Religion in the News

Catholic school controversy in Canada

Jonathan Erazo, who is not Catholic, has nevertheless attended a Catholic high school in Brampton, Ontario, for several years. During his sophomore year, he asked, and was granted permission, to skip religion classes. However, he was still required to attend Mass and go on religious field trips. Since religious schools in Canada receive public funding, Jonathan’s father, Oliver Erazo, asked the courts to clarify the Mass and field trip requirements. In his decision, Ontario Superior Court Justice Ted Matlow said that “no Catholic school system that is required by law to admit non-Catholic students should have the right to require participation in such activities [religious exercises and field trips].” —Thestar.com

New EEOC religious guidelines
Last year the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) received 3,721 charges alleging religious discrimination by employers—up from 1,709 in 1997! On March 6 of this year, the EEOC issued additional guidelines for employers who hire more than 15 people. These businesses cannot refuse employment to people because of, among other things, their religious convictions about turbans, beards, dreadlocks, and the wearing of crosses and head-scarves. Religious days of worship must also be accommodated. The new guidelines also require accommodation for people who do not belong to any religious faith but profess a sincerely held belief, so long as it relates to “what is right or wrong that [is] sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views.”—USA Today

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Romeike family can stay in the U.S.

In 2008, Uwe and Hannelore Romeike’s family fled Germany for the United States because they insisted on homeschooling their children—which is against German law. In 2010, a federal immigration judge granted them asylum on the grounds that...
Germany’s treatment of the family amounted to persecution. However, the Department of Justice disagreed, appealing the immigration judge’s decision, and in 2012, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Romeikes could not be granted asylum. They would have to return to Germany, where they would face heavy fines and the possibility that the state might take custody of their children. The Romeikes appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court; but on March 3 of this year, the court refused to hear their case. However, the following day the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ordered that the family be allowed to remain in the U.S. permanently, unless they are convicted of a crime.—Charisma News

Saved by the Bible
On Monday, February 24, in Dayton, Ohio, city bus driver Rickey Wagoner’s bus developed an electrical problem, so he pulled to the side of the road. As he was checking out the problem, three teenage boys approached him and fired three gunshots at him—two to his chest and one to his leg. He survived the bullets to his chest because they struck a Bible he was carrying in his pocket. —Christian News

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**Dallas is home to Islamic art**

The Dallas Museum of Art in Texas recently became home to the third most important collection of Islamic art in the United States after the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Edmund de Unger, a Hungarian real estate developer in Britain, collected Islamic art for several decades. Following his death in 2011, his sons began seeking a custodian for their father’s collection, and the Dallas Museum was able to accommodate the entire 2,000 objects, including carpets, textiles, pottery, and manuscripts dating to the tenth through twelfth centuries. Under the agreement, Dallas will house the art for at least 15 years, during which time it will make the collection available for loan to other museums and for scholars to study.—*New York Times*

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“It is fascinating that a country with an established Church can be less respectful of religious feelings than one without.”

—Lady Brenda Hale, deputy president of the United Kingdom’s Supreme Court, in a lecture at Yale University Law School, commenting on Britain’s current discrimination laws that have ruled against the rights of Christians.—MailOnline
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