

A Filial and Apprehensive Supplication

to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

Most Holy Father,

In view of your recent and auspicious statements in defense of the family and the consistency that Catholics must maintain in public life by upholding the principles of the Faith, the undersigned associations—heirs to the thought and action of the great Brazilian Catholic leader Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira—filially address Your Holiness to express their apprehensions about the future of the family.

In 2015, we addressed Pope Francis between the two Synods on the Family to denounce the alliance of influential organizations, political forces, and media outlets promoting so-called gender ideology. This ideology served as a seal of approval for a sexual revolution that favors customs contrary to natural and divine law. Even more seriously, we noted a widespread confusion among Catholics, **“arising from the possibility that a breach ha[d] opened within the Church that would accept adultery—by permitting divorced and then civilly remarried Catholics to receive Holy Communion—and would virtually accept even homosexual unions.”** As a result, we asked Pope Francis **“to clarify the growing confusion amongst the faithful”** and prevent “the very teaching of Jesus Christ from being watered down.”¹

With the support of other entities in the coalition titled **“*Supplica Filiale al Papa Francesco sul futuro della Famiglia*”** (“Filial Appeal to His Holiness Pope Francis on the Future of the Family”), we collected 858,202 signatures. These were delivered to the Holy See on the morning of September 29, 2015, almost exactly ten years ago.

Among the Filial Appeal signatories were 211 prelates (cardinals, archbishops, and bishops), a large number of priests and religious, and numerous renowned lay members of the faithful in the West and elsewhere. In his speech at the colloquium titled *Catholic Church: Where Are You Going?* held in Rome on April 7, 2018, Cardinal Walter Brandmüller mentioned our petition as one of the most evident manifestations of the *consensus fidei fidelium*, exercising an immunizing role to preserve the Church from error.

With great sorrow in our hearts, we must note that, far from responding to this just request from the flock, your predecessor in the Chair of Peter further aggravated the situation. On the one hand, by abusively admitting civilly remarried divorcees to Eucharistic Communion through *Amoris laetitia*’s footnote 351 and granting pontifical approval to its interpretation by the bishops of the Buenos Aires Pastoral Region, Argentina. On the other hand, through statements and gestures that legitimized homosexual civil unions, culminating in the “pastoral blessings” authorized in the *Fiducia supplicans* Declaration of December 18, 2023, signed by the prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Since then, the situation has continued to worsen, especially concerning the acceptance of homosexual relationships. There has been a proliferation of statements by high-ranking prelates calling for an *updating* of Church teaching. This includes changing paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that affirm that the homosexual inclination is “objectively disordered,” and that homosexual acts are “intrinsically disordered” and Sacred Scripture presents them as “acts of grave depravity.”

Although employing a seemingly moderate language, some prelates and theologians are already demanding the discarding of so-called moralist prejudices by historicizing situations, updating the Church’s two-thousand-year-old language, and adapting it to the present times. This is the view, for example, of personages such as Most Rev. Francesco Savino, vice-president of the Italian Bishops Conference,² French

¹ “Filial Appeal to His Holiness Pope Francis on the Future of the Family,” TFP.org, accessed Sept. 13, 2025, <https://www.tfp.org/magazines/filialpetition.pdf>. (Emphasis in the original.)

² See Bruno Volpe, “Mons. Savino, il ‘Giubileo’ LGBT e la falsa misericordia,” Infobreak.it, Sept. 1, 2025, <https://www.infobreak.it/mons-savino-il-giubileo-lgbt-e-la-falsa-misericordia/>.

Archbishop Hervé Giraud,³ and Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, archbishop of Luxembourg. The latter has gone so far as to say that Catholic teaching on homosexuality “is incorrect,” since its sociological and scientific basis is allegedly no longer valid.⁴

Likewise, Sister Jeannine Gramick⁵ and Father James Martin⁶ wish to remove the expression *intrinsically disordered* and propose alternative formulations tending to make admissible what is not and cannot be accepted. The German Synodal Path does the same by calling for a revision of the *Catechism* to adapt it to “human science,” which is tantamount to saying that the modern world has more authority than God.⁷

Unfortunately, some go even further, calling not only for change to words, but to the very practice of the Church’s moral teaching. For example, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy denies that sexual sins are grave, which paves the way for the legitimization and normalization of impurity.⁸ He also affirms that the “radical inclusion” of practicing homosexuals should be sacramental, in other words, that a lifestyle objectively contrary to the divine commandment would not constitute an obstacle to receiving absolution and the Holy Eucharist.⁹ After affirming that Catholic teaching is “sound and good,” Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe dilutes it by saying it must be understood with “nuance.”¹⁰ He indirectly reiterated what he said earlier in the *Pilling Report*, namely, that homosexual relationships could be understood in a eucharistic key, as an image of “Christ’s self-gift” in Holy Communion.¹¹ Austrian theologian Father Ewald Volgger insists on this same line of thinking when he says that same-sex unions are an image of divine solicitude for men, which justifies blessing them.¹² Swiss theologian Daniel Bogner directly undermines the sacrament of marriage by claiming that it needs to be given a new understanding, freeing it from its “shell of perfection,” so as not to discriminate against irregular and homosexual unions. He argues that it is necessary to end “the rigid fixation on biological sex and the necessary heterosexuality of spouses,” since “fertility does not have to be understood exclusively in terms of biological reproduction.”¹³

Given all this, Most Holy Father, we cannot help but conclude that, under the pretext of mercy and adapting to science, some forces are striving to reinvent the Catholic Faith according to worldly passions, making it unrecognizable.

In this context of an open offensive to impose the acceptance of homosexual unions, it was particularly shocking to see that, under the pretext of obtaining Jubilee indulgences, groups that openly profess such

³ See Marguerite de Lasa and Malo Tresca, “Homosexualité: dans l’Église de France, des initiatives pour faire bouger le discours,” *La Croix*, Mar. 3, 2023, <https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Homosexualite-lEglise-France-initiatives-faire-bouger-discours-2023-03-03-1201257664>.

⁴ Ludwig Ring-Eifel, “Er wird sicher für sich den richtigen Weg finden,” *Domradio.de*, Feb. 22, 2022, <https://www.domradio.de/artikel/kardinal-hollerich-spricht-ueber-reformen-und-woelki>.

⁵ See Jeannine Gramick, “Will Actions Affirm Pope Leo’s Words on LGBTQ+ People?” *National Catholic Reporter*, Sept. 4, 2025, <https://www.ncronline.org/opinion/guest-voices/sr-jeannine-gramick-asks-will-actions-affirm-pope-leos-words-lgbtq-people>.

⁶ See Gerald E. Murray, “Father James Martin Proposes an Alternate Catechism,” *National Catholic Register*, Jul. 10, 2017, <https://www.ncregister.com/features/father-james-martin-proposes-an-alternate-catechism>.

⁷ Der Synodale Weg, “Umgang mit geschlechtlicher Vielfalt,” *Frankfurt.bistumlimburg.de*, accessed Sept. 13, 2025, <https://frankfurt.bistumlimburg.de/themen/synodaler-weg-erklaert/news/2023/umgang-mit-geschlechtlicher-vielfalt>.

⁸ See Ashley McKinless and Zac Davis, “Cardinal McElroy: Sex and Sin Need a New Framework in the Church,” Jesuitical podcast, *America*, Feb. 3, 2023, <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2023/02/03/cardinal-mcelroy-inclusion-sexuality-244650/>.

⁹ Robert W. McElroy, “Cardinal McElroy on ‘Radical Inclusion’ for L.G.B.T. People, Women and Others in the Catholic Church,” *America*, Jan. 24, 2023, <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2023/01/24/mcelroy-synodality-inclusion-244587/>.

¹⁰ “Cardinal Radcliffe: Church Can Learn ‘A Bit of Truth’ From LGBTQ+ Catholics,” *ClericalWhispers.blogspot.com*, Dec. 20, 2024, <https://clericalwhispers.blogspot.com/2024/12/cardinal-radcliffe-church-can-learn-bit.html>.

¹¹ Joan Frawley Desmond, “Father Timothy Radcliffe’s Designation as Synod on Synodality’s Retreat Master Stirs Anxiety,” *National Catholic Register*, Jan. 27, 2023, <https://www.ncregister.com/news/father-timothy-radcliffe-s-designation-as-synod-on-synodality-s-retreat-master-stirs-anxiety>.

¹² See Josef Wallner, “Mehr als ein normaler Segen,” *Kirchenzeitung.at*, Apr. 28, 2020, <https://www.kirchenzeitung.at/site/themen/gesellschaftsoziales/mehr-als-ein-normaler-segen>.

¹³ Daniel Bogner, “Theologian: We Need a Marriage Sacrament for the ‘Field Hospital,’” *English.katholisch.de*, Feb. 12, 2024, <https://english.katholisch.de/artikel/51022-theologian-we-need-a-marriage-sacrament-for-the-field-hospital>.

errors were offered an occasion of great visibility. They were allowed to enter in procession into St. Peter's Basilica, carrying a *rainbow* cross. Even more serious, this "homosexual pride" parade was preceded by an audience granted to Father Martin, who later attributed to Your Holiness words of encouragement for his activism on behalf of the L.G.B.T. movement. Similarly, Bishop Francesco Savino, at the end of his homily in the Church of the Gesù, declared that Your Holiness had told him: "Go and celebrate the Jubilee organized by Jonathan's Tent and other organizations that care for [your homosexual] brothers and sisters."¹⁴

We are aware that some of these shocking events (and others still on the agenda) were organized by Holy See agencies during the previous pontificate and that Your Holiness, perhaps in a desire to ensure the unity of the Church, seemingly wants to change the orientation of the Roman Curia gradually. However, while it is legitimate to yield on secondary points for the sake of unity, it does not seem legitimate to do so when it involves sacrificing the truth. To do the truth is not only to say what is true, but also to practice it before many witnesses, as Saint Augustine teaches.¹⁵

A great hope arose in the hearts of millions of Catholics when, during the Jubilee of Families, Your Holiness quoted the encyclical *Humanae vitae* and asserted, "Marriage is not an ideal, but the measure of true love between a man and a woman."¹⁶ This statement echoed your address to the Diplomatic Corps, in which you reiterated that the family is "founded upon the stable union between a man and a woman."¹⁷ However, this hope turns to alarm given the fear that, as in the previous pontificate, concrete pastoral attitudes will continue to belie in practice what is taught in theory.

This fear leads us to renew the request made in our 2015 *Filial Appeal to His Holiness Pope Francis*:

Truly, in these circumstances, **a word from Your Holiness is the only way to clarify the growing confusion** amongst the faithful. It would prevent the very teaching of Jesus Christ from being watered down and would dispel the darkness looming over our children's future should that beacon no longer light their way.

Holy Father, we implore You to say this word. We do so with a heart devoted to all that You are and represent. We do so with the certainty that Your word will never disassociate pastoral practice from the teaching bequeathed by Jesus Christ and his vicars—as this would only add to the confusion. Indeed **Jesus taught us very clearly that there must be coherence between life and truth** (cf. John 14:6–7); and **He also warned us that the only way not to fall is to practice His doctrine** (cf. Matt. 7:24–27).¹⁸

We boldly and respectfully add two specific requests that would make clear the realignment of practice with the Church's traditional teaching.

We beseech you to annul Pope Francis's June 5, 2017 rescript, which conferred special magisterial value on the heterodox interpretation of the ambiguities of *Amoris laetitia*, and clearly reiterate that those who are divorced and civilly remarried and living *more uxorio* cannot receive sacramental absolution nor, as public sinners, Holy Communion.

¹⁴ Innocenzo, "Mons. Savino: 'facciamo camminare la Speranza in tempi oscuri'" Gionata.org, Sept. 10, 2025, <https://www.gionata.org/mons-savino-facciamo-camminare-la-speranza-in-tempi-oscuri/>.

¹⁵ See St. Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. E. B. Pusey, Gutenberg.org, bk 10, ch. 1, § 1, accessed Sept. 13, 2025, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3296/3296-h/3296-h.htm#link2H_4_0010.

¹⁶ "Homily of the Holy Father Leo XIV," Vatican.va, June 1, 2025, <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/homilies/2025/documents/20250601-omelia-giubileo-famiglie.html>.

¹⁷ "Audience to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See," Vatican.va, May 16, 2025, <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/speeches/2025/may/documents/20250516-corpo-diplomatico.html>.

¹⁸ "Filial Appeal to His Holiness Pope Francis." (Emphasis in the original.)

We implore you to revoke the Declaration *Fiducia supplicans* and reaffirm the prohibition on granting any blessing to homosexual pairs as established in the *Responsum* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of February 22, 2021, regarding a *dubium* on blessings for same-sex pairs.

Beseeching your apostolic blessing, we assure you of our prayers to Our Lady of Good Counsel and Saint Augustine. May they enlighten Your Holiness at this delicate beginning of your pontificate, in which you find yourself involuntarily confronted with a difficult-to-mend legacy of confusion and division.

September 15, 2025
Liturgical feast of Our Lady of Sorrows

Instituto Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira (Brasil)	American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property (USA)	Tradición y Acción por un Peru Mayor (Perú)
Asociación Civil Fátima la Gran Esperanza (Argentina)	Australian TFP Inc. (Australia)	Canadian Society for the Defence of Christian Civilization (Canada)
Fundación Roma (Chile)	Asociación Civitas Christiana (Colombia)	Deutsche Gesellschaft zum Schutz von Tradition, Familie und Privateigentum e.V. (Deutschland)
Sociedad Ecuatoriana Tradición y Acción Pro Cultura Occidental (Ecuador)	Tradición y Acción (España)	Société française pour la défense de la Tradition, Famille, Propriété – TFP (France)
Hrvatsko Ddruštvo za Zaštitu Tradicije, Obitelji i Privatnog Vlasništva (Hrvatska)	Irish Society for Christian Civilisation (Ireland)	Associazione Tradizione Famiglia Proprietà (Italia)
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