

ARCHBISHOP of CARDIFF - MENEVIA

ARCHESGOB CAERDYDD - MYNYW



BISHOP of WREXHAM

ESGOBAETH WRECSAM

JOINT STATEMENT ON ASSISTED SUICIDE
ARCHBISHOP MARK O'TOOLE AND BISHOP PETER BRIGNALL

As the Senedd prepares to debate and vote on whether to give legislative consent to Westminster's Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, we wish to express our deep concern about the proposal to legalise assisted suicide and the serious implications this would have for Wales.

If enacted, this Bill would introduce assisted suicide into law and represent a profound change in how society responds to those who are terminally ill. In our view, it would place many vulnerable people at greater risk. International experience shows that where assisted suicide is legalised, eligibility criteria tend to expand over time, the number of deaths increases, and subtle but real pressure is placed on people who are elderly, disabled, or who fear becoming a burden on others.

Wales has a long and proud tradition of compassion and of valuing the dignity of every human life. That tradition is reflected in the way our communities, health services, and voluntary organisations seek to care for those who are suffering or approaching the end of life. True compassion does not mean ending a life. It means accompanying those who suffer, easing their pain, supporting families, and ensuring that no one feels abandoned, burdensome, or without worth.

The Catholic community in Wales, through its parishes, schools, chaplaincies, and charitable work, is deeply committed to supporting people at every stage of life — particularly those who are ill or dying. We believe that the right response to suffering is not to hasten death, but to strengthen palliative and end-of-life care so that every person can live their final days with dignity, comfort, and peace.

We therefore urge Members of the Senedd, as they consider this Legislative Consent Motion, to withhold consent for this Bill and to continue focusing on policies that protect the vulnerable and uphold the value of life until its natural end. Given the very serious nature of this moment, and the changes it would bring to our society, we invite Catholics and all people of goodwill to pray and reflect carefully.

On Monday 26th January we invite those who can across Wales, to observe a day of fasting, to be in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable to the proposed Bill, and that those intent upon passing it, may undergo a change of heart. Let us all make our voices heard by engaging respectfully with our elected representatives ahead of this important decision for Wales.

Yours Devotedly,

Most Rev Mark O'Toole
Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

Rt Rev Peter Brignall
Bishop of Wrexham

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