



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on January 17, 2024

Pope's Same-Sex Blessing: Opposition and Shockwaves Build Worldwide

The bombshell Vatican document [Fiducia Supplicans](#) (“Supplicating Trust”) calling on Catholic priests to bless “same-sex couples” and heterosexual couples living in adulterous relationships set off global shockwaves that have refused to subside. Indeed, the initial tumult has only swollen since the declaration was issued by the Vatican’s Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) on December 18. This bomb exploded as Christians around the world were preparing for the birthday of the Savior, causing an unprecedented Christmas commotion. Many Catholic bishops, archbishops, cardinals, priests, theologians, commentators, and lay leaders worldwide quickly responded with emphatic opposition to the DDF’s “innovative” proposal to bless relationships that the Catholic Church has perennially taught are sinful and in violation of God’s law. (See [Defying Francis’ Same-sex ‘Blessings’: A Rising Chorus of Cardinals, Bishops, Clergy, Faithful.](#))



AP Images
Pope Francis

The Catholic bishops of Africa were the most unified and forceful in announcing that they would not countenance blessing sin. Moreover, they denounced *Fiducia Supplicans* as “blasphemous,” “scandalous,” “self-contradictory,” “confusing,” and “deceitful.” Coming as it did, however, in the busy week before Christmas, many bishops and episcopal congregations delayed issuing statements on the declaration until after the Holy Day.

Cardinal Fernández Doubles Down

In the weeks that have followed, Pope Francis and DDF head Cardinal Victor Manuel “Tucho” Fernández have tried, to no avail, to tamp down criticism of their revolutionary declaration. Although the document said that “beyond the guidance provided above, no further responses should be expected about possible ways to regulate details or practicalities regarding blessings of this type,” the volume and intensity of opposition has forced the Vatican to respond. Cardinal Fernández, the author of the contentious document, jumped on the media circuit to insist that the blessing “innovation” in no way conflicts with traditional church teaching. On January 4, Fernández doubled down, issuing a five-page DDF [press release](#) saying it is necessary for all bishops to respect *Fiducia Supplicans* as intended by Pope Francis.

“There is no room to distance ourselves doctrinally” from the Pope’s declaration about blessings, the DDF statement says, adding that the document must not be considered to be “heretical, contrary to the



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tradition of the Church or blasphemous.”

The press release, which the National Catholic Register dubbed “*Fiducia Supplicans 2.0*,” weighed in at over 2,200 words, nearly half the length of the original declaration about which it had said it would offer no further comments. The DDF’s January 4 “clarification” insists that “Prudence and attention to the ecclesial context and to the local culture could allow for different methods of application, but not a total or definitive denial of this path that it proposed to priests.” As such, the DDF was telling bishops that they *could not* prohibit priests from bestowing blessings on same-sex couples. A troubling corollary to that position is that Catholic priests who in conscience refuse to bless homosexual couples may find themselves punished either by the church or civil authorities, or both, for denying the “rights” of LGBTQ+++ “couples.” The plights of Christian cake makers, florists, photographers, and wedding planners who have refused to service sodomitical “weddings” should leave clear that priestly refusals to participate in the blessing (i.e. approval) of those engaged in homosexual acts — which the Bible calls an “abomination,” the bishops of Cameroon [rightly point out](#) — face potential harassment, clerical discipline, civil litigation, and/or prosecution, fines, and jail.

“Kissing Cardinal’s” Massive New Scandal

A colossal wrinkle was tossed into the ecclesiastical brouhaha only a few days after the DDF “clarification” press release. A previously hidden erotic book written by Cardinal Fernández in 1998 surfaced, unleashing a new storm around the man Pope Francis has appointed as the guardian of church doctrine. Titled [Mystical Passion: Spirituality and Sensuality](#), the book has been denounced by critics as “pornographic,” “blasphemous,” “raunchy,” “depraved,” “pure smut,” “creepy” “degenerate,” and, “anathema.” Written when he was still Father Fernández, *Mystical Passion* goes into pornographic detail describing human male and female genital anatomy and male and female orgasm, in a lurid attempt to compare sexual climax to divine love. It also includes a fantasized sexual liaison between a 16-year-old girl and Jesus Christ.

This outrage was not the one-off “indiscretion” of a young priest. As we have [reported](#) previously, soon after Fernández was named prefect of the DDF a furor erupted when it was discovered that in 1995 he had authored a now-infamous erotic book, [Heal Me With Your Mouth: The Art of Kissing](#). It seems that Fernández’s unhealthy and sinful obsession with all things sexual has extended back throughout his clerical career. Edward Pentin, Vatican correspondent for the National Catholic Register, [reported](#) on July 6, 2023, that a dossier on Fernández at the DDF (which Fernández now heads) had found fault with his sexual “theology” back in 2009 when then-Cardinal Bergoglio (now Pope Francis) proposed Fernández for the position of Rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina. Among the problems the DDF brought up were newspaper columns he had written, including at least one on the blessing of same-sex couples. Fernández, a protégé of and longtime advisor to Pope Francis from Bergoglio’s years as a bishop, archbishop, and cardinal in Argentina, says Francis had complete knowledge of his earlier writings.

The recent scandal over Fernández’s *Mystical Passion* prompted best-selling author and popular Catholic podcaster Dr. Taylor Marshall to title a critical video short “Is the Vatican Full of Sex-Obsessed Men?” In this one-minute podcast, Dr. Marshall quickly underscores the main topics that are so disturbing about the Fernández book.

In his longer [40-minute analysis](#) of the book, Dr. Marshall details the problems with Fernández’s obsession with sex both in his past as well as in his current promulgation of troubling doctrinal declarations, such as *Fiducia Supplicans*. Millions of Catholics and non-Catholics alike are asking, “How



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can this be happening? What is wrong inside the Catholic Church?” Dr. Marshall’s best-selling book *Infiltration: The Plot to Destroy the Church from Within* provides answers to those questions, exposing the schemes by the enemies of Christendom stretching back more than a century to penetrate and subvert the Catholic Church.

Cardinal Sarah Calls Out Heretical Blessings

While the Vatican was still reeling from the backlash over *Mystical Passion* and attempting damage control over Fernández’s scandals *du jour*, it was hit with a renewed challenge to its same-sex blessings innovation. On January 8, African Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea published a lengthy and strongly stated [message](#) of opposition to *Fiducia Supplicans*. Cardinal Sarah’s voice on the matter was highly anticipated due to the esteem with which he is held in many circles worldwide. He previously served in the Roman curia under Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, as secretary for the Congregation for the Evangelization of People, president of the Pontifical Council for Human and Christian Development, and prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Worship.

Known as a solidly orthodox theologian, erudite scholar, prolific author, and devout Christian believer, Cardinal Sarah has been unequivocal in opposing homosexual marriages and unions, earning him staunch hostility from pro-homosexual “progressives” among the American and European clergy and the secular media. However, he had remained silent on *Fiducia Supplicans* during the uproar following its release. But he didn’t hold back in his January 8 statement (which was written on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany). Citing Holy Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and statements of previous popes and councils, Cardinal Sarah forthrightly pointed out that homosexual activity is contrary to divine law, the natural law, and the church’s moral law and therefore can in no way be sanctioned.

Concerning the DDF’s deceptive effort to create a distinction in forms of blessing, Sarah stated:

Also, let me not fall into vain quibbles about the meaning of the word blessing. It is obvious that one can pray for the sinner, it is obvious that one can ask God for his conversion. It is obvious that one can bless the man who, little by little, turns to God to humbly ask for a grace of true and radical change in his life.

The prayer of the Church is not refused to anyone. But it can never be diverted to become a legitimization of sin, of the sin structure or even of the next occasion of sin.

The contrite and penitent heart, even if still far from holiness, must be blessed. But let us remember that in the face of unconverted and hardened hearts, no word of blessing comes from the mouth of St. Paul but rather this warning : “With your hardened heart, which does not want to be converted, you accumulate wrath against you for that day of wrath, where the righteous judgment of God will be revealed, He who will render to each according to his deeds.” (Romans 2:5-6).

Cardinal Sarah decried the fact that “confusion, lack of clarity and truth and division have troubled and darkened the Christmas holiday this year,” and noted that even some bishops “sow doubt and scandal in the souls of faithful by claiming to bless homosexual unions as if they were legitimate, conformed to the nature created by God.” He complemented the bishops of Africa and endorsed the strong opposition of their episcopal conferences to the faux blessings. He said that in opposing *Fiducia Supplicans* they do not oppose Pope Francis but “oppose a heresy that seriously undermines the Church.”



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Michael Haynes, reporter for LifeSiteNews.com, tweeted:

BREAKING: Cdl. Sarah firmly rejects *Fiducia Supplicans*, saying by opposing it one “resolutely & radically opposes a heresy that gravely undermines the Church, Body of Christ, & the Church, because it is contrary to the Catholic faith and tradition.”

READ: <https://t.co/vQwchOlbcJ> pic.twitter.com/c982zOEF7x

— Michael Haynes 🇺🇸 (@MLJHaynes) [January 8, 2024](#)

Cardinal Sarah took pains to point out that the Catholic Church has *not* changed its perennial teaching on the disordered and sinful nature of homosexual acts, nor has it given permission to bless same-sex “marriages” or unions. However, he notes, as have many others, that the effect of the confusing wording of the DDF document concerning “same-sex couples” will be to give the impression that blessing “gay” marriages and unions have been OK’d. He warns that “all this confusion, aroused by” the Declaration “may reappear under other more subtle and hidden formulations at the second Synod Session on Synodality, in 2024.”

Although Cardinal Sarah’s critique of *Fiducia Supplicans* was enthusiastically welcomed by orthodox Catholics, it came as no surprise that his remarks also provoked vitriolic attacks from LGBTQ activists within and without the Church. One of the most high-profile broadsides against him came from “progressive” Catholic writer Austen Ivereigh, who said in a [tweet](#) that Cardinal Sarah must resign as a cardinal and “hand back his red hat” for his condemnation of the blessings declaration.

Dr. Ivereigh is not only a close confidante of Pope Francis and the author of two biographies of the current pontiff but also a co-author with Francis of the 2023 book *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future*. A darling of the media due to his heterodox views, he has been a champion of dissent under previous pontificates. Now, however, he is Pope Francis’s most devoted attack dog, going after all who dissent from the Bergoglio revolution that is attempting to overturn two millennia of Church doctrine and moral teaching.

Entire African Bishops’ Contingent Says “No!” to *Fiducia Supplicans*

On January 11, Catholic bishops representing the entire continent of Africa delivered a devastating blow to *Fiducia Supplicans*, providing a double whammy to Cardinal Sarah’s dissent.

In a [letter](#) signed by Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, president of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) and Archbishop of Kinshasa, the bishops said that they would not be allowing blessings for same-sex couples. They note that “this Declaration has caused a shockwave, it has sown misconceptions and unrest in the minds of many lay faithful, consecrated persons, and even pastors and has aroused strong reactions.” They state that they remain in union with Pope Francis and that he has agreed to accept their dissent from *Fiducia Supplicans*.

Michael Haynes at LifeSiteNews.com tweeted:

[#BREAKING](#) Cdl. Ambongo (pres of African bishops' conferences) says Africa's bishops won't implement *Fiducia Supplicans*, over “confusion..scandal” it would cause in African society & text is in “direct contradiction” with African culture.

Says position is approved by [#PopeFrancis](#). pic.twitter.com/ViWITsuR5j

— Michael Haynes 🇺🇸 (@MLJHaynes) [January 11, 2024](#)



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Pope Francis Backs Down, Then Reverses, Blasts Critics

Faced with a growing revolt, Pope Francis [backed off](#) from the earlier DDF hard line of Fernández and agreed to accept the African bishops' dissident (orthodox) position. However, the Vatican was sending contradictory signals, since on January 11, the same day the African bishops issued their dissent (with the pope's approval), Vatican official Cardinal Mauro Gambetti [announced](#) that same-sex couples would be given blessings at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, in apparent violation of *Fiducia Supplicans* and the DDF "clarification" of January 4. The clarification restated the false distinction between traditional blessings and the same-sex innovation blessing and then reiterated the supposed restrictions on optics. "It remains clear, therefore," the statement said, "that the blessing must not take place in a prominent place within a sacred building, or in front of an altar, as this also would create confusion." In the Catholic world, it doesn't get any more prominent than St. Peter's. So, maybe the same-sex "blessings" will take place in a *non-prominent* part of the basilica? At least initially?

Well, it didn't even take 24 hours for us to see confirmation of the warnings that *Fiducia Supplicans'* weasel-worded claims of protecting traditional Catholic teaching would prove worthless and that the diabolical innovation would be used as a vehicle to normalize and *sacramentalize* sodomy. On December 19, the day after the promulgation of the DDF declaration, Fr. James Martin, a notorious LGBTQ promoter and pal of Pope Francis, rushed out to "bless" a homosexual couple and acclaim it on his Twitter feed. *The New York Times*, of course, was conveniently on hand to photograph the event and spread the celebration in its pages.

Dear friends: I was honored to bless my friends Jason and Damian this morning in our Jesuit residence, according to the new guidelines laid out by the Vatican for same-sex couples. But before this, I've been blessed by their friendship and support. <https://t.co/aojq5Vhpez>

— James Martin, SJ (@JamesMartinSJ) [December 20, 2023](#)

Then there's Fr. Richard Watson, pastor of the historic Saint Paul Catholic Church in Lexington, Kentucky. Completely in violation of the supposedly "clear" restrictions in *Fiducia Supplicans* and the subsequent Fernández clarification, Fr. Watson "blessed" a lesbian couple inside the church sanctuary, near the altar, with a crucifix and other sacred images prominently displayed. This explicitly violates the clarification directive that "the blessing must not take place in a prominent place within a sacred building, or in front of an altar." Fr. Watson even wore a rainbow Pride stole for the occasion, another violation. And, naturally, it was all photographed and publicized in defiance of the fake protections claimed by Fernández and the DDF. All of this was not only predictable, but was *precisely predicted* by critics.

This is not the private blessing for individuals that some would argue is the intended target of the new Vatican document. This is a "married" lesbian couple getting a public blessing in church. But these are the optics they must have known would be populating around the internet... <pic.twitter.com/ncuz6wz21a>

— Michael J. Matt (@Michael_J_Matt) [January 4, 2024](#)

The sodomitical "blessings" that are taking place all over the world decisively demonstrate that the so-called restrictions in *Fiducia Supplicans* were throwaway lines, deceitful eyewash, to placate the opposition. If more proof be needed, consider that Pope Francis and Fernández, who have acted harshly



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against faithful orthodox Catholics such as Bishop Joseph Strickland, Cardinal Raymond Burke, Fr. Frank Pavone, and Fr. James Altman, have taken no punitive action against priests, bishops, and cardinals who are going even beyond what *Fiducia Supplicans* purportedly allows.

Adding to the concerns are the statements of Pope Francis in an Italian television interview on January 14 in which he flip-flopped on his accommodation of the African bishops. After blessing the African people and encouraging them “to remain faithful, as always, to the defense of Christian values,” he gave an entirely different message in the interview. He [accused](#) opponents of blessings for same-sex couples of jumping to “ugly conclusions” about a document that they do not understand. He stated that “the Lord blesses everyone, everyone, everyone, those who come. Every person.” The cardinals, bishops, and priests who have resisted Francis on this matter agree, but point out that in order to receive the blessing the recipient must have true contrition for his sins and be willing to convert and change his sinful ways. As they note, Jesus said, “Go and sin no more.”

A Sign From God?

In early January, the Catholic blogosphere lit up with reports of what appears to be a sign from Heaven that *Fiducia Supplicans* is being condemned from on high. Reportedly, on December 17, 2023 — Pope Francis’ 87th birthday (he was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio, December 17, 1936) — lightning struck a statue of St. Peter at a church in Argentina, with very curious results. This was the day before the pope issued the declaration on blessings of same-sex couples. The lightning bolt destroyed the right hand of the statue, in which St. Peter holds the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven entrusted to him by Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:19). It also destroyed the keys and the iron halo of the statue. The larger-than-life statue is located on the facade of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Rosary of San Nicolas, north of Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Bergoglio was cardinal archbishop before ascending to the See of Rome. The story has been verified by two Catholic organizations that sent reporters to the church, photographed the statue, and talked to the pastor. The Lepanto Institute provided photographs and commentary on X.

Some people are questioning the veracity of the claims that a statue of St. Peter in Argentina was struck by lightning on Dec. 17, pulverizing the halo, key, and blessing hand.

The Lepanto Institute sent someone to the location to take pictures and confirm the events. The Dec.... pic.twitter.com/XsibMGej78

— Lepanto Institute (@LepantoInst) [December 31, 2023](#)

Catholic Vote also provided photographs and a more extensive [report](#) on its website. Clearly, this battle is far from over.

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