Editor's Note: The following statement was issued by members of the John Paul II Academy for Human Life and the Family, an organization founded in 2017 by former members of the Pontifical Academy for Life (see here for background). The statement is signed by Dr. Thomas Ward, President of the Academy, although additional signatories are listed here. CFN is pleased to help circulate this important statement and concurs wholeheartedly that Pope Francis should immediately remove Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, who is unfit "to fulfil the role of defender of the faith," and replace him with "a competent theologian faithful to the moral teachings of the Church."

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The John Paul II Academy for Human Life and the Family formally requests Pope Francis to dismiss Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández.

The John Paul II Academy for Human Life and Family (JAHLF) feels obliged to express its astonishment and perplexity that Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández has accepted the role of Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith despite having in past decades written scandalous books of an erotic nature which border on pornography and which contain passages that clash with the traditional teaching of the Church, in particular his works "*Sáname con tu boca – El arte de besar*" ("Heal Me With Your Mouth: The Art of Kissing") and "*La Pasión mística – espiritualidad y sensualidad*"("Mystical Passion – spirituality and sensuality"). Far from retracting the disgraceful passages that these works contain, Cardinal Fernández has limited himself to stating that he would not have published them today and that he has prohibited their reprinting.

The sensual-mystical literature for which the cardinal has a particular propensity is one of the worst evils of our time to the extent that under the pretext of spirituality, it, in reality, does nothing but justify the worst excesses of the sexual revolution that is deeply corrupting our society and leading our youth to the abyss.

Although all honest acts performed with good intentions are meritorious before God, sexual relations in our present order of fallen nature are so linked to unruly concupiscence that, generally, they cannot constitute an object that awakens or elevates piety. Already during the pontificate of Pius XI, the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office published an Instruction entitled *De sensuali et de sensuali-mystico litterarum genere* explicitly condemning mystical-sensual literature, in particular works of those authors who "do not

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fear to embellish the pasture of a sickly sensuality with sacred things, mixing immodest loves with a certain piety towards God and an entirely false religious mysticism." The Instruction explicitly states that no intention of the author can prevent "that readers whose fragility is generally great, as is also great their propensity to lust as a result of the corruption of their nature, gradually caught in nets by the bait of these impure pages, are not perverted in their minds and depraved in their hearts."

It is deplorable that almost a century after this Instruction, lay Catholics should have to remind the Prefect of the admonition of his own predecessor:

"Let these literati learn once and for all that they cannot serve two masters, God and sensuality, religion and impurity. 'He who is not with me, said the Lord Jesus, is against me' (Matthew, 12, 30). They are certainly not with Jesus Christ, the writers who, through sordid descriptions, deprave good morals, which are the most authentic foundations of civil and family society."

These scandalous episodes show that Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández does not have the necessary minimum qualities required to fulfil the role of defender of the faith. For this reason, this Academy formally asks the Holy Father to dismiss him and appoint in his place a competent theologian faithful to the moral teachings of the Church.

Respectfully yours,

In Christ,

Dr. Thomas Ward
President
John Paul II Academy
for Human Life and the Family

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