



ARCHDIOCESAN MEDIA OFFICE

Date: Wednesday 11 December, 2019

Subject: Statement Re: Voluntary Assisted Dying Legislation

In relation to the recent legislation passed by the parliament of Western Australia concerning Voluntary Assisted Dying the Archdiocese of Perth acknowledges the clear decision of the parliament. In doing so the Catholic Church reaffirms its own commitment to the sacredness and dignity of every human life and to the ethic of care, compassion and respect for human life which has characterised the Church's services in Western Australia for over 120 years.

The Catholic Church's teachings on Voluntary Assisted Dying are well known and have not changed. The Church believes in and promotes both the highest quality and most medically advanced palliative care available for those who are dying. This includes the use of all available medication to alleviate pain and suffering. The Church does not accept that this should include the deliberate ending of a person's life.

In the new operating environment which will be created by this Legislation, the Church's health, aged-care and disability agencies will continue to deliver the same quality of service and the same standard of medical and pastoral care which have been so highly valued in our community for many decades. At the heart of this care are our foundational convictions regarding the sacredness and dignity of every human life.

The contribution of the Catholic Church to the provision of health, aged-care and disability agencies is significant. Given the recent decision of the Parliament, the Church looks forward to collaborating proactively with the Western Australian Government to ensure that our long-standing contribution to the people of this state can continue without compromising the fundamental precepts which underpin all that Catholic agencies offer the people of Western Australia.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth will consider making further comment on this matter once relevant discussions with the Western Australian Government have taken place.

On behalf of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth

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