



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on December 18, 2023

## Vatican Approves Blessings for Same-sex Couples

Pope Francis approved a Vatican declaration titled [“Fiducia Supplicans On the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings.”](#) The declaration released today announced [Vatican approval for priests to bless same-sex couples](#), but does not change the doctrine on marriage, and the blessing [does not signify approval of same-sex unions](#).

The declaration released by the Vatican quoted Pope Francis as saying, “when one asks for a blessing, one is expressing a petition for God’s assistance, a plea to live better, and confidence in a Father who can help us live better. This request should, in every way, be valued, accompanied, and received with gratitude.”

Many Catholic leaders do not approve of recent actions the Vatican has taken, with [Cardinal Raymond Burke saying](#), “It’s unfortunately very clear that the invocation of the Holy Spirit by some has the aim of bringing forward an agenda that is more political and human than ecclesial and divine.”

Bishop Joseph Strickland has also been critical of actions taken by Pope Francis, [saying on X](#), “I believe Pope Francis is the Pope but it is time for me to say that I reject his program of undermining the Deposit of Faith. Follow Jesus.”

[In response to the criticisms from Catholic leaders](#), Pope Francis evicted Cardinal Raymond Burke from his Rome apartment and cut off his salary, and [removed Bishop Joseph Strickland as bishop of the Diocese of Tyler in Texas](#).



AP Images  
Pope Francis



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