

## Legal Defence Fund Update

June 2020

While the COVID-19 crisis has impacted the scope and focus of our activities over the past four months, the Legal Affairs team has continued to advocate on behalf of Christian charities through involvement in legal cases, communication and collaboration with policymakers, and publication of academic papers.

*Court Cases:* CCCCs is currently intervening in two legal cases. The **Aga case** concerns the ability of a church to deal with internal, theological disputes without fearing judicial review. CCCCs assisted the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in getting legal counsel to file an appeal at the Supreme Court of Canada. We also filed a joint intervention application with Christian Legal Fellowship, and now await the SCC's decision on whether to hear the case. The **BCM case** involves the **Canada Summer Jobs** controversy. The Legal Affairs team has been drafting documents for the intervention; the COVID-19 crisis has extended the deadlines.

*Advocacy and Communication with Policymakers:* the Legal Affairs team sent several letters to Calgary City Council regarding their **conversion therapy** by-law. Although the by-law was still passed in May, our submission has influenced churches and individuals in contacting their elected officials elsewhere. We continue to work with other organizations in responding to federal legislation that will amend the Criminal Code.

*Academic Research:* ***The Status of Religion and the Public Benefit in Charity Law***, edited by Barry W. Bussey, was published in February, and copies are being distributed to academics, politicians, and church leaders across Canada. This book comes, in part, in response to the TWU 2018 decision. It makes the case for why it is important to continue the charitable status of Christian charities, given the positive contributions of religion to society. Reviewers have described this “fascinating and provocative collection of papers” as “required reading” in a time of increasing secularization. Copies can be ordered through [Amazon](#) or from the publisher, [Anthem Press](#).

Dr. Bussey is also working on several forthcoming law review articles and books, including a paper on **freedom of conscience** which promises to be especially pertinent in light of legislation on conversion therapy and medical assistance in dying (MAiD), among other issues. The draft manuscript of a powerful, two volume collection on the **inherence of human dignity** (Volume 1: Foundations of Human Dignity and Volume 2: Dignity, Law and Religious Liberty), co-edited with Angus Menuge, has been completed recently, and publication is expected in early 2021.

These projects are possible thanks to your continued support and prayers. We are grateful for your involvement in the ministry of the legal department, as we seek to serve the Lord together! Thank you!

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