



The Catholic Bishops of Manitoba

Presentation

# *Finding Solace in Faith*

*A Catholic Perspective on End-of-Life Issues*

11 February 2026

# *Finding Solace in Faith*

Navigating End-of-Life Issues with Dignity, Hope, and Compassion

*A Pastoral Guide for Healthcare Workers, Clergy, and the Faithful*



***Think Psalm 23!***

## ***Overview***

**01. *Advanced Medical Directives***

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**02. *Palliative & Hospice Care***

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**03. *MAiD***

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**04. *Catholic Church Teaching***

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**05. *Spiritual Preparation***

# WHAT IS THE FOUNDATION?

SANCTITY  
DIGNITY

**CORE BELIEF: THE SANCTITY OF LIFE  
AND DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN  
PERSON FROM CONCEPTION TO  
NATURAL DEATH**

**THE OBLIGATION: WE HAVE A MORAL  
OBLIGATION TO PRESERVE LIFE, BUT  
THIS OBLIGATION IS NOT ABSOLUTE; IT  
IS UNDERTAKEN WITHIN REASONABLE  
MEANS**

**THE PERSPECTIVE: WE ACKNOWLEDGE  
THE REALITY OF DEATH WHILE  
UPHOLDING A HOPEFUL PERSPECTIVE  
ROOTED IN THE RESURRECTION**



# ***Advance Healthcare Directives***

**Definition:** A legal document outlining medical decisions if one becomes incapacitated

**The Health Care Agent:** Selecting a person to act on your behalf, ensuring decisions align with Catholic moral teaching

## **Benefits:**

- Ensures desired medical care.
- Relieves decision-making burdens from loved ones during grief

**Guidance:** Seek advice from a pastor, Catholic ethicist, or doctor when drafting



# ***Palliative & Hospice Care***

## **Models of Compassion**

### **Palliative Care**

Comprehensive support to improve quality of life during serious illness. It affirms dignity regardless of condition

### **Hospice Care**

Specialized palliative care for the final weeks of life, focusing on comfort and dignity

### **The Catholic Standard:**

- Neither hastens nor postpones death
- Refuses futile or burdensome treatments
- Views accompaniment as a sincere expression of human solidarity and charity

# ***The Contrast: Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)***

## **The Legal Landscape**

Legalized in Canada (2016),  
expanded in 2021 (Bill C-7)  
to remove the "reasonably  
foreseeable death" requirement

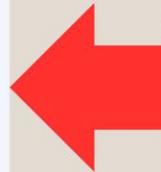


## **The Danger**

It presents death as a "solution" to  
suffering, potentially pressuring  
the vulnerable to feel like a burden

## **The Moral Objection**

The Church views MAiD as  
intrinsically immoral (contrary to  
"You shall not kill") because it  
involves the direct, intentional  
ending of a life

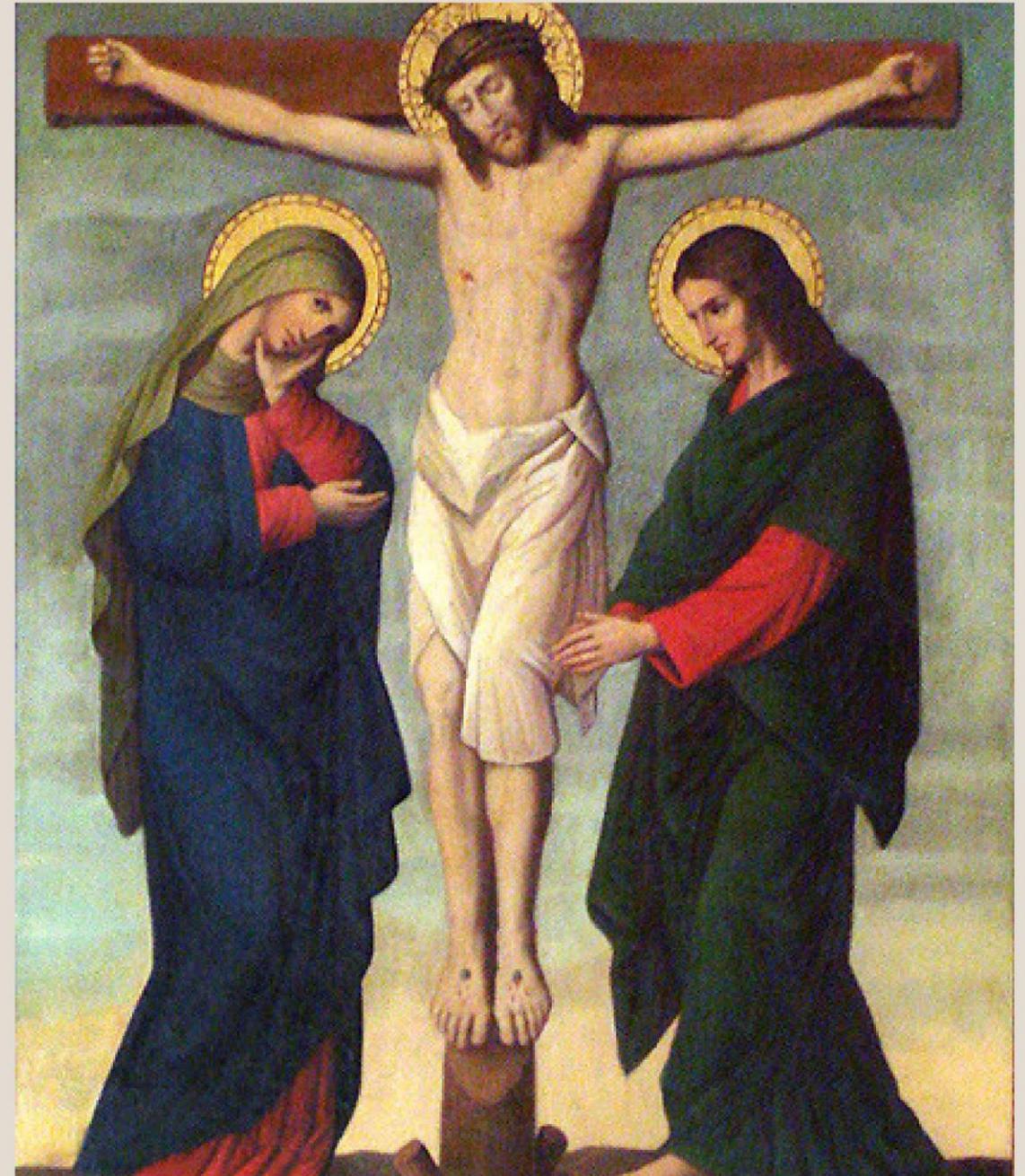


# *The Meaning of Suffering*

**Catholic View:** Suffering is not a meaningless evil to be eliminated at all costs. Through Christ's Passion, it can acquire redemptive meaning

**MAiD View:** Suffering is unbearable and renders life valueless

**Spiritual Growth:** Enduring suffering with faith can foster virtues like endurance, character, and hope (*Rm 5:3-5*)





## ***Protecting the Vulnerable (Social Justice)***

**Socio-Economic Pressures:** Poverty, isolation, and lack of healthcare in Northern communities can limit true "choice"

**The Risk:** Vulnerable individuals may choose MAiD because they feel they are a burden to their families

**Indigenous Wisdom:** Contrast the "burden" narrative with traditional Indigenous culture where elders are revered repositories of wisdom

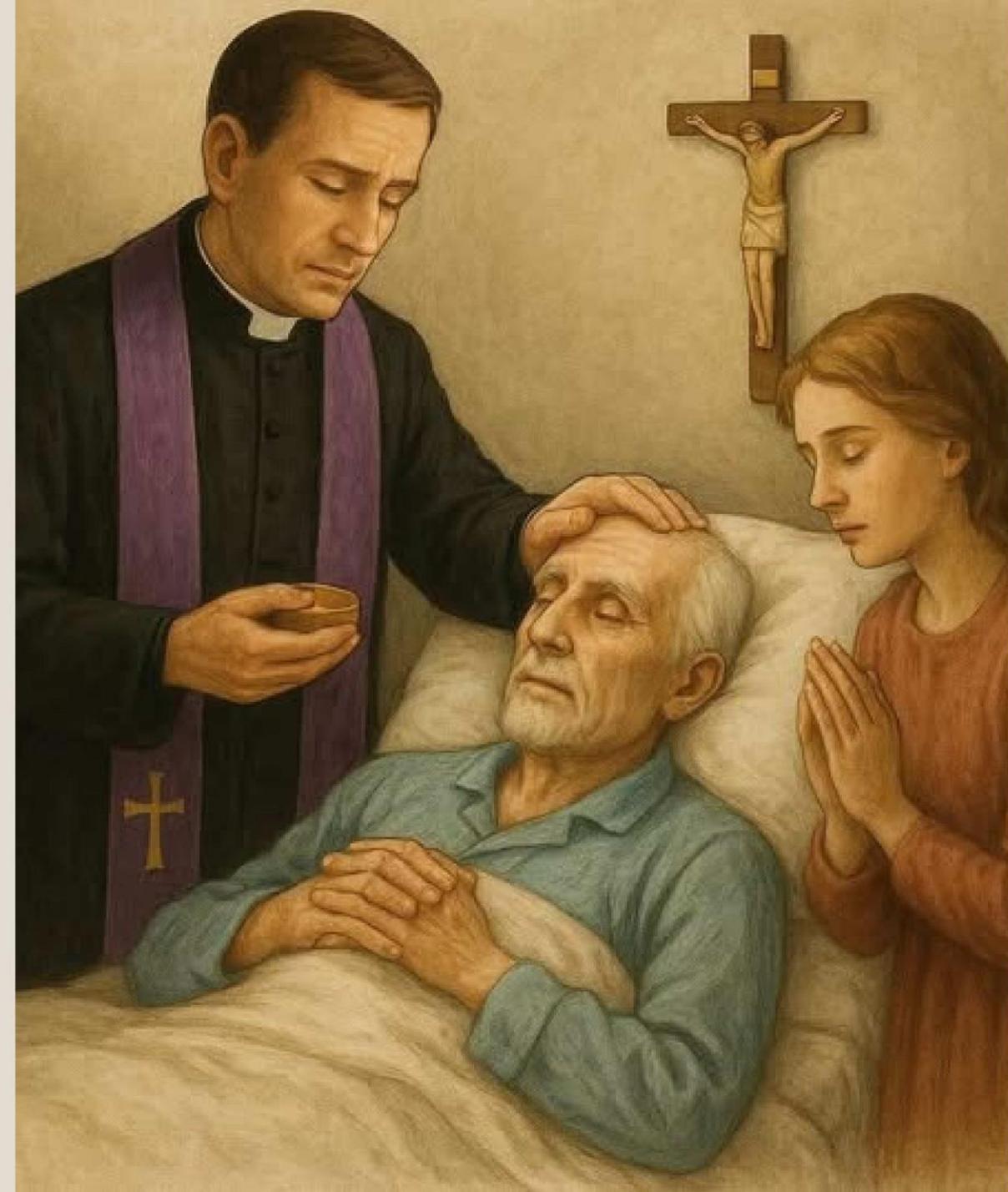
**Our Duty:** We must address the root causes of suffering (lack of care) rather than ending the life of the sufferer

# ***Spiritual Preparation & The Sacraments***

**A Transition, Not an End:** Death is a passage to a new life promised by Christ

**The Sacraments:** Vital preparation includes Reconciliation, the Eucharist (*Viaticum*), and the Anointing of the Sick

**Pastoral Role:** Priests provide spiritual counseling, sacraments, and funeral planning to bring peace to the dying and their families





# *A Call to Action*

## **Advocacy**

Call on government to make palliative care truly accessible to all Manitobans, especially in northern regions

## **Education**

Parishes should foster understanding of end-of-life issues and the detrimental effects of MAiD

## **Support**

Families and parishes must support caregivers and those grieving (bereavement counseling, prayer groups)

## **Compassion**

Never abandon the vulnerable; ensure no one feels their life is a burden



DOCUMENT



BOOKLET



BROCHURE



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*Thank You*

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