

Archbishop: The Government is Mistaken in Its Policy

February 22, 2018

Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, released the following statement in response to health authorities in B.C. forcing assisted suicide into hospice and palliative care homes:

As health authorities in B.C. start to impose euthanasia in palliative and hospice care facilities, two things are clear: the government is mistaken in its policy, and we as a society are doing something wrong.

First, the Fraser Health Authority and other branches of government are making a serious error in imposing assisted suicide in departments dedicated to hospice and palliative care. These units, and the compassionate caregivers who work there, are committed to making the final stages of life for the elderly, sick, and suffering meaningful and dignified. Assisted suicide stands in stark contrast, offering a false choice to end one's life rather than be accompanied in one's suffering.

The government needs to immediately halt any efforts to force access to assisted suicide in facilities where caregivers – whether family, friends, or health-care workers or volunteers – selflessly attend to the sick and suffering.

As a community, we must also ask ourselves where and why we are failing to provide for and accompany those who are dealing with lengthy illnesses or approaching death. The fact that more than 2,000 Canadians have ended their lives with a doctor's assistance calls us to action: we need to reach out to the suffering in our midst.

If the elderly, sick and suffering in our population feel that euthanasia is their best option, it means we as a society and as individuals are letting them down. In nearly every case we can provide adequate pain management to comfort patients. But what about the lonely, the abandoned, and those who see themselves as a burden to others or society? How do we address their needs and assure them that their life has meaning?

The Bible tells us, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." All of us, not only those who are caregivers, are called to act on Jesus' teaching. This is the greatest line of defence the Church and society have for fostering an understanding of sickness and suffering that preserves human dignity to the fullest possible extent. When we care for the sick and dying, it stands in powerful contrast to efforts to promote assisted suicide as a response to suffering. True compassion, as Pope Francis tells us, is an act of sharing. We are called to suffer with the sufferer, not to end his or her life.

In my recent homily for World Day of the Sick I thanked our caregivers for their "extraordinary ministry which brings blessings" not only to themselves but even more so to those whom they so patiently and sacrificially serve.

These men and women are an example for all of us – government and public alike – as we seek ever better ways to accompany the suffering, not to wash our hands of them with a lethal injection.

Archdiocese of Vancouver

The Real Dignity of Dying

Our Lenten Talks on Sr Nuala Kenny's book *Rediscover The Art of Dying* have just begun. Please join us for the discussion following the Stations of the Cross on Fridays of Lent. This article in the Catholic Register on the Dignity of Dying was written by Lafantaisie, aged 23. She is a freelance photographer in Winnipeg, Man.

By Janelle Lafantaisie

This past fall, my mother received a call from the care home in Yorkton, Sask., where her eldest sister was a resident. My mother was informed that her sister had taken a turn in health and there likely wasn't much time left.

My aunt had no children or spouse to care for her. So without hesitation, my mother along with her other sister who lives here in Winnipeg took leave from their jobs and boarded the next train to Yorkton. While this is an action that isn't possible for everyone in a circumstance like this, it is an outstanding witness to our call as Catholics to ensure that death is met with dignity.

My mother and I texted daily. I asked for updates and checked in to make sure she herself was doing okay. She told me each day about my aunt's decline. She had stopped eating, drinking and was hooked up to a morphine drip to relieve the pain as her organs began failing.

I can understand how some people might favour medical assistance in dying. Why would anyone want to let the pain of their organs failing overcome them until God decides it's time for them to go? Why would anyone want to travel hundreds of kilometers to hear the weakness in her sister's breath? Why does a loving God let us suffer? All are fair questions.

I believe our time on this Earth is borrowed. Jesus Christ came to this Earth and died for our sins. He carried His cross to Calvary and with His mother by His side, suffered and died so that He could overcome death and we could join Him in everlasting life and the joy that is Heaven.

Catholic social teaching speaks to the reality that people want the option of assisted suicide because they are afraid of serious pain. We do, however, live in a world with more than one option. We are blessed with care, comprehensive support of the dying, palliative medicine and hospice care. We are blessed with the option to help dying persons and not help people to die.

My aunt suffered for five days at the end of her life, but here's the good that I believe came out of it: My mom and aunt were able to be with their sister and hold her hand. They were able to put on Elvis music in the room (her favourite) and talk to her and be with her even if she wasn't responsive.

I believe that the suffering felt by my mom and aunt for their sister, as well as the suffering felt by my fading aunt, caused a sense of peace and closure for each other. I also have a firm belief that my aunt did not die in vain. She suffered so that her joy in Heaven would be that much greater. She suffered so that when Christ finally did call her home, she was ready to go.

Death is scary, but there is also comfort for those of us awaiting the joy of Heaven. There are others who believe death is just an everlasting sleep. However, Christ did not die for us to sleep, but to have eternal life.

I believe all of us who suffer in this life are called to something much greater. I believe there is dignity in death and it is also an opportunity for us to help the dying by sharing our grace, compassion, love and care.

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604-224-4344



MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)
Children's Mass: 9am 1st
Sunday of the month Oct-June
Children's Liturgy: 11am All
Sundays except the 1st Sunday
from Sept- June
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor
Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.
Associate Pastor
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.
Office Manager
Virginia Fong
Pastoral Coordinator
Bertilla Watanabe
Bookkeeper
Corinna Siy
Youth Ministry Coordinator
Theresa Barao
OLPH School Principal
Lora Clarke

IN RESIDENCE

William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

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March 4, 2018

3rd Sunday of Lent

Our Task Is to Help the Sick Share in Their Pain

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

Our choice of Sister Nuala Kenny's book "Rediscovering the Art of Dying for the Lenten Talks could not have come at a better time. Archbishop Miller this week issued a statement about the mistake Health Authorities are making in imposing assisted suicide to departments which are designed to provide care for those in the final stages of life. Archbishop Miller also poses a very important question for us to consider: As a community why are we failing to provide for and accompany those who are approaching death? His full statement is on the back page.

When Fr Boland was in his final weeks, I experienced on a day-to-day basis what it was like to see someone go through the various stages of suffering. There were times when it was very difficult and stressful for everyone. The nurse who helped Fr Boland was a living example of one who knew the meaning of compassion. She was a true witness who did everything possible to make Fr Boland comfortable. Sister Kenny who is a Sister of Charity as well as a medical doctor talks about how to deal with these difficulties and how we can share in the suffering of others. Our task is to help them bear their pain with compassion.

Let us pray with hope for enlightenment and a reexamination of these ideas by those in positions of power charged with upholding the care for the sick.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R

Kindergarten Students Celebrate the Lunar New Year

A colourful little dragon made a surprise visit to the rectory on Monday to mark the Lunar New Year. It was made by students from Kindergarten to mark the annual festivity celebrated by many of our Asian families. Small drums and noise-makers accompanied the two-headed dragon adding to the fun and drama of the event. It was no easy task keeping everyone together and moving in one direction! But not to worry, teachers were keeping close watch. Fr Babu took out his stash of lollypops which he keeps handy for just such an occasion. It was a happy little dragon that made its way back to school soon after.



Lord you have the words of eternal life. – Psalm 19

NEWS & NOTICES

Tax Receipts: Tax receipts are available for pickup at the parish office from Monday March 5 during office hours.

LFA / VC Bake Sale: Students from Little Flower Academy and Vancouver College are in the church foyer after all Masses with goodies for a fundraising Bake Sale. Funds raised will enable students to put on the One World One Heart Social Justice Conference. The two schools are aiming to invite a variety of speakers to inspire them on works of social justice. Thank you for your support!

Spring Break: School is closed for Spring Break from March 12 – 23.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross will be prayed every Friday at 7pm followed by the Lenten Talk in the hall which will begin soon after.

West Point Grey Lenten Prayer Series: Wednesdays at noon for 1/2 hour. Soup & bread lunch after prayer.
Mar 7 – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic, 2465 Crown St.
Mar 14 – West Point Grey United Church, 4595 W. 8th Ave.
Mar 21 – West Point Grey Presbyterian, 4397 West 12th Ave.

Trip to Mexico: Father Bill Comerford is going to Mexico: March 22 – 31, 2018. Eduardo and Rosa Ana Ituarte, who are parishioners of OLPH, founded an orphanage for young, needy children eight years ago and they have invited him and whoever else would like to come to visit the orphanage in Ezequiel Montes in the Mexican State of Queretaro. There is an exciting visit to the famous Basilica of our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City planned and we will experience the Via Crucis Stations of the Cross in Ezequiel Montes on Good Friday. If you are interested please call Eduardo Angel Ituarte Lima 604-401-4342. Fr. Bill is chaplain and can be reached through the parish office at 604-224-4344 ext.109.

Sunday Offering Envelopes: 2018 Sunday Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up from the parish office. Please drop in during office hours if you have not got a box of envelopes for this year. Please do not use envelopes from previous years. Thank you!

Easter Vigil: Every year to welcome the new people entering the church at Easter, we put on a reception after the Easter Vigil Mass. We are looking for volunteers to help with this celebration. Please use the sign-up sheet in the church foyer or contact Bertilla. Email: bwatanabe@rcav.org.

Monthly Eucharistic Adoration - Intensive Prayer: The Matthew 7.7 Prayer Brigade, a prayer warriors group of the Office of the Filipino Ministry (rcav.org/filipino-ministry) gathers monthly in different parishes for intensive prayer with scriptural Rosaries during a 3-hour Eucharistic adoration for peace, healing, and various intentions. Everyone is invited on March 10, 1-4 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church, Vancouver. Petitions and thanksgiving boxes are provided and will be brought to the altar before start of adoration.

2018 Parish Mission: Corpus Christi Parish invites everyone to its 2018 Parish Mission with Fr. Louis Guardiola, CPM (Fathers of Mercy). Sunday, Feb. 25, to Thursday, March 1, at 7 p.m. each night at Corpus Christi Church, Vancouver. <http://rcav.org/event/2018-parish-mission>

Retrouaille Weekend in April: The next Retrouaille Program for troubled marriages will be held on the weekend of April 13 - 15, 2018. We are blessed to be able to have our weekend at the Christian Retreat Centre Barnabas Landing, on Keats Island. - www.barnabasfm.org

Fiat: Women's Discernment Event - Weekend Retreat Fiat activities are open to single Catholic women ages 18-35 who are open to discerning God's call in life. Following the example of Mary, who gave her fiat to be both virgin and mother, we desire to hear and follow God's call to holiness through discernment of his will for our life and vocation. Join us for a weekend retreat March 2-4 at Westminster Abbey, Mission. To register, visit rcav.org/event/fiat-womensretreat

St Mark's College Lenten Liturgy and Lunch Series: Back by popular demand, St. Mark's College at UBC will again be offering our weekly Lenten lecture series "Fill Your Bowl with Joy" every Wednesday of Lent. We start with Mass at 12:10pm in St Mark's Chapel followed by a talk and discussion at 12:45 in Plato's Cave (St. Mark's College).

Stewardship Reflection

"You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything..." - Exodus 20:4

How many "gods" do you put before God? "Idols" do not always take the shape of physical things, things we can touch and feel. Those are easy to recognize. Many times they take the form of things we cannot touch and are much harder to spot like pride, power, ego, time, comfort or health.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY/MARCH

Madonna Group Meeting

Madonna Group will be meeting on Wednesday, March 14 at Noon in the Church Hall. We will have a St. Patrick's celebration. Please contact Monica at 604-739-8837 if you plan to attend.

Lenten Talks

Our annual Lenten Talks take place after the 7pm Stations of the Cross. The book we are discussing is Sister Nuala Kenny's *Rediscovering The Art of Dying*. Books are available for \$15.16 from Novalis <https://en.novalis.ca>. You can buy a book or simply attend the talk prepared by our speakers for each session.

Friday Mar 9: The Dimensions of Suffering & Care

Friday Mar 16: The Art of Dying: Learning from the Master

Friday Mar 23: Consolation & Resurrection

Holy Week Schedule

Sunday March 25
Palm Sunday Blessings of Palms
and Procession at all Masses
Penitential Service Sunday 2pm

Mon – Wed March 26-28
8am Mass as usual

Holy Thursday March 29
(No morning Mass)
Mass of the Lord's Supper 7pm
Exposition of the Blessed
Sacrament till 10pm

Good Friday March 30
Prayer/Soup & bread: Noon
Celebration of the Lord's
Passion: 3pm

Stations of the Cross: 7pm

Holy Saturday March 31
9am Morning Prayer (No Mass)
Confessions: 4-5pm
Easter Vigil 8pm

Easter Sunday April 1
Usual Mass Times



Rite of Election: A Milestone to Celebrate

By Bertilla Watanabe

RCIA catechumens and candidates of OLPH Parish gathered last Sunday for the Rite of Election at Holy Rosary Cathedral, marking yet another milestone in their journey to discovery of the love of Jesus Christ.

The group of 22 catechumens and 5 candidates celebrated Mass with Archbishop Michael Miller and others from parishes in the Fraser Valley West, New Westminster and Vancouver West churches also there for this very special occasion.

Together with godparents, family members and friends the church was packed with nearly 900 people. Archbishop Miller extended a very warm welcome to all. After the Homily came the special moment when catechumens were invited to write their names in the Book of the Elect. Archbishop Miller said: "Your name will remain in that book for as long as there is a cathedral in Vancouver!"

RCIA Coordinators Sue Ellen Griffin, Rhys Volkenant and Greg Cowley as well as godparents and sponsors for the OLPH group were present at the event. Sue Ellen commented that it was a very beautiful ceremony and a wonderful opportunity to see so many others who like ours, have taken this step to share in the Faith.

Please continue to pray for them as they progress in their faith journey towards full communion this Easter. Congratulations to all of you!

Catechumens

Paris Jia Min Chen
Maggie Ding
Vivienne Gao
Sara Ho
Jian Lang
Cecilia Leong
Jennifer Li
Meredith Mitchell
Alexander Mitchell
Isabel Mitchell
Daniel Pu
Sophia Qu
Aileen Shi
Aki Sueyoshi

Catechumens

Ruban Vijayaruban
Alan Wang
Jia-Yi Wang
Jian-En Wang
Maili Wong
Jessica Yang
Jessie Yeung

Candidates

Lawrence Cheng
Michelle Lau
Valerie Martin
Janine Mendes
David Mitchell

RITE OF ELECTION 2018

