

DIocese of San Bernardino



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, we lament the reality of physician assisted suicide in our state as the law passed last year to allow it is now in effect. It is a sad reflection on our unwillingness as a society to embrace our dying and those who suffer. We seem to have lost a sense of accompaniment when it comes to those members of our families and communities who are making their final journey to God. We do not welcome nor seek the physical pain that comes to those approaching death, and the emotional pain experienced by them and their loved ones. We do place it before God, and we embrace the pain and difficulty together.

Under the guise of expediency and convenience, this new law seeks to obscure our responsibility to protect the dignity of every human person, especially those who are elderly, terminally ill and disabled.

It does not change what our Catholic faith teaches us about the sanctity of life and how we are called to accompany those at the end of life. I encourage you to reflect on this beautiful teaching and to learn more about it if you are unfamiliar with it. I also want to express my prayer and support for those physicians and other healthcare workers whose faith and moral conscience compels them to refuse participation in physician assisted suicide.

Let us all pray that our faithful witness to life and human dignity will light the darkness of the culture of death.

In Christ,
Most Reverend Gerald R. Barnes