

# Bishop Barres' Statement on Governor Hochul's Plan to Sign Assisted Suicide Bill

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Governor Hochul's decision to sign into law the assisted suicide bill is a tragedy and a grave moral failure. In explaining her decision, the governor invoked personal liberty—the right of the individual to make determinations about the direction of his/her life. Sadly, this law facilitates abuse and manipulation of the elderly, the disabled, and those who suffer from mental or emotional illnesses. As a society, we must care for the suffering with compassion, upholding the dignity of all life, not legitimize the tragic path too many choose to escape their burdens. This sends a terrible message of despair to young people who struggle with depression and anxiety.

The governor's statement references her reflections during a funeral Mass on the compassion of God. She is profoundly misled. Jesus calls us to help the suffering to carry their crosses with love, not to participate in the willful taking of a life. Christ is the Divine Physician who cured the sick and restored the dead to life, taking pity on those who wept and mourned at the loss of a loved one. The Lord gives life, even to the suffering, and receives them upon their natural deaths into “the life of the world to come.”

Our Catholic institutions cannot and will not participate in physician-assisted suicide. We will continue to proclaim the love of God for every individual person, created in His image, that endures in every circumstance, and we will never abandon the sick and suffering to death. We will care for them until the end of their natural lives.



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