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## MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP TO THE PEOPLE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE.

### Compassion for the dying

In recent days we have heard and seen headlines exhorting the people of South Australia to support legislation to allow doctors, in discussion with patients to end life. We are all moved by the suffering of those who are dying and the suffering of those who have to watch it happen to a loved one.

As I stated in my recent letter on Euthanasia, *people who are dying have a right to be cared for*. It can appear to others that compassion for the dying is only felt by those who wish to provide Euthanasia. I want to clearly say today that compassion for those who are dying means ensuring that their right to be cared for as they die is paramount. Effective and well-resourced palliative care is the best way to ensure that those who are dying are given choices and respected in their decisions.

As a Church, we support palliative care which already allows doctors to work with patients in managing pain. We do not wish to see anyone who is dying placed in a position where, what might have appeared to be a choice in Euthanasia, actually becomes an expectation on or in the dying person, to prevent the suffering of others, especially family members.

The Review of Advanced Directives, which considered some of the challenges families face in managing the end of life, could create simpler processes for families, which would make palliative care even more responsive to the needs of the dying and their families.

Palliative care is not well understood and because of this Euthanasia can gain ground. However I say to you all today that we must resist this, by showing the greatest respect and compassion for a dying person and accompanying them through the palliative process to their death.

I urge you once again to contact your local Member of Parliament and a member for the Legislative Council to let him/her know you wish to support increased funding for palliative care and express your opposition to this latest legislation. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of your voice to your local Member of Parliament to express your desire for each dying person to have the palliative care she or he deserves, thereby eliminating the need for people to choose Euthanasia.

Yours sincerely

+ Philip Wilson

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