



COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Vancouver Archbishop supports Trinity Western U. law school

VANCOUVER (Feb. 1, 2013) – Archbishop J. Michael Miller released the following statement supporting Trinity Western University’s efforts to establish a law school:

“A [recent pastoral letter](#) from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops pointed out a disturbing trend –worldwide and in Canada – of bias, prejudice, hate propaganda, discrimination and persecution of others because of their religious beliefs.

Efforts to deny Trinity Western University the right to a law school on the basis of its religious principles are an example of the threats to freedom of conscience and religion that are becoming increasingly common in this country.

In this case, a university that professes its religious faith publicly and requests that its students respect that faith freely would be punished by those responsible for the training of professionals in the field of law.

The irony of the situation – with those who are at the forefront of the legal profession trying to penalize an institution for embracing and openly practising its convictions – is disturbing.

To attempt to bar faith from the development of those who would practise the law is to undermine the foundations of conscience and integrity that in fact contributed to the modern Western legal system .

In the tradition of St. Thomas More, who chose to serve not power but the supreme ideal of justice, our society needs more legal practitioners who are willing to serve the law of conscience in the face of compromising demands.

The Supreme Court of Canada and the B.C. Appeal Court have both recognized that Canada has a “religiously inclusive” public sphere and that religious institutions are free to hold to their religious beliefs.

Canada’s common good benefits when a religious perspective is infused into our cultural, social, political and economic institutions. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, religious institutions must be “free to act in accordance with their own principles and specific convictions” if the contributions they make to society are to be realized.

I pray for the success of Trinity Western University’s initiative to establish a law school, for the good of society, for believers and non-believers alike.

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