A group of over 90 clergy and scholars have signed a filial appeal to the Catholic hierarchy. They make two requests as sons of the Church. First, they request that bishops "**[f]ollowing the brave example of so many brother bishops around the world: please forbid immediately the application of this document in your diocese.**" Their second request is that the hierarchy around the world "**ask directly the Pope to urgently withdraw this unfortunate document, which is in contradiction with both Scripture and the universal and uninterrupted Tradition of the Church and which clearly produces a serious scandal.**"

The letter was signed by public figures from across the world including familiar names to our readers: Dr. Peter A. Kwasniewski, Dr. Maike Hickson, Prof. Roberto de Mattei, Elizabeth Yore, and Fr. Gerard Murray.

Some might question the likelihood of success of such an appeal. Yet, we must remember that God only asks us to do what is within our sphere of our station of life. He will take our humble attempts and work the real transformation. Those of us who are not bishops cannot take these actions directly; yet, we have the right and the obligation to call upon our shepherds to act and not pander to the hirelings. If it does nothing else in the immediate term, the publication of this appeal will leave a historical record that not all Catholics slavishly followed blatantly illicit and immoral directives. The early martyrs may not have seen the conversion of the Roman Empire at the time of their witness to the Faith. Yet, each one contributed their seed to the conversion.

Catholic Family News is proud to republish this witness to the truth of the natural law and the obligation of the world's episcopacy to resist the papal tyranny that attempts to impose this travesty on the Church.

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Filial Appeal

To all Cardinals and Bishops of the Catholic Church

Your Eminencies, Your Excellencies:

We, the undersigned Catholic priests, scholars, and authors, write to you on the occasion of the latest document published by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Fiducia Supplicans*, which has caused so much scandal in the Church during this last Christmastime.

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As is widely known, a relevant part of the world episcopate has practically rejected it, due to its evident break with Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. Twenty episcopal conferences, dozens of individual prelates, and even cardinals invested with the highest positions, such as Cardinal Müller and Cardinal Sarah, have expressed an unequivocal condemnatory judgment. So have also the UK, USA, and Australian Confraternities of Catholic Clergy. Never in the history of the Catholic Church has a document of the Roman Magisterium experienced such a strong rejection.

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Indeed, despite its explicit reaffirmation of the traditional doctrine of the Church on Marriage, it turns out that the pastoral practice that the document allows is in direct opposition to it. So much so, that the document has been very favorably received by those few episcopates and prelates that for decades have been openly advocating a change in the doctrine on sexual morality. It is evident that the practical message that this new declaration transmits is much more in line with the program and ideas of those who want to change the doctrine, than with the doctrine itself that the document claims to keep intact.

The document effectively attempts to introduce a separation between doctrine and liturgy on the one hand, and pastoral practice on the other. But this is impossible: in fact pastoral care, like all action, always presupposes *a theory* and, therefore, if pastoral care performs something that does not correspond to the doctrine, what is actually being proposed is *a different doctrine*.

The blessing of a couple (whether “liturgical” or “pastoral”) is, so to speak, a *natural sign*.

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The concrete gesture *says* something naturally, and therefore has a natural, immediate communicative effect, which cannot be artificially changed by the verbal *caveats* of the document. A blessing as such, in the universal language of humanity, always implies an *approval* of what is being blessed.

Therefore, the concrete sign that is given with such blessing, in front of the whole world, is that “irregular couples”, extramarital and homosexual alike, according to the Catholic Church, would now be acceptable to God, precisely in the type of union that specifically configures them as couples. Nor does it make sense to separate “couple” from “union”, as card. Fernández has tried to do, since a couple is a couple *because* of the union that gives existence to it.

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The fact that other significant and accidental circumstances such as timing, location, or ornaments such as flowers and wedding clothes are excluded from the act does not change the nature of the act, since the central and essential gesture remains. Furthermore, we all know from experience what such “restrictions” are worth and how long they last.

The fact is that a priest is imparting a blessing on two people who present themselves as a couple, in the sexual sense, and precisely a couple defined by its objectively sinful relationship. Therefore—regardless of the intentions and interpretations of the document, or the explanations the priest may try to give—this action will be the visible and tangible sign of a different doctrine, which contradicts traditional doctrine.

Let us remember that the traditional doctrine on the subject must be considered *infallible*, since it is unequivocally confirmed by Scripture and Tradition, a universal and uninterrupted tradition, *ubique et semper*. And it must be remembered that this is a doctrine of *natural law*, which does not allow for any change.

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In practice, the faithful will not even be aware of the subtle theoretical justifications introduced by the Declaration, much less those that were added in the recent clarification on the Declaration. The message that is effectively launched, and that the people of God, and the entire world, will inevitably register and are already registering is that: *The Catholic Church has finally evolved, and now accepts homosexual unions, and, more generally, extramarital unions.*

This situation fully justifies the decided rejection of so many episcopal conferences, so many prelates, so many scholars, and so many ordinary lay people. In this context, it is definitely not justifiable, especially for a cardinal or a bishop, to remain silent, since the scandal that has already occurred is serious and public, and if it is not stopped, it is bound to be more and more amplified. The threat does not become smaller but more serious, since the error comes from the Roman See, and is destined to scandalize all the faithful, and above all the little ones, the simple faithful who have no way of orienting and defending themselves in this confusion: "Whoever offends one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for him if a donkey's millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (*Mt* 18,6).

The pastors and all those who have some responsibility in the Church have been constituted as sentinels: "If the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the horn, so that the people are not warned, and when the sword comes he kills one of them, he will perish because of him, but I will ask the watchman to account for his blood" (*Ez.* 33,6).

In light of the above we fervently implore you to:

(1) Follow the brave example of so many brother bishops around the world: please forbid immediately the application of this document in your diocese.

(2) Please ask directly the Pope to urgently withdraw this unfortunate document, which is in contradiction with both Scripture and the universal and uninterrupted Tradition of the Church and which clearly produces a serious scandal.

In this difficult moment, a clear word of truth would be the best example of your faithful and courageous dedication to the people of God entrusted to you, a sign of fidelity to the true mission of the Papacy and at the same time the best help for the pope himself, an eloquent "fraternal correction," which he urgently needs in this last and most critical period of his pontificate and probably of his life. If you act promptly, there is still some hope that he may rescue his pontificate and his own person from a stain that could otherwise weigh on him indelibly, not only in history, but in eternity.

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Signatures:

Signatures:

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