

TCDSB Special Board Meeting

11/11/2020

Delegation: Josephine Luetke on behalf of Campaign Life Coalition

Good evening. My name is Josephine Luetke. I serve as the Youth Coordinator for Campaign Life Coalition, a national pro-life and pro-family organization with many supporters who are students, parents, staff, or ratepayers in the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Last December, Campaign Life Coalition awarded Trustee Michael Del Grande the Joseph P. Borowski Award, which is presented to politicians who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the cause of protecting human life and the family.

CLC would contend that the criticism Trustee Del Grande's November 7th, 2019 amendment has been subjected to has been unfair.

If I may, one of the arguments for the original motion was premised on the idea that adding "gender identity," "gender expression" and so forth to the Code of Conduct was *necessary* to prevent bullying and discrimination. In response, Trustee Del Grande employed what he called a slippery slope argument, but it could probably be more accurately described as a valid and common form of argumentation known as *reductio ad absurdum*. Essentially, if protecting members of the school community *requires* listing *each* and *every* subgroup they could possibly belong to, logically, that could lead to listing very bizarre, obscure, and, yes, harmful subgroups. Since this is an absurd and untenable conclusion, we must reject the underlying premise too.

Indeed, we need not develop an exhaustive list of protected classes, as we are all children of God. We don't need any other label besides "human" to establish that.

Obviously, some of the sexual proclivities Trustee Del Grande listed are more disordered than others. Again, that was his point.

These terms were meant to sound absurd in a way that "gender identity" and "gender expression" likely wouldn't.

So, to suggest that Trustee Del Grande was equating LGBTQ individuals with criminals is wrong. At best, this suggestion conveys a *total* misunderstanding of his argument, and, at worst, it's a malicious lie.

As a result of his comments being taken out of context, he has been mercilessly persecuted for over a year, with leaked allegations he has not been given the opportunity to defend against. This is not the proper course for justice, and may ironically constitute bullying.

I plead with everyone listening to please stop the persecution of this brother in Christ who was evidently just trying his best to defend the Church's teachings. Please do not make public the report on his November 7th amendment. Please cease to consider sanctioning him for it.

I know there has already been intense pressure from media and politicians to crucify Trustee Del Grande, and that just a modicum of the vilification he has endured is now being directed at those who have not yet obliged the mob.

At the end of the day, there is only one "opinion" that matters, and it's not the mob's, nor is it mine; it's God's. So to all of the Trustees, please let your decisions on this matter be guided accordingly, and if persecution should follow, take solace in Matthew 5:10: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Thank you kindly, and please be assured of my prayers.