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CanadaWatch

CENTRE FOR FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE:

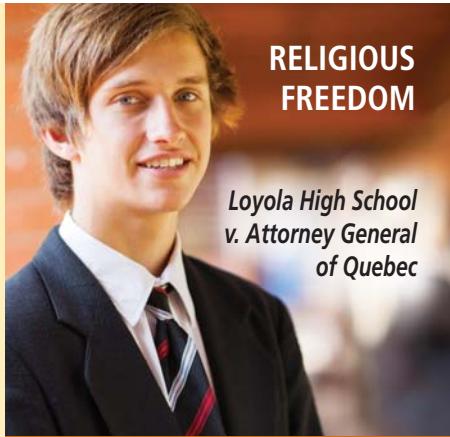
The EFC in the Courts and on Parliament Hill.

MINISTRY SERVICES:

What EFC Research Means for Donors – An Interview With Rick Hiemstra.

EFC RESOURCES:

Watch for *Faith Today's* May/June issue "Planting Season in Canada."



How you can HELP:

- Continue to pray for this case, that the Supreme Court of Canada will rule in favour of religious freedom.
- Donate to the EFC, allowing us to be fully prepared and present when we are needed in Canada's highest courts.
- Keep informed about this case online at www.theEFC.ca/Loyola.

UPDATES ON THE ISSUES

that the EFC is currently involved with are always available at www.theEFC.ca

Loyola Religious Freedom Case: An Inside Look at an EFC Intervention in the Supreme Court

More than 24 lawyers sat around the oak tables in the historic courtroom of the Supreme Court of Canada on March 24. The gallery at the back was packed. It was ticketed entry only. The seven justices entered as the "all rise" was called. Montreal's Loyola High School and 11 interveners including the EFC would finally be heard by Canada's highest Court – resulting in a decision that will shape the future of religious freedom in Canada.

Loyola High School v. Attorney General of Quebec is a case the EFC has tracked, documented and researched for several years.

Remember Quebec's controversial Ethics and Religion in Culture course? It teaches moral relativism within its religion curriculum – a curriculum that all educators in Quebec must teach, exactly as the government wrote it.

Loyola, a private Catholic boys school older than Confederation, wants to teach an equivalent course their way – with two important differences. Yes, they would teach students to understand other religions' basic beliefs and respect for people of other faiths. But they want the freedom to acknowledge their own as true, and the others as sincerely held. And in the areas of moral and ethics, Loyola wants to continue teaching Catholic distinctives as important for a Catholic moral and ethical life.

Their request was denied. The Minister of Education would not accept teaching religion and ethics from a religious perspective with the spiritual and moral absolutes that implied.

The EFC was among the first to seek intervener status. We knew this was a crucial test of where religious freedom is going in Canada. Now, here we were. The justices decided to take only a 15-minute break and, otherwise, hear the case straight through from 9:30 until after 1:00 p.m. The atmosphere was intense.

The justices were well prepared. They asked informed, challenging and relevant questions, such as: If the course is only a few hours each week and the school can teach religion in the rest of the classes, what's the harm when all the other time is spent teaching its own tradition?

After spending weeks working on written arguments, Albertos Polizogopoulos, the EFC's lawyer for this case, had his answer ready.

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"Freedom of religion does not exist in a vacuum or for a limited period of time. If this Court allows the State to justify violating freedom of religion on the basis that the violation is for a limited period of time, it does so without appreciation of the nature and scope or the context of freedom of religion in a 'free and democratic' society," argued Polizogopoulos.

"It would be like suggesting that if elections are not held, the right to vote would only be curtailed for one day every four years. And that is certainly not reasonable in a free and democratic society." Then, he picked up his notes and stepped away from the podium.

For a legal team, this was a gold medal performance in presentation. There were some other, easily missed, highlights of the day. Over half the lawyers in the room were men and women who publicly profess their faith in Jesus Christ. We know this because we worked closely to co-ordinate our efforts to make sure all the relevant points were covered, and covered well. The World Sikh Organization also gave a strong presentation. Religious freedom after all, means religious freedom for everyone.

And now, we trust the case into the hands of seven judges and one God. Our reason and works, without faith, would be pointless.

What EFC Research Means for Donors

At the EFC, research means relevant. If it's not relevant to the ministry, work and life of Evangelicals in Canada, we won't be researching it. Rick Hiemstra, the EFC's director of research, explains more.



Q How do you decide on a research topic?

We look for topics that interest and will help our affiliates. The upcoming Bible engagement project emerged from a clear need for research. Then we looked for partners, in order to both shape the project so that what we are doing meets their ministry needs. They contribute in a couple of ways, including financially. Their participation also helps keeps it grounded.

This is practical research – relevant to people in front line ministry. We're not doing things that are abstract. We work to deliver quality research to our constituents in a timely way so we can be the most help possible to them.

The other way we select research projects is through discussions with denominational leaders and EFC President Bruce Clemenger. We say "We know there is a problem here" and "How do we go and get at that?"

Q What comes next?

Usually there's a literature review and then a consultation study with the stakeholders. We go out and talk to people. Before the rollout we do some more consultation from the stakeholders. It's so important for research to be grounded in reality. That's where these consultations are important. We want to do enough that we keep it grounded, but not so much that it never gets out.

When it does roll out, there's lots of discussion, as we saw with Hemorrhaging Faith, a major EFC-related study on Canadian youth (www.hemorrhagingfaith.com).

Ideally, if the funding were available, it would be great to have regional gatherings where people could come and discuss the findings. A good study still needs to mobilize people to do something with the research.



"At the EFC, research means relevant."

Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger



I'd like to ask you to read this *Canada Watch* in a particular way – not as a report of what the EFC has done but as a thank you to you for what you have made possible. Every gift of finances or prayer the EFC receives empowers our work in the Supreme Court of Canada, our research helping the Canadian Church navigate a unique time in our cultural history, our support and networking among affiliates across Canada, and so on and so on. So, let me keep it very simple this time. Thank you. You are truly making a difference in our nation. Without you, there would be no EFC. Without the EFC, I hate to imagine.





Why should this research matter to donors?

We are helping front line workers do their jobs better. This is helping the Church deal with cultural changes and understand their ministry better.

There are a lot of cultural things we are trying to understand – it's not just number crunching. A question like: "Why does culture seem so hostile to religion right now?" is an upcoming issue for us.

Some of it is translation work. We take these cultural ideas so the average pastor or person in the pew can get what is happening. Readers who want to find out more can visit www.theEFC.ca/research.

An EFC Intern Clips Papers – and Sees the Breadth of EFC's Concerns

As an intern at the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life, one of my projects has been to monitor news stories.



Each day I scan the newspapers to find articles that I believe are of significance to EFC staff and relevant to their various projects.

The articles I email to the staff cover a range of issues such as prostitution, pornography, human trafficking, religious freedom, homelessness and poverty, and euthanasia. This project has been an especially valuable part of my internship as it has revealed the scope of the very challenging and important work the EFC is involved in.

Overall, my experience as an EFC intern has been one of encouragement to apply my faith in public life, insight into how I can actively engage with public policy issues to be an advocate for social justice, and appreciation for the extent of the EFC's work and Christ-centred approach to important policy issues.

— ALISON PENNER

On Parliament Hill



◆ The EFC participated in a Department of Justice consultation with Minister Peter MacKay on March 3 to discuss the future of Canada's prostitution laws. This consultation followed the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Canada (Attorney General) v. Bedford*, a case in which the EFC intervened. The Court found the existing laws unconstitutional and has given the Government of Canada until December 2014 to change them or lose them. The EFC issued its report to Parliament on this issue 11 days prior to the decision. For more please see www.theEFC.ca/bedford.

◆ EFC Policy Analyst Julia Beazley spoke recently at three Defend Dignity forums on prostitution in Brampton, Ontario Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and, Calgary, Alberta. For more please see www.DefendDignity.ca.

◆ The EFC appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada on March 24 in the Loyola High School religious freedom case. For details see the front page article of this issue of *Canada Watch*.

◆ The EFC has sent letters to the law societies in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario about the proposed Trinity Western University school of law. TWU received approval for a law

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Watch for *Faith Today's* May/June issue for:

- An exclusive FT interview with Trinity Western University President Bob Kuhn on his school's controversial school of law
- Behind the scenes in church plants across Canada
- Muslims who become Christians
- How, when and why Canadians do – or don't – read the Bible.

Visit our new blog and website at www.faithtoday.ca

EFC Finances 2013

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school in December 2013 but some lawyers have challenged provincial law societies to individually reject those decisions and refuse to allow TWU grads to practice law. The EFC letters outlined the legal reasons TWU graduates should be permitted to practise law in those provinces.

◆ The Department of Foreign Affairs' Office of Religious Freedom invited EFC staff to attend two recent consultations on international religious freedom, one on Middle Eastern Christians After 2010 and another on Religion in China Today.

◆ The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear an appeal in *Carter v. Canada*, a British Columbia euthanasia case in which the EFC intervened.

The EFC will apply to intervene in this final appeal. For more please see www.theEFC.ca/carter.



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or call toll-free 1-866-302-3362



Activate CFPL is the EFC's law and public policy blog – Visit www.theEFC.ca/activateCFPL



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www.facebook.com/theEFC

Prudent, frugal and careful. Those words must describe every expenditure the EFC makes.

This pie chart illustrates the EFC's sensible use of the funds that we receive.

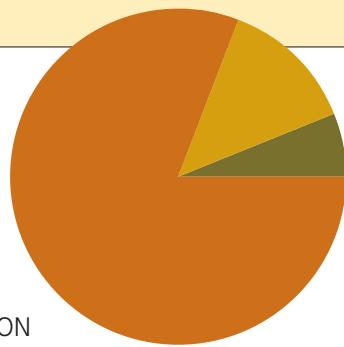
Your donation will be used to be a voice of biblical truth to the courts, to government, and to culture. It will be used intelligently and with integrity. We are active participants, working to positively influence public policy for the Kingdom and for the good of all Canadians for generations to come.

Your generosity gives a strong voice to our shared belief in biblical truths, and the need for those truths in a healthy society.

If you would like to make a donation to this important ministry work please visit www.theEFC.ca/donate or call us today at 1-866-302-3362. We will use the funds that you entrust to us carefully, as a good steward of God's gifts.

EFC Revenue for 2013 Fiscal Year

- 81% MINISTRY & PROGRAMS
- 13% FUNDRAISING
- 6% ADMINISTRATION



Information for fiscal year 2013 – June 2012 to May 2013



Box 5885 West Beaver Creek Post Office, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 0B8
Tel: 905.479.5885 • Toll Free: 1.866.302.3362 • Fax: 905.479.4742
Email: efc@theEFC.ca • www.theEFC.ca



The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is the national association of Evangelicals, gathered together for influence, impact and identity in ministry and public witness. Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals and a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society.