

8-2008

Toronto Youth Speak to Their Archbishop

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-tc>

Recommended Citation

(2008). Toronto Youth Speak to Their Archbishop. *Spiritan Magazine*, 32 (3). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-tc/vol32/iss3/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Spiritan Collection at Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritan Magazine by an authorized editor of Duquesne Scholarship Collection.

Toronto Youth Speak to Their Archbishop

Archbishop Collins,

It is our pleasure to welcome your Grace to the Pope John Paul II Catholic High School community as we celebrate our 25th anniversary.

... We, at the school of Pope John Paul II strive to live up to our namesake, caring for those in our community, and those outside our immediate reach. We have responded to the needs of an alumnus who needed help to save his son's life. We take an active role with Free The Children and Volunteer Now: in the past we have helped build a school in Africa, and this year we will be building a well for a village in Kenya. Students in our community help feed the homeless, some go to Mexico to immerse themselves in the local lives and our school is blessed to have students of different religions, working and living together, respecting each other.

Some major issues

... We have many concerns about the Church and Catholicism that we would like to share with you, to get your insight.

For example, two major issues greatly concerning youth, where the Church has made its viewpoints clear, are same-sex marriages and contraception. We are eager to hear your opinions on such matters, your Grace, as an official representative of the Catholic Church.

Our second concern lies in fundamentalism. How can we the youth discern the literal interpretation of certain passages in the Bible? For example, the teaching of most Churches on homosexuality is heavily dependent on a literal reading of text.

To continue, there are concerns among some of us about other religions and the church's relationships with them, in particular Islam and Judaism. There lies a desire to encourage open dialogue and relations among the other faiths, to achieve a better understanding of faith in this modern world.

Contemporary technologies and research

The modern world is propelled by innovative technologies driven by science. In a world of artificial birth control and contraception some youth feel that the Church does not always coincide with our views on the beneficial applications these breakthroughs provide. This, too, is the case in areas such as stem cell research and its applications; as well as genetic modification in which embryos can be treated for illness before birth. In these times, science can complement and ensure human life, and there is a slight perception of disagreement from the Church.

How keep faith relevant?

Perhaps the biggest worry of all among youth concerning religion is faith itself. We live in a secular world, where faith is waning. The media constantly bombard us with views and images of a better life guaranteed by material possessions. It also skews our views on beauty and morals, making it increasingly difficult to adhere wholeheartedly to the teachings of Catholicism. How is the church bringing the focus of the secular world back to faith, and how is it keeping faith relevant — especially in the youth, the people of tomorrow?

All these add to an already present feeling of disconnect between youth and the Church as an institution. For many of us, it is difficult for our faith and our church to walk hand in hand. It is clear there is a growing gap between youth and the Church, as evident in decreasing church attendance, yet there is still hope and desire to bridge this gap.

Youth want to improve communication between our current generation and the traditions of the church. Your visit to our school facilitates this desire and for that we thank you. We look forward to hearing your insight.

*It is difficult for
our faith and our church
to walk hand in hand*
