



Catholic Civil Rights League

www.ccrl.ca

Monthly highlights

Volume 1, No. 7, July 30, 2010

Census should keep religion questions, says League

The League has called on Industry Minister Tony Clement to urge him to reconsider plans to remove the question about religious affiliation and make the longer form of the 2011 census voluntary. The plan has also drawn the ire of statisticians, historians and other faith groups, who say the census will not be accurate enough to facilitate research and planning if crucial information is made voluntary.

The League commented earlier in July on changes being made by Statistics Canada to the next federal census, including its decision to exclude religious affiliation information from the mandatory portion of the 2011 census. Instead, the information will be gathered in the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS), which will replace the long form of the Canadian census that to date was sent to 20% of Canadian households.

The new NHS will be sent to a little over a third of Canadian households, but unlike the census, the NHS will be voluntary.

“Information about religious affiliation and religious practice are helpful to many Canadians in their understanding of society and, more specifically for some faith groups, in planning for the needs of their community,” said Joanne McGarry, League executive director. “Such information is also extremely useful for historians and sociologists, both now and in the future, as well as to Canadians researching their own family histories.”

A voluntary multi-page form will probably have a much lower return rate than the census, completion of which is mandatory. Many people will not take

the time to complete it. As a result, the role faith plays in many Canadians’ lives will likely end up being under-represented.

Historically census numbers have been viewed as an objective count of a religious group’s numerical position. In the League’s view, it would be more helpful to retain the question on the census, and accompany it with a question about religious activity, since numerous surveys show that religious practice is a better predictor of volunteerism and charitable giving than affiliation itself.

Unfortunately, this change appears to be reflective of a trend to keep matters of religion off the public radar. This is unfortunate, since some of the better research about the relationship between faith and philanthropy comes from the agency’s own research.

- See this release on our website for some interesting links to StatsCan research about the positive relationship between participation in a faith community and philanthropy and volunteerism.

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League AGM scheduled: Charles Lewis, religion editor of the National Post, will be guest speaker at our annual general meeting in Toronto Oct. 21. The meeting begins with the 5:30 Mass at St. Michael’s Cathedral, in memory of our late director Frederick W. Hill and other deceased League members. The talk, a light buffet and the business portion of the meeting, will take place afterward at a nearby venue. Details will be confirmed later.

League congratulates Cardinal Ouellet

The League has sent a message of congratulation to Cardinal Marc Ouellet, archbishop of Quebec City, on his appointment as Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and President of the Commission for Latin America.

“The League has always appreciated Cardinal Ouellet’s support for expressing the teachings of the Church in the public forum,” said Philip Horgan, president of CCRL. “Despite criticism for upholding the Catholic vision of respect for life from conception to natural death, the cardinal has continued to be an inspiring leader for Catholics within Canada, and a staunch supporter for Catholic education within his home province. We send our prayers and warmest best wishes on this happy occasion.”

Pope Benedict appointed Cardinal Ouellet to his new posting June 29. Cardinal Ouellet is at present Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of Canada, and will be Apostolic Administrator of the archdiocese until he takes possession of his new ecclesiastical office in Rome.

Media Watch

As we mentioned in a membership message July 16, The Vatican recently released updated guidelines on the handling of numerous issues in Church governance, including improvements to the management of allegations of the sexual abuse of minors. Because the wide-ranging document discussed the integrity of the sacraments, it also reiterated the penalties and sanctions for the attempted ordination of women. *Links to the complete document, and some good articles about it, are available through the Media Watch section of our website.*

While some twinning of the two topics in the public mind is understandable, given their appearance in a single document, some of the media lost no time in helping to create the impression that the Church considers sexual abuse and the ordination of women to be of equal gravity in a general sense, rather than in the strictly-defined sense of sacramental integrity. We are presently supporting several members’ complaints to the CBC about some regional coverage July 16 that included no spokesperson who sup-

ported Church teaching on the topic of ordination. We also contacted Radio 102.1 in Toronto to protest some obscene language about the Pope concerning this news story. Joanne McGarry, League executive director, was featured July 20 on CHCH News channel in discussion with Marie Bouclin, who considers herself an ordained Catholic priest.

Let the League know: Articles, cartoons and advertising that you believe have anti-Catholic content should be sent to cctl@cctl.ca to help us respond in a timely way.

Join us on Facebook: Search for “Friends of the CCRL”

YouTube: www.youtube.com/CatholicCivilRights

Victoria pro-life group funding restored

After two and a half months of consultation, the legal conflict between the University of Victoria’s pro-life club, Youth Protecting Youth (YPY), and the University of Victoria Students’ Society (UVSS) came to a conclusion July 20. The legal conflict was the result of two years of discrimination and censorship, during which YPY was repeatedly denied funding that other clubs received. The situation escalated in the spring of 2010, when the UVSS refused to recognize YPY as a club, and made policy modifications that specifically targeted pro-life advocacy. YPY responded by filing a petition in the BC Supreme Court. The students’ society board of directors has now passed a motion to reinstate Youth Protecting Youth’s funding retroactively to 2008, a total of \$719.

Supporting the League

The League welcomes new members. If you received this publication through a friend and are not already on our mailing or e-mail list, we invite you to join our membership community. For further information, call 416-466-8244, e-mail cctl@cctl.ca or visit our website, www.cctl.ca

We rely completely on your generous support to continue our work. Gifts can be made online (www.cctl.ca/join/donate) or by mail to 500—120 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto, ON M4P 1E2.