



Six Plain Reasons why legislation to permit Assisted Suicide is gravely wrong and dangerous for Society

Last week, Kim Leadbeater MP confirmed that she would introduce a bill giving the terminally ill the right to so-called “assisted dying” – aka “assisted suicide,” helping another person end their life. Over the next weeks, we will no doubt be subjected to a barrage of emotional pressure from the media and from euthanasia campaigners such as Exit International to persuade us to support a change in the law. In plain language I give you here six reasons why bringing in assisted suicide and euthanasia is gravely immoral and a danger to our society.

- 1 The option of assisted suicide puts intolerable pressure on the sick and the elderly, tempting them to feel they are a burden – and a financial drain – on their family and others. The right to die would inevitably become the duty to die - and in time the right to make another die.
- 2 To legalise euthanasia and assisted suicide would undermine palliative care – Britain is a world-leader - and the work of care-homes. It would spell the end of care homes as we know them, since it would be cheaper and less trouble to kill someone rather than to care for them. Caring for the dying, looking after them, is true “dignity in dying” - not a lethal injection or a Sarco pod.
- 3 Assisted suicide places an unacceptable and immoral demand on medical staff, doctors and nurses. It would make them accessories in killing. It would also undermine the trust we would normally have in them.
- 4 Once the legislation is passed, like a line in the sand, it will keep creeping forward, expanding to cover more and more categories in accordance someone else’s viewpoint. This fact is demonstrated in every other country that has legalised assisted suicide and euthanasia. In Canada, 5% of deaths are now by lethal injection.

5 Suicide is a grave offence against God, against neighbour and against self. - Against God, Who in His love and providence has given us the gift of our life. Life is not ours to dispose of. - Against neighbour because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation, and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations. - Against self, because suicide is gravely contrary to the just love of self, contradicting the natural inclination of the human being to preserve and perpetuate his/her life.

6 Suicide is not only a grave sin, but if freely, consciously and deliberately chosen as in an assisted suicide, a mortal sin. Willingly assisting someone to kill themselves in this way is also a mortal sin. How would it be possible to offer the Last Rites? And what justification will the person make when they come before the Lord to give an account of their life - and their death?

As Catholics, we must mobilise. We believe in assisted living, not assisted dying. Investing in palliative care is a better way to support people suffering at the end of life. Don't be seduced by the emotional pitches in the media we will be bombarded with. Correct them when they use the double-speak of 'assisted dying': call it what it is: 'assisted suicide.' Speak out against this sinister proposal. And pray earnestly that our legislators and our society will see common sense. For once this line is crossed, our society will never be the same again.

Bishop Philip Egan

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