



Catholic Diocese
of Cleveland

Memorandum

Cathedral Square Plaza

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

To: Priests

From: Bishop Edward C. Malesic

Date: 23 October 2020

Re: Helpful Clarifications regarding Holy Father's recent comment

Prot. #: 618/2020

Brother priests

It has come to my attention that some of you are facing questions relative to the Pope's comments in the recently released documentary film, *Francesco*. In an effort to give you some talking points as you interact with your parishioners this weekend I offer you the following:

1. Comments made by the Holy Father in documentaries or interviews do not, in and of themselves, constitute a change in universal or particular law.
2. I have not received any official notification that the Church's understanding on this matter has changed.
3. The quotes attributed to the Holy Father in the recently-released documentary film "*Francesco*" do not alter or realign church doctrine, but actually reaffirm the traditional definition of Marriage as a lifelong, life-giving, committed union between one man and one woman.
4. The Holy Father's remarks remind us that we all have the right to belong to a family and that even persons who have homosexual attractions should not be excluded from their families of origin, nor from the Church.
5. Consistent with prior remarks, it appears that the Holy Father is addressing the matter within the framework of Church teaching: the objective truth of the definition of Marriage; respect for the dignity of every person at all times, regardless of sexual orientation; and safeguarding the civil rights of peoples by legal authority, even if they are living in situations that we do not condone.
6. It is always important to go to the Pope's actual words in the proper context rather than relying on reports about them.

I hope this is helpful to you as you interact with your parishioners this weekend. Be assured of my gratitude for your good work and my continued prayerful support.

Fraternally,
Bishop Malesic