

CATHOLIC UNDERSTANDING OF REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING AND DYING VS. THE LILA MANFIELD SAPINSLEY COMPASSIONATE CARE ACT

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ST. PHILIP CATHOLIC CHURCH
GREENVILLE, RI

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FOUNDATIONAL QUESTION:

Is the sick or dying person placed at the center of attention?

OR

Is the sick or dying person abandoned, isolated, ignored?

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BOOK OF HOURS 1440; DUCHESS OF GUELTERS



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RHODE ISLAND

- ✘ The Lila Manfield Sapinsley Compassionate Care Act would make PAS/MAiD legal in RI + SB126/HB5210 (2023).
- ✘ Would make it legal for doctors to prescribe a lethal dose of medicine to some patients for the express purpose of enabling them to use it to kill themselves, including at home.

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THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH 500BC

“I will never give a deadly drug to anybody who asked for it, *nor will I make a suggestion to this effect.*”

Why did Hippocrates *distinguish* suggesting the act from doing the act and *equate* suggesting the idea to the patient to the same level of evil as actually killing the patient?

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RI BILL: SB126/HB5210 RESTRICTIONS:

- ✘ at least 18 years old; cognitively able to make health care decisions
- ✘ diagnosed with a terminal disease with six-month prognosis
- ✘ two verbal requests to their doctor at least 15 days apart
- ✘ one written request signed by witnesses
- ✘ a second doctor must confirm and/or require a psych. eval.
- ✘ Prescribing doctor must confirm: no coercion
- ✘ Prescribing doctor must inform: care options other than PAS
- ✘ Prescribing doctor must offer opportunity to withdraw request
- ✘ Patient must be able to physically take the medicine
- ✘ If anyone administers it to the patient, that remains illegal

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SB126/HB5210

A physician shall not be subject to any civil or criminal liability or professional disciplinary action if the physician prescribes to a patient with a terminal condition medication to be self-administered for the purpose of hastening the patient’s death and the physician affirms by documenting in the patient’s medical record all of the following.

Question: Why this introductory remark?

Answer: Because of other RI Laws

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DUTY TO AID LAWS

- ✘ A patient with a terminal condition who self-administers a lethal dose of medication shall not be considered to be a person exposed to grave physical harm under 11-56-1.
- ✘ no person shall be subject to civil or criminal liability solely for being present when a patient with a terminal condition self-administers a lethal dose of medication pursuant to this chapter
- ✘ or for not acting to prevent the patient from self-administering a lethal dose of medication pursuant to this chapter
- ✘ or for not rendering aid to a patient who has self-administered medication pursuant to this chapter.

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SUICIDE AND INSURANCE LAW

A person and their beneficiaries shall not be denied benefits under any life insurance policy, as defined in 27-4-0.1 for actions taken in accordance with this chapter.

The sale, procurement, or issue of any medical malpractice insurance policy or the rate charged for the policy shall not be conditioned upon or affected by whether the physician is willing or unwilling to participate in the provisions of this chapter.

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PROLIFE RESPONSE TO PAS BILLS/LAWS

- ✦ 180-degree shift in law, medicine and society
- ✦ rejecting the age-old principle that doctors will *never* apply their medical knowledge to willfully cause the death of a patient
- ✦ enshrining in law the principle that doctors *will* employ their medical knowledge to willfully cause the death of a patient.
- ✦ The reason why PAS laws always expand is *not* because people are weak at sticking to the list of requirements/restrictions.
- ✦ It is because we have taken the fateful step to enshrine willful killing into our laws and medical ethos. (Hippocrates' suggestion)
- ✦ The original restrictions begin to seem unfair to those who want PAS and are not within them and they are removed one by one.
- ✦ The abuse is not killing the people "outside the guidelines", it is "killing of people" inside or outside the guidelines

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POPE PIUS XII, 1957

Pain medications

Principle of Double Effect applies if life will be shortened

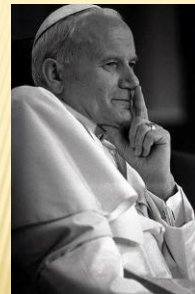
Special concern: reduced consciousness

Moral heroism is not required

- ✦ The Catholic Church is in favor of pain reduction via proper palliative and hospice care that respects the preciousness of every person by recognizing the difference between staying with a patient and loved one until their natural death versus abandoning them to euthanasia or physician assisted suicide.

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ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II SALVIFICI DOLORIS 1984



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“LOVING TO THE END”

When Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

- Jn 13:1

2 Meanings:

Astonishment at simultaneous suffering and love

An intrinsic link between suffering and love

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3 QUESTIONS HUMAN BEINGS ASK ABOUT SUFFERING

How did suffering begin?

What exactly is suffering?

What is the inner meaning of suffering?

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SUFFERING UNLEASHES LOVE

Interiorly – warmth of heart, attention to another individual person “one on one”

Exteriorly – Institutions and acts of helping

Culturally – A civilization of love

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RAVENSBRUCK PRAYER

O Lord, remember not only men and women of good will, but also those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they inflicted on us. Remember the fruits we have born thanks to this suffering: our comradeship, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of this; and when they come to judgment let all the fruits that we have born be their forgiveness.

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WHAT IS THE JOY OF THE MARTYRS?

St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Peter



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THREE STAGES OF ST. PAUL

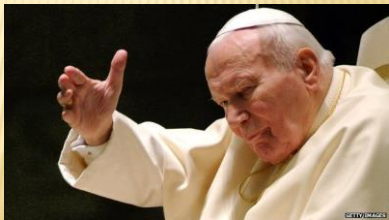
Acceptance

Gratitude

Joy

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LIVING HIS TEACHING...



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ST. JOHN PAUL II SD, PAR. 26

“When this body is gravely ill, totally incapacitated, and the person is almost incapable of living and acting, all the more to interior *maturity* and *spiritual greatness* become evident, constituting a touching lesson to those who are healthy and normal.”

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JOHN 16: 20-22

I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a child into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.