



04 November 2020

POPE FRANCIS' STATEMENT IN THE DOCUMENTARY "FRANCESCO" EXPLAINED

#English Translation Text

Some statements contained in the documentary "Francesco" directed by Evgeny Afineevsky have recently raised different reactions and interpretations. The following useful points, therefore, are offered from the Holy See for an adequate understanding of Holy Father's words, upon His request and supervision.

Over a year ago, Pope Francis granted an interview in which he answered two distinct questions at two different times, which were referred and published in the documentary as a single answer without the proper context. This has led to confusion. First, the Holy Father made a pastoral reference to the necessity that a son or a daughter with homosexual orientation should never be discriminated against within the family. These words refer to it: "Homosexual persons have a right to be in a family; they are children of God, they have a right to a family. Hence, no one may be cast out of the family or made to live miserably."

The following paragraph of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia* on Love in the Family (2016) can shed light on the above quoted expressions: "During the Synod, we discussed the situation of families whose members include persons who experience same-sex attraction, a situation not easy either for parents or for children. We would like before all else to reaffirm that every person, regardless of sexual orientation, ought to be respected in his or her dignity and treated with consideration, while 'every sign of unjust discrimination' is to be carefully avoided, particularly any form of aggression and violence. Such families should be given respectful pastoral guidance, so that those who manifest a homosexual orientation can receive the assistance they need to understand and fully carry out God's will in their lives" (n. 250).

A subsequent question in the interview pertained to a local law in Argentina on "egalitarian marriages of same-sex couples" ten years ago, and to the then Archbishop of Buenos Aires' opposition to it. In this regard Pope Francis affirmed that "it is absurd to speak of homosexual marriage". He added that, in this precise context, he had spoken of these persons' right to receive some legal protections: "What we have to enact is a law of civil coexistence; they have a right to be legally sheltered. I upheld that".

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During another interview in 2014, the Holy Father said: “Marriage is between a man and a woman. Driven by the need to regulate economic aspects between persons, such as health care insurance, secular states want to legalize civil unions in order to regularize different situations of coexistence. These are coexistence agreements of various kinds, of which I cannot list the different forms. We have to see the different cases and evaluate them differently.”

It is therefore evident that Pope Francis was referring to specific civil laws and certainly not to the Church doctrine, which he has reaffirmed many times over the years.

- *end of statement* -

Note:

The Secretariat of State, upon specific request of His Holiness, asks to share this clarification with all Bishops for their Pastoral perusal.

This clarification has been forwarded by the Nunciature, and the local translation into English has been verified by the same.

Msgr Marco Sprizzi a.i., the *Chargé d'affaires* at the Nunciature in Kuala Lumpur, has requested to “find a way with Bishop Sebastian by which the CBCMSB can present its contents to the media and concerned civil society’s persons.”

I therefore, endorse this statement and request of you to kindly disseminate it widely to all your pastoral collaborators as well as those who can assist in the media and civil society.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sebastian Francis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a solid horizontal line that serves as a separator.

**+ Rt Rev Sebastian Francis DD
President, CBCMSB**