



## DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

March 5, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the Hamilton Diocese,

As Catholics, we are called to protect the most vulnerable members of our society and to see the inherent value in every human life. As Pope Francis writes in his Encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, “*When the dignity of the human person is respected, and his or her rights recognized and guaranteed, creativity and interdependence thrive, and the creativity of the human personality is released through actions that further the common good.* (22)” Today I am calling you to action for the sake of every healthcare worker and those they serve in the province of Ontario.

The Federal Government is on the verge of expanding assisted dying in Canada. Passing Bill C-7 will mean expanding access to euthanasia and assisted suicide to the disabled, those with mental illness and those who have an advanced directive. Many Canadians are alarmed at the implications of Bill C-7 and have contacted their Federal Member of Parliament to express their concerns.

We need to be equally concerned about a related issue and that is conscience rights for healthcare workers. Many healthcare professionals have moral convictions that do not allow them to participate in assisted dying. They are being pushed out of their professions by provincial health regulators that insist healthcare providers must participate in MAID. No one should be forced to go against their conscience, even, for example, by making an effective referral, in ending the lives of patients.

Ontario needs legislation to protect doctors, nurses, pharmacists and others. Because MAID involves taking the life of a patient, participation should be voluntary. In Ontario, you can support both healthcare providers and vulnerable patients by contacting the Ontario government, especially your local MPP, and ask that legislation be introduced to protect the conscience rights of healthcare workers. If enough of us speak, the government will listen.

I invite you to take action by calling, e-mailing, or mailing a letter to the Ontario government through your own MPP. Consider a visit to the following site, [www.canadiansforconscience.ca/ontario](http://www.canadiansforconscience.ca/ontario), where you can learn more about this critically important issue and through their site send an email directly to the Ontario government. Conscience rights must be protected in legislation for the sake of all.

You can also find links to this site and further information on the Diocesan web site at [www.hamiltondiocese.com](http://www.hamiltondiocese.com).

The Catholic response to human suffering is proper healthcare, prayer and accompaniment. Let us pray for all healthcare providers and for those who are sick, vulnerable and alone. Let us together protect the most vulnerable by protecting all healthcare providers' right to practise their work using their own moral conscience as their guide.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

*+ Douglas Crosby*, OMI

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI  
Bishop of Hamilton

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