

ONTARIO CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

To: Diocesan Marriage Contacts

Re: Update #13, March 29, 2005

The Vote on Second Reading of Bill C-28

The latest information is that the vote on the Conservative amendment to Bill C-38 will take place on, or very close to, April 12. That, it is claimed, will be immediately followed by the vote on the Bill itself as presented by the government. There are two weeks before that vote takes place in which to try to influence MP's. Letters, faxes, phone calls or visits in this time frame would be in order.

The Legislative Committee on Bill C-38

There is still no confirmation of how this Committee intends to operate. However, rumour has it that it will travel to key sites around the country. We need as many groups as possible to present to it.

Here is some advice we have been given:

- We need to be seen as concerned about the whole social institution of marriage and not just "religious" marriage.
- We do not want two kinds of "marriage". In our view this state of affairs will diminish the importance of marriage as a social institution.
- We need to highlight the effect of change on children. The evidence is that children are best off in a stable marriage of two parents of the opposite sex.
- The Bill is based on the aspirations and satisfaction of adults now. It does not address the needs of children or of future generations.
- The changes envisaged will weaken the bonds of kinship. Children have a right to be as clear as possible about their genetic and cultural inheritance.
- We need to avoid creating the impression that we will be satisfied with being in the position of not having to carry out such marriages. That is a red herring. The real issue is the change in the concept of marriage and what that teaches future generations about marital relationships, that is, that they are limited to the satisfaction of adult needs.
- Our concern is the long term good and prosperity of the nation, the common good.