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PRESS RELEASE:

[Sept 24, 2007, Waterloo] Defend Traditional Marriage & Family responds to Catholic Board

Defend Traditional Marriage & Family (DTMF) today released a statement in response to the allegations and demands made by the Waterloo Catholic School District Board in its press release of September 5, 2007.

STATEMENT

DTMF's mission is to defend the institutions of Marriage and the Family, for the common good of society. Our discussions with the WCDSB centred on certain educational resources which we, and many concerned Catholic parents believe may have the effect of confusing a child's understanding of the family unit and the nature of marriage.

In the interest of Christian charity and fairness toward the Catholic School Board, we will begin with an apology to the Board for two statements made by DTMF, which in review, we agree were mistaken.

The first statement was from our August 3rd letter to the Board in which we described a workshop given in March as a "Transgender indoctrination course for Principals". We admit it was a mistake to describe the workshop as an "indoctrination course", given that we only saw the title of the workshop, but had not yet been given access to the content itself. The title of the workshop was called "*Understanding and Supporting Transgender Children and Youth*". Having only the title to work with, the farthest we should have gone was to say the following: "We are concerned that the use of the term 'transgender' might be used in the course to describe a child's gender identity, and if so, that would make it incompatible with Christian anthropology which teaches that God created us male and female - it does not teach that we are created gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered". We trust the Board will be satisfied with this retraction and public clarification.

The 2nd statement we wish to retract was made by Mr. Fonseca August 24th on a live radio show in which he said the following: "indoctrination courses for principals to make them believe that homosexuality is acceptable and that transgender is a normal gender just like being male or female". We are obliged to admit that as a result of the show being live, and Fonseca not reading from a prepared script, he mixed up two different comments while speaking live. He accidentally attributed a statement about the book "Open Minds" to the



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“Transgender” Workshop. What he meant to say was the following “A book which may have the effect of leading teachers and students to view homosexual behaviour as morally acceptable, and a “Transgendered” workshop which we fear may lead Catholic educators to believe that transgender is a legitimate gender, just like being male or female, have caused us concerns”.

The way Fonseca’s words accidentally came out on the live show gave a false impression about the “Transgender” workshop for Principals. DTMF humbly and sincerely apologizes for this slip up and for any loss of reputation that has caused the Board.

DTMF and a number of concerned Catholic parents still fear that some material in circulation might have the effect of undermining Catholic moral doctrine.

We wish to ensure the Board understands that we are trying to **support** the Board in its mission to uphold and teach the Catholic faith. We have simply been questioning the Board on books, resources and courses which might have the effect of undermining Catholic moral doctrine. We have never accused Staff nor Board members of **deliberately** introducing anti-Catholic materials. We have simply brought to their attention the possibility that the **materials** were inappropriate for a Catholic school system. We simply asked for an open, cooperative dialogue with the Board.

We will now clarify some of the assertions made by the Board’s press release:

1. It falsely claimed that we had stated on the Jeff Allan radio show that “the Board has ‘hired’ an actively, openly homosexual activist to advise students on homosexuality”.

- This is categorically untrue. It was actually the host of 570 News’ Jeff Allan Show who stated that the School Board ‘hired” this person. DTMF never said that and it is false for the Board to attribute that comment to Jack Fonseca. On the show, we only stated what the School Board’s own meeting minutes reveal. That is, that the Family Life Committee approved giving parents the phone number of this openly homosexual therapist as a possible support for students who experience same-sex attractions.
- Even still, it begs the question – is it compatible with Catholic doctrine for a school board to offer a secular therapist who is a practicing homosexual as a possible resource to parents of children struggling with same-sex attractions? We believe this is a legitimate question and merits discussion.

2. The Board appears to misunderstand DTMF and its supporters, which appears evident when it stated in its press release: “DTMF argues its members’ dislike of homosexuality and homosexual people...”. The innuendo is that our supporters and the Catholic parents we are representing to the WCDSB “dislike” homosexual persons.

- That is false. One of our organizational mandates is to foster in our members the greatest love towards homosexual persons. It is a pure love



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- because it is a Christian **love** that shows compassion for the total person – physically, emotionally and spiritually. Out of Christian love for homosexual persons, our supporters are genuinely concerned for those who enter a destructive lifestyle that is rife with endemic health problems including potentially fatal diseases like AIDS, rectal cancer, Hepatitis A, B & C as well as a lifestyle which research shows has a much higher rate of domestic violence. Is it more compassionate to hide these dangers from young people? Or to show them the truth in love? The love our supporters have for gay people is that same motherly love for a child. Furthermore, our supporters and our Executive Committee would be the first to defend gay people against unjust discrimination or harassment.
- Furthermore, we agree with the Board that students who experience same-sex attractions indeed deserve support and counselling. In fact, we believe that in this day and age where sex and sexuality have become so confused, that the Catholic community has an obligation to provide support services to affected students. Where we disagree with the Board is in who should deliver the counselling. DTMF sought the advice of COURAGE, an apostolate of the Roman Catholic Church which ministers to those with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. COURAGE has been endorsed by the **Pontifical Council for the Family**. We ask the Board and the Diocese of Hamilton to pursue the following recommendation made to us by COURAGE:

“We recommend a combination of spiritual direction and therapy – with both the spiritual director and the therapist being in complete agreement with the Church’s moral teachings on chastity... Why not go through the effort of putting together a list of local Catholic priests and Catholic therapists, all faithful to the magisterium, and referring young people to them as a resource?”

Finally, we hope that the Board will accept our apology and acknowledge our sincere objective of supporting the WCDSB in upholding and teaching Catholic moral values. It is our sincere desire that all parties will come together, in the name of Jesus, with no other intention than to serve our Lord and to open our hearts to be lead by the Holy Spirit.