

C a t h o l i c  
**CIVIL RIGHTS**  
L e a g u e

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## ***CBC says it won't replay pilot program***

As noted in numerous national news reports, the League spent the latter part of May challenging a CBC comedy pilot program "The Altar Boy Gang", which aired May 11 in prime time (9 pm). The show's extreme disregard for Catholic images, including the dousing of a pile of Communion hosts with LSD, was beyond any acceptable limit for comedy or drama, particularly by a network that owes any competitiveness it has to the taxpayer. As the National Post noted in an editorial based on our protest, Catholics should not have to pay through their taxes for shows that scorn their sacred beliefs.

The show was about a group of altar servers who apparently use their role in the parish to facilitate an entry into the drug trade. At various points in the program, the Communion host is depicted as munchable snack food, possible poker chips and a repository for drops of LSD. Drug-laced hosts are left in the confessional for pick-up.

The blatant disregard for sacred images shown by this program is much more galling in view of the support that the CBC gets from Canadian taxpayers, almost half of whom are Catholic. Support from the Canadian Television Fund was also acknowledged.

Within the past year, the CBC hired an independent Muslim Canadian consultant to ensure that religious sensitivities were respected in its program "Little Mosque on the Prairie". No similar step was taken in the making of this program, though the network claimed it may have done so had it proceeded with the show beyond the pilot stage.

This is not the first time CBC programming has been perceived as defamatory to Catholics or their sacraments. The League was involved in dialogue with the network concerning "Our Daily Bread" in 2000, "Sins of the Father" in 2002 and "Random Passages" in 2003. We secured an on-air apology from the network in 2002 over some misleading film footage in a news report about the BC Blackwater residential schools court decision. All of these shows included content offensive to most Catholics.

In addition to our press release and media interviews, we contacted senior management at CBC and the Canadian Television Fund (CTF) to demand an explanation of how such plainly unacceptable material made it to air. We have also contacted Bev Oda, the government minister responsible for the CBC as Minister of Canadian Heritage, to urge her to consider this incident in the ongoing review of CBC's relationship to the taxpayer. Several MPs contacted the League to express their disappointment with the airing of the program, and some issued a statement of their own afterward (see League articles of interest on our website).

The CBC responded to us promptly, in a letter from Richard Stursberg,

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## ***Renewed efforts needed to build culture of life, League told***

Catholics need to dedicate themselves to building a culture of life to combat the forces that are creating increased conflict between religion and the state, Father Alphonse De Valk, CSB, told the League's recent Spring dinner in Toronto.

Discussing a prediction that governments will soon insist that churches, in their practices and pronouncements, must follow the secular values of the state over the Church's own values, Father De Valk critiqued a number of developments in Canada over the past few decades that suggest such a conflict is in fact growing.

Father De Valk, editor of Catholic Insight and a co-founder of the League, recalled that the League itself was founded in 1985 to combat unfair attacks in the media against the Church, which themselves were usually provoked by the Church's firm stance against abortion and other anti-life forces.

"Many of these forces gained strength with the Omnibus Bill of 1969. In fact that bill only decriminalized homosexual conduct that occurred in private," said Father De Valk. "But it was broken almost immediately, through advertising of homosexual businesses, for example, and just about every challenge of these violations failed, usually on equality grounds.

"This laid the groundwork for numerous changes in human rights law across Canada that treat homosexuality as a prohibited ground for discrimination. When this agenda was pushed into our court system through the "marriage" cases, practically every decision in favour of same sex "marriage" rested on equality grounds, even though sexual orientation was deliberately left out of the Charter of Rights. It was simply "read in" by judges in court decisions as an analogous ground." It is also noteworthy, said Father De Valk, that the government did not appeal the decisions in these cases.

Noting that these decisions have created a cultural as well as a legal environment hostile to traditional values, Father De Valk listed a number of cases and situations where courts or human rights tribunals have penalized people and institutions for the simple and peaceable expression of Christian teaching on moral issues.

Examples included the former mayor of London, Ontario, Diane Haskett, who was fined for refusing to proclaim a Pride Day; Scott Brockie, a Christian printer in Ontario who was fined for refusing an order from a gay rights' organization, and eventually gave up in the face of very costly appeals; and Trinity Western University, which, after a challenge by the BC College of Teachers, was only allowed to keep its graduates' accreditation status with the proviso that they not "preach" in the classroom. (Students at the school are required to agree to live by a code of Christian

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*By Thomas Langan, KSS  
President Emeritus*

### ***A voice for the future***

We need more young people within the CCRL. Our numbers are definitely thinnest in the student and young family age groups, and this must change. Young people are terribly busy, but they are also full of energy and ideas. When they serve as volunteers at the office, or with a local chapter, or simply read our newsletter and use our website, their enthusiasm and optimism is refreshing, and they ask the challenging questions we need to ponder. We can learn much from each other.

If we wish to ensure that Christian values keep infusing the culture, we must keep up with this culture's orientation. And it is not necessarily moving in the direction pointed out by the press. We are constantly surprised at what the next generation sees as important: How interesting, for example, that 'Abolish Abortion' emerged in the #1 spot on the Great Canadian Wish list. A partnership between the CBC, Facebook and Student Vote, that wish list was intended to compile Canadians' fondest wishes in order to feature them on a Canada Day broadcast. The survey was taken on Facebook, a site used by more than two million Canadians, especially younger ones. Many of you participated in it, having learned of it from the League's e-mail update service. Here is a good example of what kind of assistance the League can bring to young Catholics eager to find their civic voice. However, to profit from this assistance, they need to know of us, eventually to belong to the League and choose to take it forward.

There are many things we could do to help bring this about. For example, it would be great to launch groups of unmarried young people, who are always interested to meet others of the same mind but of the opposite sex in non-threatening situations. Many of them also wish to keep up with the situation of the Church in Canada, both in order to defend its interests and to impact the way it approaches our society. The CCRL provides an ideal forum to do both. Bringing young men and women together in monthly meetings focused on the issues of the day would kill two birds with one stone.

We could also launch groups of young married people, giving them a chance to co-operate with each other to further the needs of their new families, including defending their right to oversee their children's education. This, by the way, would allow us to tap into a new pool of talent, that of women momentarily cooped up at home while enjoying time out to raise their children, who would not mind keeping a 'finger in the pie.' So much can be done through participating in letter writing, information gathering, and so on.

Once involved in a lively community of the kinds mentioned above, the new generation will see the need to participate in the vital tasks of the CCRL. This will fuel the fire which matures them, and it will give the CCRL a real future.

The League has developed into a solid tool for thinking in the present, for getting our voices heard, for putting pressure where it is needed. Now we need young people willing to take advantage of this tool, honed as it was through many years of hard work. They have the enthusiasm and optimism, and they have the technological expertise that lay movements need to communicate properly in today's world. Please, provide League subscriptions to any young person you know who might be interested in the League's work. If none of them is, arouse that interest in those you think would profit from it. If we could add 30 under 30's, or 20 under 20's during the summer, it would raise hope of a rich future for the League. They will derive much pleasure from it, they will meet real friends in the process, and they will find their voice in our society. But we need each and every one of you to assist us in launching this process. Whom will you help subscribe, this month? ■

2007  
J U N E

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For reprints or additional copies of this newsletter, please contact the League's Toronto office at (416) 466-8244.

To join the Catholic Civil Rights League see membership form in newsletter (pg. 7).

# REGIONAL ROUNDUP

## Update on BC schools initiative

The League is continuing its efforts to undercut support for the Corren Agreement at the district level. Specifically, the League has persisted with correspondence to school boards that had not yet responded to our concerns; circulated a review of international conventions and declarations supporting parental authority; responded firmly and sometimes sharply to inappropriate actions or evasive replies; sought the assistance of the provincial Ombudsman; and used the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

To date, we have had replies from 39 school districts. Twelve districts representing about 42 per cent of the public school population have agreed to allow accommodation of parental concerns. Some districts have attempted to avoid committing themselves to a clear position. Access to information requests to the Ministry of Education and two school districts are in progress. The Minister of Education has failed to keep a promise to respond promptly to written questions from a lawyer representing a number of groups, including the League. School trustees are being made aware that the minister has not disputed our arguments and has failed to respond to an invitation to publicly state that school districts are not bound to accommodate the exercise of freedom of conscience and religion.

The League has produced a review of nine international agreements and conventions, which, taken together, fully support the League's position in affirming the authority of parents to withdraw their children from objectionable classes. ■

## Antigonish chapter combats youth clinics in schools

CCRL - Antigonish Chapter has for over a year been involved in the issue of Youth Health Centres in schools served by the Strait Regional School Board (Northeastern Nova Scotia, including the counties of Antigonish & Guysborough & the counties of Inverness & Richmond on Cape Breton Island). During the Spring of 2006, the School Board allowed Youth Health Centres to open in schools before any plans were put in place for how these Health Centres were to operate. In other areas of Nova Scotia, these Youth Health Centres are primarily centres for organizing and disseminating sex education, including prescribing contraceptives and distributing the graphic and explicit sex manual from the Department of Health Promotions.

CCRL Antigonish has been lobbying to have parents included in the education & health of their children. It is of particular importance to Catholic & Christian parents who do not want their children indoctrinated into the anti-life culture.

This past December, Sandy MacDonald, a lawyer and past president of CCRL Antigonish and Karen MacDonald, a physician and board member of CCRL Antigonish, made a presentation to the Strait Regional School Board regarding these clinics. In her presentation, Dr. MacDonald spoke about Physician/Patient Confidentiality. What is it? What are the limitations? Do parents have any role in their child's health care? In his presentation, Mr. MacDonald spoke about the rights of parents under the Nova Scotia Education Act.

Despite the excellent CCRL presentations, the board sought a second legal opinion on the question of parental rights. This delayed the vote on the Youth Health Centre issue until February 07/2007. In a vote of 6/4 the School Board voted to ignore the rights of parents to insist upon signed permission slips if their son or daughter was referred to a Youth Health Centre.

In the past few months, CCRL Antigonish has been working behind the scenes at the grassroots level in an attempt to influence good people who care about the rights of parents to run for school board positions in the next School Board Election to help address this clear issue of "Parents' Rights Denied". ■

## Other chapter updates

Many thanks to Windsor-Essex Chapter for its invaluable assistance in alerting us to the scandalous "Chocolate Jesus" art exhibit that may well have lasted all of Holy Week without the protest their work helped spark (report, page 7). Chapter members have also done extensive research about Amnesty International's change in position on abortion from neutrality to advocacy, a position that will probably be finalized for the Canadian organization this summer. The League encourages all members who support AI in Canada to discourage the organization from taking this step. To join Windsor chapter, contact Bob Baksi at robert@baksi.com.

Moncton chapter is seeking a new president as James Ouellet wishes to devote more of his time another Church organization. We thank James for all his work in getting this chapter started, and for his help in creating some French language marketing materials for us. He has also been of invaluable assistance in writing letters to the editor on life and family issues. To join Moncton chapter, contact Sister Cecile Leblanc at cecilevie@hotmail.com.

For information about forming a new chapter, contact Joanne McGarry, League executive director, at ccl@ccrl.ca or call 416-466-8244. ■

## Two winners for 2007 Archbishop Exner Award

The League is happy to announce the winners of this year's Archbishop Exner Award for Catholic Excellence in Public Life. The League created the award in 2004 to mark the retirement of Archbishop Exner, Archbishop Emeritus of Vancouver and League chaplain. The award honours outstanding achievements in the service of the faith by Catholic laity.

This year the League extends the award to two outstanding Catholic laypersons, J. Fraser Field of Powell River BC, and Jim Hughes of Toronto, for service to education and to the pro-life movement respectively. The awards were given at the League's recent Spring dinner. (Report, P.1)

Detailed information about the award winners follows.



### **Fraser Field,** *for services in education:*

Fraser Field is the founder and managing editor of the Catholic Education Resource Center, popularly known as CERC, an online library of articles and book excerpts of special interest to teachers and professors but greatly appreciated by many others for their fidelity to orthodox Catholic teaching.

CERC ([www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org)) is on a mission of evangelization in the age of the Internet.

While teaching, Mr. Field became aware of the need to provide teachers with the wide variety of teaching tools about the Catholic faith that are available by integrating them on an attractive, easy-to-use website. This venture went live in 1998, and has since attracted thousands of regular visitors and subscribers.

"I am very honoured to be receiving the Adam Exner award and I believe that His Grace Adam Exner will be pleased as well; he was very encouraging of our initiative," said Mr. Field. "I would like to thank (League President Emeritus) Tom Langan publicly. Tom is my dear friend and mentor; he has been a serious supporter and encourager of this initiative since the beginning. In fact, CERC would not have come into being had not Tom believed in and supported it as and when he did. God bless and grant long life to both Tom and Janine Langan.

"I converted to the Catholic faith in 1987 and, after working in counselling psychology for several years decided to return to school and obtain a Bachelor of Education in order to help spread the good news of the Catholic faith in the Catholic schools.

"As a relatively new and very keen convert in those early days of new life, I found myself increasingly alarmed at what seemed a growing effort in diverse educational and cultural circles to paint Christianity, and especially the Catholic Church, as a blot on human existence. In the media and in the public square the Church was taking a beating."

Noting that these indictments were going largely unchallenged, despite being false or misleading, Mr. Field said that the work of CERC and the League has been complementary in meeting the challenge.

The Church's challenge in communicating her message in a climate of such widespread misinformation seemed at the time daunting, even overwhelming. Added to all this was the consideration that the religious education of most Catholics — even well-educated Catholics — is doctrinally at an elementary school level.

Since its inception, CERC has been dedicated to compiling an Internet resource library made up of the clearest, most accurate and convincing articles we can find on all aspects of the Church's teaching and history. CERC has worked to make freely available and easily accessible a well-

reasoned Catholic perspective on everything from social justice issues to history and religion, from sexuality to literature and politics, from the environment to parenting and the latest trends in education.

Today, CERC is educating a broad range of Catholics and enquiring non-Catholics about the positive role Catholicism has played and continues to play in the world. As well, it has become a major clearinghouse for the best well-reasoned responses to the widespread indictments and misunderstandings about the Catholic Church coming from the larger culture.

Of particular interest is CERC's popular email newsletter, the CERC Bi-Weekly Update. The update is a free service, listing all the new articles posted to the CERC site during the past two weeks and pointing readers to important editorials of interest on matters of faith and culture from around the world. People can sign up for the update from the front of the site ([www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org)).



### **Jim Hughes (pictured, left,** **with Phil Horgan and Joanne McGarry)** *for services to the pro-life movement:*

Award recipient Jim Hughes has served the pro-life movement for over 40 years, first as a tireless volunteer and then as a guiding force in

broadening the scope of Canada's pro-life movement to combat other anti-life forces such as the re-definition of marriage, euthanasia and assisted suicide. Mr. Hughes is the National President of Campaign Life Coalition (CLC), which is the political arm of the pro-life movement here in Canada, and the Vice President of the International Right to Life Federation.

Jim Hughes was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He has been married for 41 years to Virginia, a registered nurse. They have four adult-aged children and are blessed with five grandchildren.

Shortly after the death of fellow parishioner, Canadian artist William Kurelek, the priests at Corpus Christi parish in Toronto encouraged Jim to join the pro-life movement. So in 1978, Mr. Hughes interrupted a successful 10-year career in his own wholesale/importing business to dedicate his services to the pro-life cause. It was through the urging of his wife, Ginny, that he joined CLC. She suggested that he volunteer at CLC for two years to help get it off the ground. The two years rolled into 29 years and counting.

Campaign Life Coalition works with all levels of government in Canada to secure full legal protection for all human beings, from the time of fertilization to natural death. Through the years of changes in the political climate, Jim Hughes has kept working relentlessly to establish and re-establish a Parliamentary Pro-Life Caucus in Ottawa. He regularly meets with Members of Parliament, Senators, and leaders of life and family organizations here in Canada, in the United States and in Europe.

CLC is actively involved at the international level, representing pro-life and pro-family Canadians. It became involved at the United Nations in 1994, at the urgent request of the Holy See and immediately obtained official UN recognition as an NGO (non-governmental organization). CLC has sent participants to various UN conferences including Cairo (on Population & Development), Copenhagen (on Social Development), Beijing (on Women), Istanbul (on Housing), Rome (on Food), and Lisbon (on Youth). Thanking the League for the award, Mr. Hughes joked about how his initial commitment of two years had turned into 30, and recalled meetings with many people involved with life issues, including Henry Morgenthaler, who "thanked me for the prayers."

The story underlines the importance of prayer in combating the issues of the day, Mr. Hughes reminded the audience. "Before I became involved with this work, I went to Mass on Sundays. Since then, spiritual reading, the rosary and other frequent prayer, and daily Mass, have become part of my life."

In March 1983, Campaign Life Coalition founded The Interim, Canada's only pro-life, pro-family newspaper. In keeping pace with the electronic-savvy population, The Interim started the Internet-based LifeSite Daily News in 1997.

Jim strongly believes that our youth "are not our future but our present" and must be an integral part of the pro-life movement. In this regard, CLC, from its inception, has hired summer students as interns who, through their work with and courses at CLC, gain knowledge and awareness of the issues involved in respect of abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, cloning, marriage and other family issues, and are trained in pro-life activities. Many of these young people have gone on to become leaders of pro-life groups in their communities and in other international organizations. Many of them have represented CLC at U.N. conferences. Pro-life Members of Parliament and Senators rely heavily on the briefs these U.N representatives write on the unreported machinations of elements at the United Nations.

Jim is also one of 18 individuals named in a lawsuit launched by the former Ontario New Democratic Party government to silence the pro-life movement. The case has not been resolved. ■

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*Continued from p. 1 ►► RENEWED EFFORTS NEEDED TO BUILD CULTURE OF LIFE*

conduct, including chastity.) The League was involved in the Brockie and Trinity Western cases.

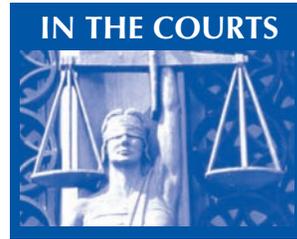
Father De Valk said that the late Pope John Paul II often spoke out about attacks against Catholic teaching, especially on the sanctity of life, notably in the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. John Paul himself, toward the end of his pontificate, noted that such attacks were growing worldwide in both number and severity. His Holiness was not afraid to speak out against the structural sin inherent in anti-life laws throughout the world. As Father De Valk recalled, Catholics themselves sometimes contributed to these problems through the work of dissident theologians, the work of Catholic politicians who ignore Church teaching in their voting, and an emphasis on social justice without its proper doctrinal foundations. Despite these challenges, Father De Valk said, the Church remains the one significant opponent of the anti-life agenda worldwide.

Quoting from the March edition of *Reality Magazine*, Father De Valk cited the prediction that if Churches refuse to obey secular law, for example by insisting on the Catholic understanding of marriage, the time will come when they will be punished, not just by lawsuits and fines, but also by being denied the tax exempt status that they need to carry out their charitable work among the poor and marginalized.

"Will this happen? And what can we do about it?" asked Father De Valk. "I don't know the answer to the first question, but I do know that Catholics will have to take an active role in re-building a culture of life, and take the issues up with their candidates in election campaigns."

Father De Valk received a standing ovation for his talk. A recording of it will be made available on [www.hmwn.net](http://www.hmwn.net) Radio Maria and on our website.

Following the talk, League President Phil Horgan presented the Archbishop Adam Exner Award for Catholic Excellence in Public Life to J. Fraser Field, founder and managing editor of Catholic Educators Resource Centre, and Jim Hughes, national president of Campaign Life Coalition. (See story, page 4). ■



## *Courts and issues update*

An appeal has been filed in the Federal Court of Appeal in the case of Susan Comstock, the League member who has been attempting to have her mandatory union dues diverted to the Church because of the union's direct, monetary support of same sex "marriage." We hope that the appeal

will cause the real human rights issues raised by the case to be addressed, since the decision by the federal court dealt primarily with the procedural matters of how the case had been handled by the union, the employer and the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

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In the week leading up to a "Silent No More" display at McMaster University March 29, a CUPE local in Hamilton, Ontario issued a memo to its members in late March reminding them that they have the right to refuse "unsafe working conditions" that the exhibit could create. The League was sent a copy of this memo by a concerned union member, and apart from the possibility of crowding in the corridor, we couldn't determine where the dangerous working conditions might be! In our view, the memo is one more example of a very selective approach to social issues on the part of organized labour. Most of the big unions are not the least bit hesitant about using mandatory dues to promote their generally left-leaning agendas, regardless of individual members' views. In fact, LifeLine groups have been refused club status at Carleton (it was later granted conditionally) and UBC Okanagan. In the League's view, this is an unjustified infringement on free speech. ■

## *Whatcott appeal begins*

The appeal of William Whatcott to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, from the finding of the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (SALPN) that he was guilty of professional misconduct, opened June 12 in Regina.

Mr. Whatcott was suspended for 45 days from the Association and ordered to pay \$15,000 in costs for picketing in front of Planned Parenthood Regina and calling them "baby killers." (Planned Parenthood is one of the largest abortion providers in North America, and is affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation.)

The appeal raises the constitutionality of a professional person speaking out on important social issues without fear of discipline by his or her professional association. Mr. Whatcott's lawyer for the appeal is League member Thomas Schuck, a pro-life activist from Weyburn, Sask. who is also acting for Mr. Whatcott on an appeal from the province's Human Rights Tribunal and in a civil action against the Prince Albert Police for malicious prosecution. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association is also intervening on Mr. Whatcott's behalf. Judgment was reserved. (Bill Whatcott has been arrested more than seven times without being convicted.) ■

## *Development Update*

*Thank you very much for your generous response to our Spring Development Appeal. We know that our faithful donors receive a great many requests for money, often from organizations that can provide some income tax relief, so the League's executive board is especially grateful for your support. We were pleased to add some new donors to our monthly giving plan. We rely exclusively on our membership community to sustain the League's operations and initiatives.*

*We always need new memberships, both individual and group, to help give us a wider support base. That is why all our fundraising appeals include an option for distributing literature in the parishes and providing new subscriptions. ■*



## Mac's Stores pull ad

In the early part of May, the in-store poster for Mac's Milk's Froster campaign featured a nun and a goat kneeling before the Froster's drink, itself emblazoned with the "WTF" slogan. (The company's official line is that this stood for "what's the flavour." However, in the youth market it is also Internet shorthand for "what the f\*\*.") In response to our complaints, the posters were removed from all stores about two weeks ahead of schedule. While the marketing manager stated that no offense was intended, he did apologize for any that was given. To help prevent similar depictions in future, we have written to Advertising Standards Council stating our belief that this ad contravenes industry guidelines on portrayals of identifiable groups, and asking them for a ruling. The council has forwarded our concerns to the advertising agency involved and will make a ruling once it hears from them. ■

## MTV violated industry time-of-day guidelines, CBSC says

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC) ruled recently that MTV Canada violated industry standards when it broadcast a program featuring sexually explicit segments at 8:30 in the morning on Easter Monday, 2006. While it is unlikely that our supporters watch this station much at any time of day, the decision could prove to be significant as it addresses, at least indirectly, the problem of re-broadcasts. The "Watershed Hour" guideline, which requires CBSC-member broadcasters to restrict controversial content to program slots at night after 9 pm, has been cited more than once in response to the League's protests of comedy talk shows with strong anti-Catholic material. While content of this kind is unacceptable to many people regardless of when it airs, the watershed hour guideline is one of the few measures we have to uphold some standards of decency. It is refreshing to see a decision stating that all broadcasters should follow it, and not just on first telecast. ■

## Protest puts end to "Chocolate Jesus" exhibit

The life-sized "Chocolate Jesus" exhibit that briefly appeared in a very public window of a New York hotel was cancelled after public outcry. The sculpture "My Sweet Lord" by Cosimo Cavallaro, a Canadian artist, was to have been exhibited for two hours each day during Holy Week (timing which the artist, almost incredibly, claimed was just a coincidence). Protests, including a call by the US Catholic League to boycott the affiliated Roger Smith Hotel, forced the gallery to scrap the showing and issue an apology. There were several newspaper polls in Canada about whether the chocolate Jesus exhibit should be shown. We encourage League members to participate in these conversations to help keep our voices heard. ■

## "Turning the Tide" DVD available

The new DVD on euthanasia and assisted suicide entitled: "Turning the Tide" produced by the [Euthanasia Prevention Coalition](#) and [Salt and Light](#) television, where it premiered recently, is now available for purchase.

Turning the Tide was designed to change the way secular society perceives the issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Secular society views the issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide to be issues related to autonomy whereas Turning the Tide shifts the focus of the issue.

Turning the Tide uses a personal story style to focus on the vulnerability of the person when one experiences disability, depression or symptoms related to degenerative and/or end of life conditions. The video also focuses on issues related to pain and symptom management and proper end-of-life care.

Groups that have viewed Turning the Tide have been incredibly impressed by the production quality of the video and the profound comments by the people featured in the DVD.

Turning the Tide features: **Bobby Schindler** (Terri Schiavo's brother), **Wesley Smith** (Attorney, International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide), **Catherine Frazee** (former chair of the Ontario Human Rights Committee), **Adrian Dieleman** (counselor, rehabilitation clinic for spinal cord injuries in Hamilton), **Jean Echlin** (palliative care nursing consultant), Senator **Sharon Carstairs** (Senator from Manitoba), **Alex Schadenberg** (executive director, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition), **Reg Hancock** (spinal cord injury survivor) and more.

Please contact Euthanasia Prevention Coalition ([www.epcc.ca](http://www.epcc.ca), or 1-877-439-3348) or Salt and Light ([www.saltandlighttv.org](http://www.saltandlighttv.org), 1-888-502-3181) for ordering information. ■

## HMWN Radio Maria gets approval for license

Holy Mother World Networks of Canada has been granted approval for a license to operate an English-language specialty radio service across Canada by the Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). The next step will be for HMWN to work with cable companies to find at least one carrier to deliver the service.

The League wrote to the CRTC to support HMWN (Radio Maria) its application, and urged ours members and supporters to follow suit. We thank the many who did so. The CRTC's decision, issued March 12, approves the application for a national, English-language religious specialty audio service specializing in the Catholic faith.

The outlet will provide programming such as the Rosary and Mass, Vatican news, music, and programs about family and society. It has already built a loyal following by providing such content, but without its own frequency is available only via a special adapter or through Internet streaming. ■

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## CCRL in the news

A partial listing of media engagements on our members' behalf since our last edition.

*National Post, Ottawa Citizen, May 16* – League Executive Director Joanne McGarry on CBC's program pilot "The Altar Boy Gang," which featured desecration of the sacraments.

*Canadian Catholic News, 22* – MPs seek to have media brass hauled before committee over "blasphemous" show

*LifeSite News, May 16* – CBC TV offends Catholics with show mocking Sacraments.

*National Post editorial May 16* – "Enough with the anti-Catholic bias" quotes League in its comment that Catholics should not have to pay through their taxes for CBC shows that demean their most sacred beliefs.

Radio interviews about "The Altar Boy Gang" were given by the League to numerous outlets including *CFRB, AM 640, Toronto, CJBW London, 940 Montreal and QR77, Calgary.*

*Catholic Register, May 20* – Catholics must be prepared for an attack on education rights. League's issue paper on denominational school rights across Canada.

*Interim, May edition* – Case of union member supported by the League in seeking diversion of union dues.

*BC Catholic, April 30* – League Executive Director Joanne McGarry discusses changes in the cultural landscape concerning abortion, and League co-sponsorship of March for Life. Also cited in *Catholic Register, May 6*

*Catholic Register, April 29* – Quebec parents continue fight for education rights. Campaign supported by the League.

*Ottawa Citizen, April 27* – "Secularism can't guide moral society," article by League Director Richard Bastien

*Catholic Register, April 15, BC Catholic, April 30* - Catholic public servant loses court battle over union dues.

*BC Catholic, April 2,* (Article and letter) League Director Sean Murphy on the Corren agreement and parental rights in BC schools

*National Post, Ottawa Citizen March 31* – League President Phil

Horgan on the case of Susan Comstock, who sought to divert her mandatory union dues to the church. Also editorial, April 3, and letters April 3 to April 5.

*Catholic Insight, April edition* – League efforts in urging the Canadian Hospital and Palliative Care Association to remain opposed to euthanasia and Physician Assisted Suicide.

*Catholic Insight, March edition* – League's response to parliamentary vote, December 06, on re-visiting the definition of marriage

*Catholic Register, March 19, BC Catholic March 12* – Intervenors apply for leave to appeal three parent decision

*U of T Magazine, Spring, 2007* – Joanne McGarry in defense of the charitable status of churches and others whose teachings or practices are at odds with some aspects of liberal thought. ■

## March for Life attracts thousands, but not much press

Your generosity made it possible for us to provide some financial support for the annual March for Life in Ottawa in May. We have worked hard on such civil rights issues as the definition of marriage, freedom of religion and freedom of expression. However, the right to life from conception to natural death is the most fundamental of all civil rights. Unfortunately, there was little press coverage of the march, which is often the biggest gathering of the year on Parliament Hill. However, it may have provided impetus for a National Post feature about Canada's lack of an abortion law, and on the current pressures on doctors to provide abortion referrals despite personal objection. That the CMA is, at least at present, upholding doctors' right not only to refuse to provide abortion, but also to refuse to refer for it, is encouraging. However, as several articles recently added to our website attest, the status quo should not be taken for granted. ■



Please visit our website at:

<http://ccrl.ca>

New this quarter:

- \* Background paper on school funding
- \* Life issues updates



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### League comments on McGuinty-Schwarzenegger stem cell announcement

The Catholic Civil Rights League commented on Ontario's pledge to provide \$30 million for stem cell research, which was announced jointly by Premier Dalton McGuinty and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger during the governor's early June visit to Ontario. The money, from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, will be earmarked for the Cancer Stem Cell Consortium of researchers here and in California.

The agreement includes research on embryonic stem cells. While Canadian law allows both adult and embryonic stem cell research, with both types eligible for federal funding, Church teaching objects to all activities that endanger the life of the embryo, including stem cell research that involves the destruction of embryos. There is no similar concern attached to adult cells, which are taken after birth without harm to the person.

Two things are troubling about this announcement. One is the spectacle of two Catholic politicians acknowledging that they realize embryonic stem cell research is in conflict with Church teaching, yet stating that the possibility of creating life-saving or life-enhancing treatments must have priority. The other is that while adult stem cell treatments have already produced more than 70 treatments and cures that have worked on thousands of patients, embryonic cells have produced few if any such results. Given that health care dollars are scarce, we have to question why a substantial sum of money is being directed at something morally wrong and less likely to produce results.

Scientists obtain embryonic cells from surgically aborted fetuses or "spare" embryos created either deliberately for research, or for artificial reproduction and then donated to scientific research by the parents. Ethicists have expressed concern that mothers undergoing in vitro fertilization may be pressured to create "extra" embryos for research purposes. All of these means of obtaining embryonic cells for experimentation can only be based on the belief that some forms of human life are expendable. This belief is at odds with Catholic teaching, which holds that all life, from conception onward, is entitled to equal dignity and respect. There is an excellent, non-technical summation of both the medical issues and Catholic teaching available through the Catholic Office of Life and Family ([www.colf.ca](http://www.colf.ca)).

### School updates

A recent court ruling in the Northwest Territories declared that trustees on the Yellowknife Catholic school board need not be Catholic provided they meet residency requirements. We have added an article and the decision itself to our website as it could have implications for Catholic school challenges in the rest of Canada. School trustees have a strong influence on the Catholic character of our schools. The League is following this case, and its probable appeal by the school board, very closely.

There have been a number of news reports across Ontario in the past few months about some Ontario public school boards voting to recommend an end to funding for Catholic schools in favour of a unified, non-sectarian system. There are two groups hoping to make this question an issue in the Ontario election: The first, best-exemplified by [www.oneschoolsystem.org](http://www.oneschoolsystem.org), is hoping to end funding to Catholic schools and is a prime mover on those public school board resolutions. The second, Parents for Equality in Education, would keep Catholic school funding in place but extend it to other faith-based schools as well. Both are hoping to make the question an election issue. The League has prepared a position paper that we hope will help familiarize our supporters with the issue. It is available on the Issues section of our website. ■

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#### Continued from p. 1 ►► **CBC PILOT PROGRAM**

executive vice president for English programming, apologizing for offense given by the program and stating the network has no plans to proceed with the show, which it described as "absurdist comedy satire." Mr. Stursberg also claimed, however, that under Canadian Television Fund guidelines the network is required to broadcast any pilot programs it purchases. For its part, the CTF pointed out in its response that the approval of program content rests with the broadcaster.

The process by which original Canadian content is subsidized always merits review. The League will keep addressing the problem in its dialogue with Canadian media. Admittedly, there is not much we can do about broadcast executives who will not "bend the rules" in order to avoid a greater mistake; there seems to be near-unanimity that those making the decision at CBC knew the program would be, as they put it "unlikely to appeal to audiences," even if the anti-Catholic content wasn't bothersome to them.

Thanks to the many League supporters who sent their protests to the CBC. Your efforts helped the network take the League's concerns more seriously. Members who wish to make a further protest about this program may wish to forward our press release or a news article to their MP, with a note about concerns regarding CBC funding. ■