



Conférence Episcopale Nationale du Cameroun National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon

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Le Président

DECLARATION OF THE BISHOPS OF CAMEROON ON HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BLESSING OF "HOMOSEXUAL COUPLES"

Faced with the semantic abuses designed to distort the value of realities and the true meaning of the notions of family, couple, spouse, sexuality and marriage;

Faced with the wave of indignation, questioning and concern that the Declaration "*Fiducia supplicans*" on the question of the blessing of same-sex couples has aroused among the people of God;

For the sake of human dignity and the salvation of all humanity in Jesus Christ;

We, the Bishops of Cameroon, unanimously declare the following on the subject of homosexuality and the blessing of "homosexual couples":

1. In conformity with our 2013 Declaration on Homosexuality, we strongly reaffirm the truth of the Church, Mother and Educator, which teaches the sacredness of the sexual identity of man and woman created in the image of God (Gn 1:26), of the dignity of their sexuality and of marriage which is the foundation of the family. The human person is created male and female: "*Male and female he created them*" (Gn 1:26). This invariable difference, which is the foundation of their relationship and their complementarity, is fulfilled in the bonds of marriage.

2. Homosexuality falsifies and corrupts human anthropology and trivialises sexuality, marriage and the family, the foundations of society. In the African culture, this practice is not part of family and social values. It is a flagrant violation of the heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestors. In the history of peoples, the practice of homosexuality has never led to societal evolution, but is a clear sign of the imploding decadence of civilizations. In fact, homosexuality sets humanity against itself and destroys it.

3. The profound identity of sexuality is misunderstood, hijacked and perverted outside the conjugal relationship between man and woman. Consequently, homosexual acts are not "sexual", but "acts against nature" (Rm 1, 26).

4. Marriage is an institution that legitimizes sexual relations and procreation for the foundation of a new family. It is the union of a man and a woman who commit themselves to the life of a couple, to found a family and to live together in love. Homosexual unions are not marriages. They distort the meaning of marriage by reducing it to a sterile, pleasure-seeking and perverse bond: "*infamy between man and man*" (Rom 1:26).

5. Homosexuality is not a human right. It is an alienation that seriously harms humanity because it is not based on any value proper to the human being: it is a dehumanization of love, "an abomination". (Lev, 18, 22). Rejecting it is in no way being discriminative; it is a legitimate protection of the constant values of humanity in the face of a vice that has become the subject of a claim to legal recognition and, today, the subject of a blessing.

6. Literally, "To bless is to speak well of". And to "speak well of" in order to gain grace through the gesture of blessing a "homosexual couple" would be tantamount to encouraging a choice and a practice of life that cannot be recognised as being objectively ordered to the revealed designs of God. What is more, differentiating between liturgical and non-liturgical contexts in order to apply the blessing to same-sex "couples" is hypocritical. The act of blessing, whether performed in a liturgical assembly or in private, remains a blessing. We therefore declare non-compliant any form of blessing, public or private, that tends to recognize "same-sex couples" as a state of life.

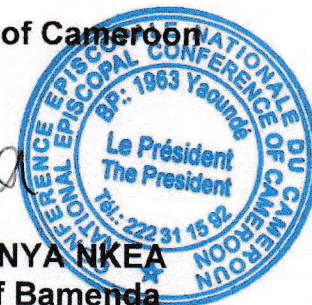
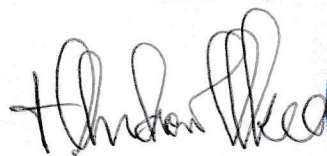
7. Faithful to the constant teaching of Ecclesial Tradition which declares acts of homosexuality intrinsically disordered and contrary to the natural law (*Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 2357*), we, the Bishops of Cameroon, reiterate our disapproval of homosexuality and homosexual unions.

8. Consequently, we formally forbid all blessings of "homosexual couples" in the Church of Cameroon.

9. Since God does not want the death of the sinner, but his/her conversion to eternal life, we recommend those who are inclined to homosexuality to the prayers and compassion of the Church, with a view to their radical conversion. We also invite them to turn away from their mentality of victimization in which they take pleasure in considering themselves as "victims", "weak", "minorities"; in order to seize the opportunity for conversion that God gives them in the many exhortations of His Word.

Signed in Yaoundé on 21 December 2023

For the Bishops of Cameroon



† Andrew FUANYA NKEA
Archbishop of Bamenda
President of NECC