

AMICUS BRIEF FILED

The Catholic League recently filed a friend-of-the-court brief regarding a case that involves mistreatment of the dead.

After being contacted by the Painesville, Ohio law firm of Dworken & Bernstein, we decided to join with them in an unusual case. The firm is representing a family whose son died in an accident.

When the body of the deceased, Christopher Albrecht, was taken to the Clermont County Coroner's Office for autopsy, the brain was removed from the corpse and held for testing. The rest of the body was then returned to Albrecht's parents for burial, but since they did not know that their son's brain had been removed, they buried him. They sued when they learned of this outrage.

The lawsuit challenges the right of a coroner's office to unilaterally remove body parts for testing. Astonishing as it may sound, efforts are under way to change the current law that offers protection to bodies and body parts of the deceased. Those pushing for change want to discard body parts as "medical waste," preferring the euphemism of "dead carcass" to refer to a deceased body.

This is an incredible abuse of power, one which shows nothing but contempt for the right of family members to honor their deceased loved ones. It also shows how the culture of death has evolved. But if it is legal to throw unborn babies in the trash, we should not be surprised by this development.