



# Archdiocese of Winnipeg

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## Statement of Archbishop Richard Gagnon on, *Fiducia Supplicans* - A Declaration on the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings December 22 2023

On December 18, 2023, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith issued an important Declaration on the pastoral meaning of blessings in the Catholic Church, blessings requested by couples in various forms of irregular relationships, including same-sex couples.

The title, *Fiducia Supplicans*, comes from the first words of the Declaration in Latin and refers to 'trustful supplication' on the part of people relative to receiving a blessing from the Church's ministers: "The supplicating trust of the faithful People of God receives the gift of blessing that flows from the Heart of Christ through His Church." The document is about the pastoral theology and practice of giving and receiving blessings in the tradition of the Church. It presents a clarification and a certain widening of this important spiritual resource of the Church, to meet contemporary situations.

It is worthy to note that an important distinction is made between what can be referred to as 'liturgical blessings' and the practice of 'spontaneous blessings.' The Declaration reaffirms the Church's perennial teaching on marriage and repeats that the Church has no power to bless or to affirm relationships which are outside this traditional understanding. However, the spiritual resource of spontaneous blessings is available for everyone who seeks God's assistance, mercy, and guidance in His plan of love and truth.

In the New Year, the Archdiocese will discern ways to assist the Faithful in understanding the Church's teaching on blessings. The first step would be to encourage clergy and laity to read and become familiar with this Declaration, *Fiducia Supplicans*.