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From: [REDACTED]
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To: corporate
Subject: 2022 five year plan

Importance: High

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Hi

RE:

PERMISSIVE EXEMPTIONS BYLAW 2348, 2022 SCHEDULE C

Cont'd As permitted by the Community Charter, council has granted exemptions from municipal property taxes for the following general purposes: * Land and improvements surrounding a statutorily exempt building for public worship.

I object to this.

Let's look at the Canadian Catholic Church. You know, the ones who ran residential schools but didn't pay the court ordered \$25 million dollar settlement? While the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and its 80,000 members spent \$28.5 million on the new cathedral, they raised just \$34,650 for survivors. The church successfully argued that the country's Catholic churches had tried their best and had no more to give. Right. Well at least the Pope apologized. Still no money though.

As of the end of 2019, the Canadian Catholic Church had \$490 million in cash, \$1.212 billion in investments (stocks and bonds), and reported properties worth \$3.297 billion. It also had \$124 million in donations that it had deferred, meaning they were received but neither spent nor reported as income, and would be reported as income in a future year.

In total, its net assets were \$4.1 billion in CANADA. This only covers 3,446 Catholic churches. It excludes monasteries, nunneries, schools, hospitals and other Catholic charities which may also have large land holdings and investment portfolios. (source <https://www.charityintelligence.ca/research-and-news/ci-views/43-charity-news/691-unfounded-vows-of-poverty-a-run-through-of-the-financial-wealth-of-the-canadian-catholic-church>)

This is the Canadian arm of the organization. The global land holding of the Church are over 700,000 square kilometers, an area slightly bigger than Alberta including Vatican embassies, churches, cathedrals, monasteries, some schools and convents. It is impossible to calculate the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church. Financial records are kept secret and its real estate and art valuations have never been independently audited.

Do Catholic Charities do good for many in Canada? Absolutely. Should they have tax free status? No. Not with that much disposable cash.

Let's look at the newest Church we gave tax free status last year.

"We believe that singleness and marriage are honoured by God and should be blessed by the church. God instituted marriage as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman for the purpose of companionship, encouragement, sexual intimacy, and procreation." - <https://whistlerchurch.ca/statement-of-faith/>

Gays need not apply.

The Mennonite Brethren (Whistler Church's religious order) states, "We encourage all homosexuals to give up their lifestyle and find healing in Christ." <https://www.mennonitebrethren.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Homosexuality-A-compassionate-yet-firm-response.pdf>

So being Gay is a lifestyle. Right. This borders on hatred as covered by our Constitution.

Artisan Church, a Mennonite Brethren congregation in Vancouver, B.C., that adopted a welcoming and affirming stance toward LGBTQ people, was voted out of the British Columbia MB conference in 2021. <https://anabaptistworld.org/mb-conference-in-canada-removes-lgbtq-affirming-church/>

So, if a church welcomes an inclusive base, it gets kicked out. Do they deserve tax free status? No.

While there is no official statement of separation of church and state in Canada like the USA, it can be argued that there should be. The Canadian Supreme Court ruled, unanimously, in *Mouvement laïque québécois v. Saguenay (City)* that the municipal council in the Quebec town of Saguenay could not open its meetings with a Catholic prayer because, as the opinion explains, "When all is said and done, the state's duty to protect every person's freedom of conscience and religion means that it may not use its powers in such a way as to promote the participation of certain believers or non-believers in public life to the detriment of others." <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/15288/index.do>

Arguably, Whistler is promoting religious beliefs in this way.

By affording Tax free status to churches, the RMOW is arguably promoting religious beliefs and affirming a negative stance towards LGBTQ. Giving the churches in Whistler tax free status is detriment as it is promoting religion to non-believers without consent.

Tax the churches.

Regards,

Paddy Smyth

Whistler BC. "Exceeding Nature"