

**PRESS RELEASE
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"CATHOLIC VOICES CANADA" LAUNCHES IN VANCOUVER

VANCOUVER, May 28, 2014 – Pope Francis is on Twitter, and now a group of Vancouver-area Catholics are using the mass media to get their message across to the public.

Catholic Voices, originally created for the 2010 papal visit to the United Kingdom, is preparing for its Canadian launch in Vancouver the second week in June, ready to give public voice to Catholic perspectives on social issues. Coordinator Peter Nation says the main focus will be making ordinary, young, media-trained Catholics available for media and public forums where a Catholic viewpoint is needed.

"The Church has always relied on official spokespersons to present the official position on controversial issues as they arise," Nation said. "Catholic Voices wants to provide ordinary, everyday Catholics to the media, men and women who are articulate and informed, who love their faith, and are eager to provide a Catholic point of view."

Nation said the Voices will be available to talk to media looking for Catholic commentary on everything from the Pope's trip to the Holy Land to hot-button topics like assisted suicide, transgenderism, women priests or same sex marriage.

One of their priorities will be responding to media requests in a timely manner. "We know that journalists are often on tight deadlines and are often looking for someone to speak at a moment's notice," said Nation. "We hope Catholic Voices will help fill a gap where the official Church may sometimes need more time to respond. In short, we want to help the media to do their job in covering the Catholic side of a topic."

Catholic Voices is now a major project present in more than a dozen countries worldwide. Its model, training ordinary Catholics in our reframing techniques and media skills and giving them in-depth briefings on the controversial issues behind news stories concerning the Church, has created a whole new generation of confident speakers. It has also transformed the way Catholics are perceived in the media, winning the backing of bishops and broadcasters alike. The project has led to books, the Catholic Voices Academy, regular communications workshops and talks, and a widely-followed blog (www.cvcomment.org). Although Catholic Voices has been approved by the Archbishop of Vancouver, it functions independently of official Church spokespersons.

Catholic Voices co-founders, Austen Ivereigh and Jack Valero, will be in Vancouver from June 5 to 11 to complete the training of the CV Canada group and will be available to the media.

For information contact:

Peter Nation

peter@catholicvoices.ca

778-929-0445

www.catholicvoices.ca