Appeal to the Cardinals

In response to the confusion created by Pope Francis' attempt to alter the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to include doctrine contrary to Scripture and Tradition, an international group of clergy and academics, including CFN Editor-in-Chief Brian McCall, have appealed to the College of Cardinals to intervene.

According to the press release announcing the delivery of the letter, it is the legal right of Catholics to appeal to their pastors in such circumstances: "According to the Church's own law, competent Catholics 'have the right and even at times the duty to manifest […] their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful' (Code of Canon Law, Canon 212). St Thomas Aquinas, considered a model for Catholic theologians, likewise held that "if the faith were endangered, a subject ought to rebuke his prelate even publicly" (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 33, art. 4, ad. 2).

Below is a copy of the letter delivered to the Dean of the College of Cardinals today, August 15, 2018. Let us pray that the Cardinals will have the fortitude to respond to the grace of state of their office and to give witness to the truth.

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To their Most Reverend Eminences, the Cardinals of the holy Roman Church,

Since it is a truth contained in the word of God, and taught by the ordinary and universal magisterium of the Catholic Church, that criminals may lawfully be put to death by the civil power when this is necessary to preserve just order in civil society, and since the present Roman pontiff has now more than once publicly manifested his refusal to teach this doctrine, and has rather brought great confusion upon the Church by seeming to contradict it, and by inserting into the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* a paragraph which will cause and is already causing many people, both believers and non-believers, to suppose that the Church considers, contrary to the word of God, that capital punishment is intrinsically evil, we hereby call upon Your Eminences to advise His Holiness that it is his duty to put an end to this scandal, to withdraw this paragraph from the Catechism, and to teach the word of God unadulterated; and we venture to state our conviction that this is a duty seriously binding upon yourselves, before God and before the Church.

Dr. Hadley Arkes, Professor of Jurisprudence and American Institutions emeritus at Amherst College; founder and director of the James Wilson Institute on Natural Rights & the American Founding, Washington D.C.

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