



Catholic Civil Rights League

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Monthly highlights

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League to participate in prostitution appeal

OTTAWA, October 25, 2012 – The Catholic Civil Rights League is pleased to learn that the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) has allowed an appeal in the Ontario Court of Appeal ruling eliminating some of Canada's prostitution laws. Leave to appeal and leave to cross-appeal have been granted by the SCC without costs. The motion to stay the decision of the Court of Appeal until the Supreme Court renders its judgment was also granted.

The Ontario Court of Appeal ruling retained the prohibition against soliciting for prostitution, but lifted the prohibition on keeping a common bawdy house and living off the avails. While the Ontario ruling only applies in Ontario, a Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) decision would apply nationwide. In announcing the appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada in April, Justice Minister Rob Nicholson said: "It is our position that the Criminal Code provisions are constitutionally sound, and denounce and deter the most harmful and public aspects of prostitution."

Joanne McGarry, League executive director, says the appeal will help give voice to the concerns of many Canadians that a more liberal prostitution law will prove harmful to women and girls and harmful to the family as well as make Canada an easier place for human traffickers to operate.

"With our partners REAL Women of Canada and Christian Legal Fellowship, we have been intervenors in this case from its beginning in Ontario Superior Court. Our position was and remains that while the law is not perfect, any liberalization of it would not improve prostitutes' safety, and would make it easier to lure and exploit vulnerable girls and women. Evidence from other jurisdictions suggests that when legalization occurs, the illegal side of the business continues to flourish."

The 2010 Ontario Superior Court Ruling struck down all three prostitution laws that were part of the case, arguing that provisions against soliciting, living off the avails and keeping a common bawdy house should be legalized because they placed unconstitutional restrictions on prostitutes' ability to take safety measures such as hiring security to protect themselves.

Education minister's comments attack religious freedom

TORONTO, ON October 12, 2012 – The Catholic Civil Rights League calls Ontario Education Minister Laurel Broten's recent comment that Catholic schools should not teach that abortion is wrong an unwarranted attack on the constitutionally-guaranteed right of Catholic schools to teach the Catholic faith.

"The right to life, from conception to natural death, is a core teaching of Catholicism," said Joanne McGarry, executive director of the League. "Ms. Broten reportedly said she doesn't think there is a conflict between "choosing Catholic education for your children and supporting a woman's right to choose" so she is clearly ill-informed about the fundamentals of Catholicism.

"It's interesting that she reportedly cited the anti-bullying Bill 13, with its prohibition on "misogyny", as justification. Isn't it misogyny when unborn children are aborted because they're female? The type of prohibition envisioned by Ms. Broten's comments would amount to a most unwarranted intrusion into the rights of Catholic schools."

- Visit our website for links to more articles about this controversy.

Media Watch

“Married Jesus” satire protested

TORONTO, ON, October 2, 2012 – The Catholic Civil Rights League has protested the satirizing of the Last Supper in the Sept. 28 episode of CBC’s “This Hour has 22 Minutes.” In a letter to the show’s producers, the League commented on the double standard often seen in portrayals of religious stories and caricatures.

Based on the recent news story that some fragments of an ancient parchment refer to a “wife of Jesus”, the skit presented The Last Supper, as depicted in Da Vinci’s masterpiece, interrupted several times by a woman portrayed as Jesus’ wife. One interruption, to the elevation of the wine including the familiar words of the consecration, was greeted with “...can’t this wait, I was in the middle of something.”

In the League’s letter, Executive Director Joanne McGarry stated, “While... the discovery of a fragmentary parchment alluding to the possibility of a married Jesus was in the news recently, it’s hard to believe your writers could find no other incident in the life of Jesus where the humorous possibilities could be exploited in a non-offensive way. By instead mocking one of Christianity’s most revered Gospels, the foundation of the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, you are certainly upholding the principle that it’s okay to ridicule Christianity to a degree never contemplated for other religions.

“There have been many violent responses to anti-Islamic “entertainment”. The fact that Christians only respond with the channel changer and with words does not make offensive portrayals acceptable. Be assured that believers, and many other fair-minded Canadians, do not appreciate their tax dollars being spent on this type of entertainment.”

CBC radio contest included Church as a “vote-off” option

The CBC Radio One weekly program "Day 6" is having a contest called “Deep Sixed” in which people can vote for or against the elimination of several things, including Facebook, maple syrup, Bluefin tuna, the Catholic Church and "white people." This was obviously intended as a joke, but we challenged why they would include the Church in a satirical contest of this kind. We encouraged our members to contact them about this bizarre choice, and suggested that "CBC funding" might be a better option! Following our protest, program managers

said they had decided to remove the Church from the list, replacing it with a discussion of various countries' economic problems.

Visit our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CatholicCivilRightsLeague) for interactive content of interest to League supporters.

Let the League know: If you see articles, notices of TV programs or other media content that you believe have serious anti-Catholic content, please contact us at ccrl@ccrl.ca to help us evaluate and respond in a timely way.

League News

We enjoyed a pleasant and informative annual meeting Oct. 24 in Toronto, including a talk by Father Tom Lynch, national director of Priests for Life Canada. In a wide-ranging talk about the need for political and social initiatives in support of life, Father Tom reminded us of the importance of keeping our eye on the goal of respect for all life, the need to recognize that we will sometimes disagree among ourselves about the means, and the importance of supporting pro-life legislative initiatives that keep the debate alive and thus may help build pro-life support. Quoting from the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, Father Tom addressed the question of incremental legislation, noting that Pope John Paul II identified a situation (where one law, though imperfect, is better than another either proposed or already on the books) where a Catholic can in good conscience support a less than ideal law provided (s)he makes his or her complete pro-life conviction known.

The League’s annual report, including financial and annual activity statements, was presented at the meeting. Please contact us (ccrl@ccrl.ca or 416-466-8244) if you would like a copy.

The League is pleased to address parish and school groups in regions where we have a director available. Contact Joanne at 416-466-8244 or ccrl@ccrl.ca for more information.

Please respond generously to our Fall Development Appeal to sustain our initiatives.

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