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## **Germany: “Fiducia supplicans”. Mgr Bätzing (Bishops’ President), “to ask for a blessing is to express trust in God’s goodness”**

The document “Fiducia Supplicans on the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings”, released by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith yesterday, was in general positively received by the German Catholic world. The President of the German Bishops’ Conference (DBK), Mgr Georg Bätzing, published a presentation of it on the official website: “I warmly welcome this document and I am grateful for the pastoral perspective it brings. Fiducia supplicans explains that it is in principle possible and permissible for the ordained minister to respond to the desires of couples who ask for a blessing for their relationship, even if they do not fully live according to the Church’s norms. This means that a blessing can be given to couples who do not have the opportunity to celebrate a marriage in the church due, for example, to a divorce, and to same-sex couples”. The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith points out the clear distinction from the sacramental blessing in the context of marriage and the need not to blur this distinction. The DBK President recalls that “marriage, as a permanent and indissoluble union between a man and a woman open to offspring, is, according to Catholic teaching, a sacrament that spouses give each other and is sealed by the Church’s blessing”. The prelate therefore points out that “asking for a blessing is a humble gesture towards God in which people express their trust in God’s goodness. In the blessing, God’s love is given as a force in the path of life. The Declaration notes that the granting of a simple blessing must not and cannot require the same moral conditions required to receive the sacraments”.

Massimo Lavena