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Boston College Law School

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BCLR to Host Symposium on Church Crisis

3/20/03--On April 4, 2003, The Boston College Law Review will host an important symposium reflecting on the clergy scandal of the past year. The event, entitled "The Impact of Clergy Sexual Misconduct Litigation on Religious Liberty," will be held in the Law School’s East Wing room 120, and will run from 9-6 p.m.

The Law School symposium is part of Boston College’s "Church in the 21st Century" initiative, which explores the issues underlying the clerical sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church by providing a forum and resources to assist the Catholic community in transforming the current situation into an opportunity for renewal.

"The clergy abuse scandal has been a source of trauma and heartache for so many people," said BC Law Dean John H. Garvey. "It has also raised a number of serious questions about the tension between ecclesiastical liability and religious liberty. Among America’s preeminent Catholic universities, Boston College has played an important role as a center for academic and intellectual debate on the challenges facing the church. This symposium will further that effort by examining a set of unusually important and difficult legal questions."

The topics covered in the symposium will be wide-ranging, and will include canon law, tort liability, bankruptcy, constitutional law, law of non-profit corporations, criminal law, and evidentiary law issues surrounding the priest-penitent privilege. The symposium will address the interaction of these various legal doctrines in the cases currently pending before courts across the country, and aims to provide sophisticated analysis of relevant legal precedent to help insure that justice is done to all parties concerned.

There will also be a luncheon held on April 4, at a cost of $15 per person. If you are interested in attending the luncheon, please print and fill out this form (PDF format), and return it to the address listed on the form.

For more information on the symposium, including a list of speakers and schedule, please visit the symposium website.

St. Thomas More Society to Hold Conference on April 5

A second event on the church crisis will occur on the following Saturday, April 5, from 12 to 6 p.m. The BC Law St. Thomas More Society conference will deal with the other side of the coin: did Catholic doctrine actually contribute to the current crisis? The event will be held in the East Wing building, room 120.

The St. Thomas More Society is a group of Catholic students and faculty at Boston College Law School dedicated to the integration of Catholic teaching and the legal profession. This second conference is aimed at educating students and lawyers about the application of the teachings of their faith to the practice of law.

For more information, please contact Joe Donohue at donohujo@bc.edu.