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21 February 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide in Canada last year, the provinces are now required to implement protocols. In Ontario, the government recently introduced Bill 84. The proposed legislation, however, does not include adequate protection for the conscience rights of healthcare providers in our province.

This protection in law is essential. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, for example, has taken the position that if a patient requests assisted suicide and the physician refuses to comply, the physician will be required to provide an “effective referral” to someone who will perform the action. Thousands of doctors and healthcare workers in our province are alarmed because making an “effective referral” would be immoral cooperation in killing another person and therefore would go against their conscience. Some doctors have stated that they would have to leave the practice of medicine or move to another province. In this respect, Ontario is unique. Other provinces in Canada – and all other countries in the world that have legalized euthanasia and assisted suicide – are not forcing healthcare workers or institutions to act against their conscience or basic mission and values.

**What actions can be taken?**

- Now that Bill 84 has been introduced, we have a limited time to act. The bishops of Ontario are appealing to Catholics across the province to contact their Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) insisting that our government provide conscience protection for medical professionals. It is critical that we act in the next few weeks, prior to the end of March.
- Go to [www.CanadiansforConscience.ca](http://www.CanadiansforConscience.ca) to find more information about what the legalization of assisted suicide means for healthcare workers and institutions in Ontario and the negative impact it could have on the vulnerable. This website will help you write your MPP with your concerns.

Our Catholic faith teaches that life is a precious gift to be cherished from the moment of conception until natural death. The intentional act of killing oneself or another human being is very seriously morally wrong. Our position is that all Canadians should have access to palliative care. When people are dying, we should not kill them. We should care for them, deal with their pain and support them with our love.

I thank you for your prayers and actions at this critical time to support our doctors and healthcare workers. Many of our parishioners have already contacted their MPP about their concerns. These interventions are making a difference. If you have not contacted your MPP, I urge you to do so as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Ronald Fabbro, C.S.B.*

Most Rev. Ronald Fabbro, C.S.B.  
Bishop of London