

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Three parents for one child? Time has come to pause and reflect**

The Ontario Court of Appeal's decision of January 2, 2007 to allow three legal parents for the same child should sound the alarm for federal and provincial governments across Canada. It is necessary to slow the accelerated rate of change that has been transforming our most fundamental social institutions. Canadians urgently need to pause, reflect, study and debate where our changing standards of marriage and family are taking us.

Parenthood is a natural reality based on biological facts that are beyond redefinition by courts or legislatures. Every child genetically originates from one mother and one father, and has a right and a need to be raised by its biological parents to the extent possible. Where this is not possible, adoption is a commendable and important alternative to serve the best interests of the child.

The evolving desires of adults have not changed the needs of children. Research continues to confirm that children do best when raised by their own married mother and father. Intentionally steering our society away from this model provides grave cause for concern. We do not yet know the effects of three or more legal parents on our children, but our experience with divorce and its negative impact on children calls for caution. We can only imagine the extensive consequences that may result from radically redefining parenthood and family.

Children are the future of Canada. We owe it to them to make responsible, thoroughly studied decisions regarding the structure of the family, since it most profoundly affects their development and well-being. Children are vulnerable and have to be protected instead of subjected to another social experiment.

Rather than allowing courts to define social policies, governments need to ensure that their laws continue to promote the natural two-parent family model. Canadians also need a public commission to comprehensively evaluate the impact upon children and upon society itself of redefining parenthood and marriage. Finally, we invite all Canadian citizens to participate in a thorough social dialogue on these issues.

*COLF is co-sponsored by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus. It promotes respect for human life and dignity, and the essential role of the family.*

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