

**Topic: Brief to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights Regarding Bill C7:
An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Medical Assistance in Dying)**

Date: November 10, 2020

Author: John J.F. Killackey, Mississauga ON

This Brief¹ is being submitted on the recommendation of Ms. Iqra Khalid, MP, Mississauga – Erin Mills, November 9, 2020.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church: “The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in His divinity, assumed our nature, so that He, made man, might make men gods.”

Therefore, and further in the words of the Catechism, to destroy the flesh is: “A crime against human life” and therefore “intrinsically evil”.

In addition, with regards to the argument that medical assistance in dying addresses pain, the Catholic Church teaches that the Cross of Christ helps us to see illness and pain in a new way. Christ’s example on Calvary shows us that our pain, in sharing it with Christ’s suffering on the cross, can open the door to salvation.

Although positioned with low esteem in the secular world of today, the Catholic Church has been the historical moral authority guiding the successful development of the Western world and allowing man to be free and to grow within a peaceful coexistence with others. The teachings of the Church should not be discounted. Although considered invalid in philosophical circles, the *slippery slope* argument used against medical assistance in dying, has come to fruition and demonstrates why the Church’s teachings should be heeded as we see the progression of euthanasia in Canada rapidly move from the legal classification of murder to one of a medical procedure for the dying, to now one of a treatment for those in pain, and, probably in the near future, for use in teenagers.

Polls indicate that the majority of Canadians favor euthanasia. I challenge the fairness of these findings and attribute some of this opinion to Canadian government-promoted disinformation, unbalanced information and lack of complete information. Consistent underfunding of palliative care also contributes to this position. Together with the lack of any abortion legislation and this government’s strong-arm approach to quash any pro-life education, we find a government that has had a strong and consistent position of the promotion of death for Canadians most vulnerable.

More than 14,000 people have died of euthanasia since the federal government legalized it in 2016. Canadians were promised that there would be a five-year review of euthanasia before the law was amended – that review has not begun at this time. The federal government argues that it must pass this law because of a Quebec Superior Court ruling, yet Bill C-7 far exceeds requests of the court. In addition, more study is needed, as originally planned.

¹ Some of the ideas and wording for this Brief were from columns by Charles Lewis and Peter Stockland published in the Catholic Register, November 1, 2020

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On behalf of all Canadians, please:

- Pause Bill C-7 until the five-year review of euthanasia is completed so Canadians can better understand the effects of assisted suicide
- Support funding for palliative care so Canadians have real end-of-life options (currently only 30 per cent of Canadians receive quality palliative care when they need it)
- Support the conscience rights of medical professionals who oppose euthanasia for ethical or religious reasons and ensure these rights are protected through legislation

Religious leaders, disability rights organizations, lawyers' organizations and over 800 doctors, join me and many Canadians in this request (details available upon request).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.F. Killackey", written in a cursive style.

John JF Killackey