

# Service Canada's gender neutral policy no joke warn Catholic thinkers

Service Canada's directive to employees to use gender neutral language met with derision in social media, but some Catholic observers say the move represents a dangerous trend.

The directive, revealed by Radio Canada Mar. 21, instructed those who help with passports and other government services to use a persons' first and last name without honorifics like Mr. or Ms. It also told employees not to use specific terms such as mother or father but to use the word 'parent' instead.

The directive was ridiculed by Conservatives in the House of Commons as akin to the Prime Minister's use of "peoplekind" to correct a young woman's use of the word "mankind" in a townhall earlier this year.



COLF executive director Michel MacDonaldCCN

But what Trudeau passed off as a bad joke, others say is an example of what Pope Francis warned about in *Amoris Laetitia* as the "ideology of gender," said Michel MacDonald, executive director of the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF).

In the document, Pope Francis "spells out exactly what is taking place in Canada," when he writes of "'legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female,'" MacDonald said. "The pope further warns that if this ideology is not challenged, it will be asserted by the government 'as absolute and unquestionable, even dictating how children should be raised.'"

"The Trudeau regime's incessant attacks – beginning with its promotion of abortion – on the body, the family, and the Church are not haphazard, however

haphazardly they are carried out," said Douglas Farrow, Professor of Theology and Christian Thought at McGill University. "They are ideologically consistent."

"The sooner people wake up to the fact that law untethered from reality is dangerous and demand a major course correction, the better. If they don't wake up soon, tyranny will certainly prevail."

When Radio Canada obtained a copy of the directive that included instructions to address a person by their full name, the report generated a massive social media backlash. Even Cardinal Gerald Cyprien Lacroix, Archbishop of Canada and Primate of Canada, responded on Twitter.

"Strong popular reaction to the new service Canada directive to no longer use the words: Sir, madam, Father, mother," Cardinal Lacroix said. "Basic politeness can be exercised differently than by wiping out differences between women and men and basic notions of mother and father."

"Let's think about it... will we also have to cross our vocabulary son, daughter, cousin, cousin, grandfather, grandmother?" he said. "Come on! The words that define us also reveal the links that unite us and express the fact that we are beings of relations."

"What is the effect of removing sex distinctions and relationships based on the biological family?"

Cardinal Lacroix declined an interview when it seemed the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Jean-Yves Duclos said the directive would be clarified and revised.

In Question Period Mar. 21 Duclos said : "Service Canada will continue to use 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.'. Service Canada will continue to talk to Canadians and treat them respectfully, regardless of their identity, as part of its commitment to diversity and inclusion."

Mathieu Filion, director of communications for Minister Duclos, said in an email, the directive was not a policy but a "note that was sent by Service Canada to its Managers on January 19."

"When Minister was made aware of this note yesterday morning, he immediately asked Service Canada to modify and clarify it," Filion said.

However, Duclos told CBC News Mar. 21 Service Canada would be replacing terms like mother and father on its form with "parent," and that employees would be undergoing "gender sensitivity training."

"The untethering of law and public policy from biological reality, we have been

saying, is tyrannical in nature, because the state that will not recognize the body itself as a limiting factor will not recognize the family either," said Farrow. "Nor will it recognize religious communities, because the latter in their own way, especially if they are Christian, not only honour the body but also remind the state that it is still more fundamentally limited by the body's maker; namely, God."

Farrow pointed out he and others had been warning of the possible consequences of "the law ignoring the body" since Ontario's 2003 Halpern decision that found the traditional definition of marriage unconstitutional because it violated the equality provision of the charter. That decision led to the Liberal government's redefining marriage in 2005 to include same sex couples.

The consequence of "eliding sexual distinction and cooperation from its understanding of marriage—would be the end of the natural family as a unit with standing before the law," Farrow said.

"Halpern already achieved that in principle, but it is still working itself out in practice," Farrow said. "The next step is to remove sexual differentiation from our language and way of thinking generally. Transgenderism is a means to that end, as is the new policy for state-approved language that does not recognize sex," he said.