
香港天主教社會傳播處

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Date : 23 December 2023

Pastoral blessings of the declaration *Fiducia Supplicans*

On the 18th of this month (Monday), the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Holy See, with the approval of Pope Francis, published a declaration entitled *Fiducia Supplicans*, which drew wide attention. At the heart of the declaration is a call for clergy to impart pastoral blessings to those who are in same-sex or irregular relationships, but are asking for the mercy of the Father. Some media reports mistakenly comment that the Church now also give recognition to same-sex marriages.

In fact, the declaration does not change the traditional teaching of the Church that marriage is a life-long union between man and woman. Furthermore, the declaration emphasizes that such pastoral blessings, based on pastoral charity, should not be confused with the liturgical blessing of marriage, and such pastoral blessings must not be so imparted as to cause misunderstanding. The pastoral blessings to those who yearn for God's mercy and long to entrust their lives into His hands are meant to help them to live fully accordingly to His will and to lead them to salvation. This has always been the way that God leads mankind to salvation.

In short, the content of the declaration is not only rooted in biblical tradition and church teaching, but also highlights Pope Francis' keen pastoral instincts. Since taking office as the Pope, he has been leading the Church to walk with and care for the socially marginalized, the helpless, and those rejected by society, showing God's mercy to them and leading them to salvation.

The Diocese of Hong Kong hopes that more people in society will experience God's mercy and blessings through the inspiring message of this declaration.

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