



Cardus is Canada’s faith based think tank. In assuming this title, our organization has committed itself to being a leader in the renewal of North American social architecture through independent research, robust public dialogue and thought-provoking commentary. Our take on cultural engagement and faithful presence is resonating with change agents within civil society institutions as well as market and government leaders. Within this document is a brief overview of the vision of Cardus, current programs and recent successes as we expand our voice further into the public sphere.

## CULTURAL INVESTMENT

Cardus, working out of and rooted in our rich Christian heritage, cares deeply about the place(s) where culture meets policy. Our work seeks to provide answers to the questions our neighbours are asking using best-in-class tools and research that can’t be ignored when they conflict with the popular mainstream position. Cardus is animated by several big “themes” which inform our specific program areas of work.

### 1 PROPERTY, POVERTY, & SOCIAL MOBILITY

A Christian anthropology begins with humans that are made in the image of their Creator. This is a distinct vision, and one we cannot take for granted. At its heart, a Christian anthropology makes a big difference when it comes to markets, the economy, and labour. That’s why we are focused on spreading our vision of what it means to work, give and aspire to hire things. With an ever-widening gap between the language of government and the language of markets, we are in need of new ways to think about the value we create as workers and economic actors. Through strategic public theology contributions, Cardus is providing its constituents with useful language and new ideas on how to work and participate economically in culturally constructive ways.

### 2 SOCIAL ISOLATION & CONNECTEDNESS

Cardus understands that humans are placed in the world to live in communion with God and each other. As such, we are dismayed to hear about increasing levels of social isolation in North America. In a modern society learning further towards individualism, we believe our most essential freedom can be found in godly social structures. Cardus invests in the health and integrity of structures and institutions because we believe that they mediate between governments and the markets, between the forces which both crush and nurture community.

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## CULTIVATION OF VIRTUE

North American society has lost the language of virtue. Our contemporaries adhere to a social ethics that prizes the politics of identity over the formation of character. At Cardus we believe that virtue-creating institutions such as the family, the church and the school have significant social value. These institutions form and cultivate workers and citizens who are capable of mediating between governments and markets and doing the actual work of creating a civil society. Credibly introducing this mode of thought in the modern era requires empirical evidence and the language of data. Through these legitimate channels, Cardus will continue to advocate for the important virtue-forming work of families, churches and schools.

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## KEY PROGRAMS

### WORK & ECONOMICS

#### *Working to Build a Humane Economy*

Our economic health and vitality rely heavily on institutions, habits and behaviours that are not primarily economic in nature. As a discipline, economics is based on judgements about what makes a good society. We believe that these judgements should be subjected to the kind of debate that you might find in a refereed journal. In a sense, we want to bring back political economy: to bring back discussions of how our view of economics is shaped by our view of what makes a good society.

### SOCIAL CITIES

#### *What Makes a Good City?*

When we look at the questions facing cities today, we see two phenomena colliding with each other. One is that more and more Canadians are living in urban environments, in cities. The other is that we're seeing increased social isolation, people less and less connected with each other. What Cardus is exploring in our Social Cities program is... how can we take social isolation and begin to turn it backwards, and reconnect Canadians to each other, and to institutions and community? Social Cities revolves around three complementary notions: those of charity, subsidiarity and social capital.

### EDUCATION

#### *All Education is Public Education*

Education is a bridge between our private and our public worlds. We believe that education is confessional in nature: it is never entirely separate from our deepest religious, moral and ideological convictions. It's tempting to think that only government funded schools matter or are enriching public life. But Cardus research shows that independent schools, as a mechanism for the delivery of education diversity, strengthen the workforce and lead to better outcomes for a greater diversity of students.

## FAMILY

### ***The Institution Undergirding Our Civil Society***

Family is the first institution we meet. We're born into it. As such, family is the bedrock for all of the other institutions which are situated between government and the marketplace. Cardus is gently reminding people through science, faith and reason that families matter. Mothers and fathers matter, not just to their children, but to the public spaces we all share. A thriving social architecture, less social isolation, and the pursuit of vocations all begin in healthy homes.

## HEALTH

### ***Re-Framing the End-of-Life Conversation in Canada***

Most Canadians want to die of natural causes, in their home environment, surrounded by their natural caregivers. To this end, Cardus is identifying the supports which are required for a continuum of care, and working with communities to ensure that discrete health and social service providers are able to coordinate their services.

## CARDUS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE

### ***Ensuring Robust Religious Freedom & A Vibrant Public Faith***

The Cardus RFI will actively provide education, research and training amongst religious leaders, laity and those involved in the culture-shaping institutions of our country. The Institute will also equip faith and communities to defend religious freedom and support religious freedom advocacy by Canada's faith leaders.

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## EXAMPLES OF IMPACT

We are excited that the voice and vision of Cardus continues to expand in scope and influence. Cardus researchers are regularly approached by leading publications for their input. Below are few notable contributions:

- "Robert Latimer's request for clemency is a slam-dunk 'no.' Does Ottawa get that?" Senior Writer at Cardus, Peter Stockland, provided his critique of the Robert Latimer case in ***Macleans*** magazine in August 2018.
- In a July 2018 article about religion in Canada, ***The Economist*** magazine cited a Cardus research poll which found that 57% of immigrants thought religious-based organisations had a good effect on society, while highlighting that a contrasting 36% of Canadians held the same view.
- Cardus data has been used numerous times in recent articles in ***The National Post*** including articles on immigration by Executive Vice President Ray Pennings and a piece child-care policy by Cardus Family Program Director Andrea Mrozek.
- Cardus Economics Researcher Brian Dijkema's article "Reviving Solidarity" was published in the Summer 2018 edition of the journal ***National Affairs***.