



CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE
OF SYDNEY



MEDIA STATEMENT

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NEED TO PROTECT FAITH BASED MEDICAL AND AGED CARE PROVIDERS FROM “KILL BILL”

*A Statement from the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney,
Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP*

For the past two years society has been stopped in time. We have often been unable to gather, grieve, commiserate or celebrate with each other while enduring some of the most significant restrictions to personal autonomy ever experienced in a western democracy.

The purpose of these restrictions was to protect those most at risk in our community.

It is incredible that the same NSW parliament that put our lives on hold for more than two years in order to protect the most vulnerable has now passed a bill that sanctions their killing.

This “kill bill” divides us into two classes of people: those whose lives are protected by the state with the resources of healthcare, social services and law enforcement, and those whose deaths are facilitated because their lives are deemed to be “not worth living”.

It is a dramatic departure from parliament’s solemn obligation to pass laws for the good of its citizens and to protect the weak.

As Pope Francis has said, euthanasia and assisted suicide are the marks of a ‘throwaway culture’ where the forgotten, the downtrodden, the poor and the elderly will ultimately suffer.

I fear, that this bill will dehumanise the medical and nursing professions, creating a health industry where it might become more cost effective, or expedient to push people towards death.

I fear also for families, that this bill will damage family life, creating tensions where someone is taking a long time to die and pressures on everyone for this to be “hurried up”.

And I fear for the dying themselves who are told by this bill that our parliament regards their lives as no longer inalienable, and who may more than ever feel they are regarded a “burden” on others and “better off dead”.

With amendments to this kill bill now due to be debated, I call upon our MPs, even those who are in favour of this bill, to agree to reasonable amendments to provide some limited protections for those most vulnerable and to ensure that faith-based providers of medical and aged care services can continue to offer a choice to residents who do not want to be associated with this lethal regime in any way.

Forcing Catholic or other religious providers to have euthanasia on their premises amounts to a grave attack on freedom of religion.

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