



NEVADA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

A Call to Action from the Nevada Catholic Conference

Holy Thursday
April 6, 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Nevada Legislature is once again considering a bill that would make assisted suicide legal in the State of Nevada. Senate Bill 239 proposes that a person who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness with six months or less to live in the opinion of a doctor or an advanced practice registered nurse may request a prescription "*that is designed to end the life of the patient.*"

The Church believes in the dignity of all human life, from the moment of conception until natural death. This vision is predicated on the conviction that God alone is the Author of life, and the sole arbiter of death.

Assisted suicide conveys a message that persons have no worth if they are weak or unproductive. Assisted suicide, as active euthanasia, should not be confused with various ethical end-of-life choices such as palliative care or hospice care. Advancements in pain management techniques, medications, and therapies have allowed healthcare professionals to provide effective relief to patients experiencing severe, chronic, or terminal illness. These advances have helped give patients the option to manage their pain and live with greater comfort and dignity, and enhances the quality of life for patients with terminal illness rather than ending their lives prematurely.

Palliative care can also provide patients with a sense of control and autonomy by involving them in decision-making about their treatment and care. Choosing these alternative ethical forms of care provides comfort, dignity, and respect for human life.

In states where assisted suicide has become law, economic factors, not ethical decisions, often determine the care terminally ill patients may receive. In some states that have legalized assisted suicide, health insurance companies can deny payment for potentially life-saving medical treatments yet be willing to pay for a life-ending prescription for assisted suicide.

Our brothers and sisters with disabilities, the elderly, and those battling depression become particularly vulnerable to being pressured into assisted suicide. Furthermore, numerous studies have confirmed that physicians can be wrong in their prognosis of terminal illness life expectancy. Many patients live longer than expected and some are thankfully cured.

We urge you to immediately contact your state legislators to have your voice heard. Let them know that you value human life, and that you oppose Senate Bill 239 legalizing assisted suicide in Nevada. Visit the Nevada Catholic Conference website: NEVADACATHOLIC.ORG to learn how to contact your legislators.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend George Leo Thomas, Ph.D.
Bishop of Las Vegas, Board Chair of NCC

Most Reverend Gregory W. Gordon
Auxiliary Bishop of Las Vegas, Member of NCC

Most Reverend Daniel H. Muegggenborg
Bishop of Reno, Member of NCC