which it is not because it does not lead the flock to Jesus and to heaven.

I do not promote horse racing because I do not have a horse in the race. It appears to me that those promoting this pastoral approach might

have a horse in this race, promoting acceptance of homosexuality for themselves and using Holy Church for self justification rather than fighting the demons with Jesus, Mary, faith and the sacraments..

These frequent presentations for “desensitization” regarding the sin of homosexuality with subsequent “jamming” of those who disagree with the label of ideology, are intended to “convert” Catholics to accept this sin not as sin rather as a good, just as was set forth in the book After the Ball by Kirk and Madsen in 1994

*When such men do so, I respect their office, but not their orifices.
If you cannot speak the truth of Jesus, please, shut up!*

MARIAN FATHERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

American Province of the BVM Mother of Mercy
Eden Hill, Stockbridge, Massachusetts 01262

December 21, 2023

Dear Brothers,

As Marians of the Immaculate Conception it is our duty and moral obligation to uphold the teaching of the Catholic Church as has been handed down to us through Divine Revelation and the Deposit of Faith. Thus, we, the Major Superiors of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy Province, believe it necessary to provide some guidelines in regards to the Dicastery of the Faith's recent Declaration *Fiducia Supplicans* dated December 18, 2023.

The manifest purpose of this document of the Holy See is to allow "the possibility of blessing couples in irregular situations and same-sex couples (FS, 31)". The document states that such blessings are performed "without officially validating their status or changing in any way the Church's perennial teaching on marriage." Therefore, to ensure this latter statement is properly adhered to, Marian clergy

(ordained deacons and/or priests) are prohibited from blessing irregular relationships, unions, or same-sex couples in the United States and Argentina, or while traveling abroad. This applies to all Marian clergy regardless of diocesan policies. We see no situation in which such a blessing of a couple could be properly and adequately distinguished from some level of approval of the irregular relationship, leading to the scandal of the faithful. Such blessings (liturgical or spontaneous) would work against the legitimate care a priest or deacon owes to his flock.

It needs to be emphasized, however, that blessing individual persons struggling with sin, but striving to do the will of God and conform their lives to Church teaching, are not only allowed, but strongly encouraged. Marian clergy will continue to bless the individual sinner, but we cannot in any way bestow blessings that may infer that we are condoning or blessing the sin of irregular unions.

Very Rev. Chris Alar, MIC Provincial Superior

Very Rev. Donald Calloway, MCI Vicar Provincial

Communiqué from the Superior General of the SSPX

DECEMBER 19, 2023



He who loves me keeps – and makes others keepers of – my commandments.

We are dismayed by the declaration *Fiducia supplicans* of the prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, on the question of blessings for “couples in an irregular situation and couples of the same sex”. Especially since this document was signed by the Pope himself.

Although it purports to avoid any confusion between the blessing of such illegitimate unions and that of a marriage between a man and a woman, this declaration avoids neither confusion nor scandal: not only does it teach that a minister of the Church can call down God’s blessing on sinful unions, but by doing so, it actually reinforces these situations of sin.

The call for such a ‘blessing’ would consist only of asking for these people, in a non-liturgical framework, that “all that is true, good and humanly valuable in their lives and in their relationships be invested, healed and elevated by the presence of the Holy Ghost”.

But to make those who live in a fundamentally flawed union believe that the same could have any positive value is the worst kind of deception, and the most serious lack of charity towards these lost souls. It is wrong to imagine that there is anything good in a situation of public sin, and it is wrong to claim that God can bless couples living in such a situation.

Doubtless, every man can be helped by the prevenient mercy of God, and discover with confidence that he is called to convert in order to receive the salvation that God offers him. And **Holy Church never refuses a blessing to sinners who legitimately ask for it: but then, this blessing has no**

other object than to help the soul to overcome sin in order to live in a state of grace.

Holy Church can therefore bless any individual, even a pagan. **But never, in any way, can it bless a union that is sinful in itself, under the pretext of encouraging what is good in it.**

When we bless a couple, we do not bless isolated individuals: we necessarily bless the relationship that unites them. However, we cannot redeem an intrinsically bad and scandalous reality.

Such encouragement to proceed pastorally with these blessings leads in practice, inexorably, to the systematic acceptance of situations incompatible with the moral law, whatever else is said.

This unfortunately corresponds to the assertions of Pope Francis, who defines as “superficial and naive” the attitude of those who force people to behave “in a way for which they are not yet mature, or of which they are not capable [1]”.

This idea, which no longer believes in the power of grace and rejects the cross, does not help anyone avoid sin. It replaces true forgiveness and true mercy with a sadly impotent amnesty. And only accelerates the loss of souls and the destruction of Catholic morality.

All the convoluted language and sophisticated dressing up of the document of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith cannot hide the elementary and obvious reality of these blessings: they will do nothing more than reinforce these unions in their intrinsically sinful situation, and encourage others to follow them. This will merely be a substitute for Catholic marriage.

In fact, it manifests a profound lack of faith in the supernatural, in the grace of God and the strength of the cross to live in virtue, in purity and in charity, in accordance with the will of God.

It is a naturalistic and defeatist spirit that loosely aligns itself with the spirit of the world, the enemy of God. This is one more surrender and subjugation to the world, on the part of the liberal and modernist hierarchy, which since the Second Vatican Council has been at the service of the Revolution inside and outside the church.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, guardian of faith and holiness, come to the aid of the Holy Church. May she especially protect those most exposed to this chaos: children, now forced to grow up in a new Babylon, without reference points or a guide that reminds them of the moral law.

*Don Davide Pagliarani, Superior General
Menzingen, 19th December 2023*

**The Only Blessing of Mother Church is the Truth That
Will Set Us Free. Note on the Declaration *Fiducia
supplicans***

Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller

With the Declaration *Fiducia supplicans* (FS) on the Pastoral Significance of Blessings, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) has made an affirmation that has no precedent in the teaching of the Catholic Church. In fact, this document affirms that it is possible for a priest to bless (not liturgically, but privately) couples who live in a sexual relationship outside of marriage, including same-sex couples. The many questions raised by bishops, priests, and laity in response to these statements deserve a clear and unequivocal response.

Does this statement not clearly contradict Catholic teaching? Are the faithful obliged to accept this new teaching? May the priest perform such new practices that have just been invented?

And can the diocesan bishop forbid them if they were to take place in his diocese? To answer these questions, let us see what exactly the document teaches and what arguments it relies on.

The document, which was neither discussed nor approved by the General Assembly of Cardinals and Bishops of this Dicastery, acknowledges that the hypothesis (or teaching?) it proposes is new and that it is based primarily on the pastoral magisterium of Pope Francis.

According to the Catholic faith, the pope and the bishops can set certain pastoral accents and creatively relate the truth of Revelation to the new challenges of each age, as for example in the field of social doctrine or of bioethics, while respecting the fundamental principles of Christian anthropology. But these innovations cannot go beyond what was revealed to them once and for all by the apostles as the word of God (*Dei verbum* 8). In fact, there are no biblical texts or texts of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church or previous documents of the magisterium to support the conclusions of FS. Moreover, what we see is not a development but a doctrinal leap. For one can speak of a doctrinal development only if the new explanation is contained, at least implicitly, in Revelation and, above all, does not contradict the dogmatic definitions. And a doctrinal development that reaches a deeper meaning of the doctrine must have occurred gradually, through a long period of maturation. In point of fact, the last magisterial pronouncement on this matter was issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in a responsum published in March 2021, less than three years ago, and it categorically rejected the possibility of blessing these unions. This applies both to public blessings and to private blessings for people living in sinful conditions.

How does FS justify proposing a new doctrine without contradicting the previous 2021 document?

First of all, FS recognizes that both the CDF *Responsum* of 2021 and the traditional, valid, and binding teaching on blessings do

not permit blessings in situations that are contrary to God's law, as in the case of sexual unions outside of marriage. This is clear for the sacraments, but also for other blessings which FS calls "liturgical." These "liturgical" blessings belong to what the Church has called "sacramentals," as witnessed by the *Rituale Romanum*. In these two types of blessings, there must be an agreement between the blessing and the Church's teaching (FS 9-11).

Therefore, in order to accept the blessing of situations that are contrary to the Gospel, the DDF proposes an original solution: to broaden the concept of a blessing (FS 7; FS 12). This is justified as follows: "One must also avoid the risk of reducing the meaning of blessings to this point of view alone [i.e., to the 'liturgical' blessings of the sacraments and sacramentals], for it would lead us to expect the same moral conditions for a simple blessing that are called for in the reception of the sacraments" (FS 12). That is, a new concept of blessing is needed, one that goes beyond sacramental blessings in order to accompany pastorally the journey of those who live in sin.

Now, in reality, this extension beyond the sacraments already takes place through the other blessings approved in the *Rituale Romanum*. The Church does not require the same moral conditions for a blessing as for receiving a sacrament. This happens, for example, in the case of a penitent who does not want to abandon a sinful situation, but who can humbly ask for a personal blessing so that the Lord may give him light and strength to understand and follow the teachings of the Gospel. This case does not require a new kind of "pastoral" blessing.

Why, then, is it necessary to broaden the meaning of "blessing," if the blessing as understood in the *Roman Ritual* already goes beyond the blessing given in a sacrament? The reason is that blessings contemplated by the *Roman Ritual* are only possible over "things, places, or circumstances that do not contradict the law or the spirit of the Gospel" (FS 10, quoting the *Roman Ritual*). And this is the point that the DDF wants to

overcome, since it wants to bless couples in circumstances, such as same-sex relationships, that contradict the law and the spirit of the Gospel. It is true that the Church can add “new sacramentals” to existing ones (Vatican II: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 79), but she cannot change their meaning in such a way as to trivialize sin, especially in an ideologically charged cultural situation that also misleads the faithful. And this change of meaning is precisely what happens in FS, which invents a new category of blessings beyond those associated with either a sacrament or a blessing as the Church has understood them. FS says that these are non-liturgical blessings that belong to popular piety. So there would be three kinds of blessings:

a) Prayers associated with the sacraments, asking that the person be in the proper state to receive the sacraments, or asking that the person receive the strength to turn from sin.

b) Blessings, as contained in the *Roman Ritual* and as Catholic doctrine has always understood them, which can be addressed to persons, even if they live in sin, but not to “things, places, or circumstances that ... contradict the law or the spirit of the Gospel” (FS 10, quoting the *Roman Ritual*). Thus, for example, a woman who has had an abortion could be blessed, but not an abortion clinic.

c) The new blessings proposed by FS would be pastoral blessings, not liturgical or ritual blessings. Therefore, they would no longer have the limitation of “ritual” or type “b” blessings. They could be applied not only to persons in sin, as in “ritual” blessings, but also to things, places, or circumstances that are contrary to the Gospel.

These “c” type blessings, or “pastoral” blessings are a novelty. Not being liturgical but rather of “popular piety,” they would supposedly not compromise evangelical doctrine and would not have to be consistent with either moral norms or Catholic doctrine. What can be said about this new category of blessing?

A first observation is that there is no basis for this new usage in the biblical texts cited by FS, nor in any previous statement of the Magisterium. Nor do the texts offered by Pope Francis provide a basis for this new type of blessing. For already the blessing according to the *Roman Ritual* (type “b”) allows a priest to bless someone who lives in sin. And this type “of blessing can easily be applied to someone who is in prison or in a rehabilitation group, as Francis says (quoted in FS 27). **The innovative “pastoral” blessing (type “c”), in contrast, goes beyond what Francis says, because one could give such a blessing to a reality that is contrary to God's law, such as an extramarital relationship.** In fact, according to the criterion of this type of blessings, one could even bless an abortion clinic or a mafia group.

This leads to a **second observation: it is hazardous to invent new terms that go against the traditional usage of language. Such procedure can give rise to arbitrary exercises of power.** In the case at hand, the fact is that a blessing has an objective reality of its own and thus cannot be redefined at will to fit a subjective intention that is contrary to the nature of a blessing. Here Humpty Dumpty's famous line from *Alice in Wonderland* comes to mind: “When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.” Alice replies, “The question is whether you can make words mean so many different things.” And Humpty Dumpty says: “The question is which is to be master; that's all.”

The third observation relates to the very concept of a “non-liturgical blessing” which is not intended to sanction anything (FS 34), that is, a “pastoral” blessing (type “c”). How does it differ from the blessing contemplated by the *Roman Ritual* (type “b”)? The difference is not in the spontaneous nature of the blessing, which is already possible in type “b” blessings, since they do not need to be regulated or approved in the *Roman Ritual*. Nor is the difference in popular piety, since the

blessings according to the *Roman Ritual* are already adapted to popular piety, which asks for the blessing of objects, places, and people. **It seems that the innovative “pastoral” blessing is created ad hoc to bless situations that are contrary to the law or spirit of the gospel.**

This brings us to a *fourth observation* concerning the object of this “pastoral” blessing, which distinguishes it from a “ritual” blessing of the *Roman Ritual*. **A “pastoral” blessing can include situations that are contrary to the Gospel. Notice** that not only sinful persons are blessed here, but that by blessing the couple, it is the sinful relationship itself that is blessed. Now, God cannot send his grace upon a relationship that is directly opposed to him and cannot be ordered toward him. Sexual intercourse outside of marriage, qua sexual intercourse, cannot bring people closer to God and therefore cannot open itself to God's blessing. Therefore, if this blessing were given, its only effect would be to confuse the people who receive it or who attend it. They would think that God has blessed what He cannot bless. **This “pastoral” blessing would be neither pastoral nor a blessing.** It is true that Cardinal Fernandez, in later statements to *Infovaticana*, said that it is not the union that is blessed, but the couple. However, **this is emptying a word of its meaning, since what defines a couple as couple is precisely their being a union.**

The difficulty of blessing a union or couple is especially evident in the case of homosexuality. **For in the Bible, a blessing has to do with the order that God has created and that he has declared to be good.** This order is based on the sexual difference of male and female, called to be one flesh. Blessing a reality that is contrary to creation is not only impossible, it is blasphemy. Once again, **it is not a question of blessing persons who “live in a union that cannot be compared in any way to marriage” (FS, n. 30), but of blessing the very union that cannot be compared to**

marriage. It is precisely for this purpose that a new kind of blessing is created (FS 7, 12).

Several arguments appear in the text that attempt to justify these blessings. **First, the possibility of conditions that reduce the imputability of the sinner. However, these conditions refer to the person, not to the relationship itself.** It is also said that asking for the blessing is the possible good that these persons can realize in their present conditions, as if asking for a blessing already constituted **an opening to God and to conversion. This may be true for those who ask for a blessing for themselves, but not for those who ask for a blessing as a couple. The latter, in asking for a blessing, implicitly or explicitly seek to justify their relationship itself before God, without realizing that it is precisely their relationship that distances them from God.** Finally, it is claimed that there are positive elements in the relationship and that these can be blessed, but these positive elements (for example, that one helps the other in an illness) are **secondary to the relationship itself—whose defining characteristic is the sharing of sexual activity—and these elements do not change the nature of this relationship,** which in no case can be directed towards God, as already noted in the 2021 *Responsum* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Even in an abortion clinic there are positive elements, from the anesthesiologists who prevent physical pain, to the desire of the doctors to protect the life project of the woman who is having an abortion.

A fifth observation concerns the internal inconsistency of this innovative “pastoral” blessing. Is it even possible to give a non-liturgical blessing, a blessing, that is, which does not officially represent the teaching of Christ and of the Church? The key to answering this question is not whether the rites are officially approved or rather spontaneously improvised. The question is whether the one giving the blessing is a priest, a

representative of Christ and the Church. FS affirms that there is no problem for the priest to join in the prayer of those who find themselves in a situation contrary to the Gospel (FS 30), **but in this blessing the priest does not simply join in their prayer, but rather invokes the descent of God's gifts upon the relationship itself. Insofar as the priest acts as a priest, he acts in the name of Christ and the Church.** Now to claim that one can separate the meaning of this blessing from the teaching of Christ is to **postulate a dualism between what the Church does and what the Church says.** But as the Second Vatican Council teaches, revelation is given to us by deeds and words, which are inseparable (Dei Verbum 2), and the Church's proclamation cannot separate deeds from words. It is precisely the simple people, whom the document wishes to favor by promoting popular piety, who are most susceptible to being deceived by a symbolic deed that contradicts doctrine, since they intuitively grasp the doctrinal content of the deed.

In light of this, can a faithful Catholic accept the teaching of FS? Given the unity of deeds and words in the Christian faith, one can only accept that it is good to bless these unions, even in a pastoral way, if one believes that such unions are not objectively contrary to the law of God. It follows that **as long as Pope Francis continues to affirm that homosexual unions are always contrary to God's law, he is implicitly affirming that such blessings cannot be given. The teaching of FS is therefore self-contradictory** and thus requires further clarification. The Church cannot celebrate one thing and teach another because, as St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote, Christ was the Teacher “who spoke and it was done” (Ephesians 15:1), and one cannot separate his flesh from his word.

The other question we asked was whether a priest could agree to bless these unions, some of which coexist with a legitimate marriage or in which it is not uncommon for partners to change. According to FS, he could do so with a non-liturgical,

non-official “pastoral” blessing. This would mean that the priest would have to give these blessings without acting in the name of Christ and the Church. But this would mean that he would not be acting as a priest. **In fact, he would have to give these blessings not as a priest of Christ, but as one who has rejected Christ. In fact, by his actions, the priest who blesses these unions presents them as a path to the Creator. Therefore, he commits a sacrilegious and blasphemous act against the Creator's plan and against Christ's death for us, which meant to fulfill the Creator's plan.** The diocesan bishop is concerned as well. As pastor of his local church, he is obliged to prevent these sacrilegious acts, otherwise he would become an accomplice to them and would deny the mandate given to him by Christ to confirm his brethren in the faith.

Priests should proclaim God's love and goodness to all people and also help sinners and those who are weak and have difficulty in conversion with counsel and prayer. This is very different from pointing out to them with **self-invented but misleading signs** and words that God is not so demanding about sin, thus hiding the fact that sin in thought, word and deed distances us from God. **There is no blessing, not only in public but also in private, for sinful living conditions that objectively contradict God's holy will.** And it is no evidence of a healthy hermeneutic that the courageous defenders of Christian doctrine are branded as rigorists, more interested in the legalistic fulfillment of their moral norms than in the salvation of concrete persons. For this is what Jesus says to ordinary people: “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Mt 11:28-30). And the apostle explains it this way: “And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is

begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith. Who [indeed] is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 Jn 5:3-5). **At a time when a false anthropology is undermining the divine institution of marriage between a man and a woman, with the family and its children, the Church should remember the words of her Lord and Head: "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few" (Mt 7:13-14).**