

Human Dignity Until the End: Join in the Diocesan Effort to Oppose Physician-Assisted Suicide



On Public Policy weekend next month parishes around the diocese will collect petition signatures opposing the legalization of physician-assisted suicide (“PAS”) in New York State.

PAS discriminates against people with disabilities. It threatens improvement of palliative care. It puts vulnerable people at risk of coercion to end their lives by the heirs to their estates.

Learn more about these and other dangers of PAS at www.nosuicideny.org and from author Jane St. Clair, quoted below, from www.authorsden.com

A few of the many reasons to oppose PAS:

“American teens kill themselves at a rate of about one every two hours. About 19% of our teens tell researchers they have experienced depression, and half of those have had suicidal thoughts. Our kids take three times the number of prescription drugs for depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions than do European teens.”

“By okaying assisted suicide laws, we are telling our teenagers that suicide is okay and necessary sometimes. Given the above data, do you really think that's a good idea?”

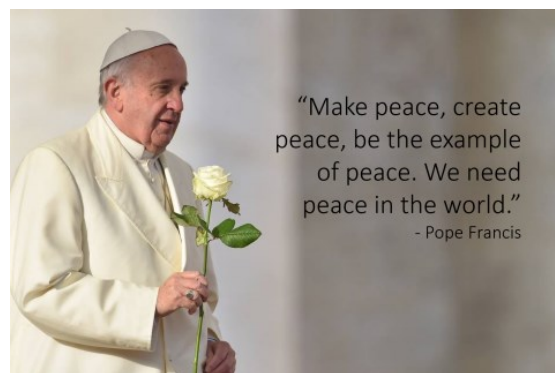
In his autobiography, *Still Me*, Reeve describes the despair he felt after becoming paralyzed in a riding accident. Within seconds, he went from being a handsome, extremely physically fit person to one who could not move from the neck down. He could speak and drink through straws, and that was pretty much it.

He asked his wife to help him commit suicide, and she said, “I understand how you feel, but you're still you and I love you.” Hence, the title of the book.

What Reeve confesses is that he was testing her to see if she was willing to take over his care.

He went on to live a life of example. Not only did he write an inspiring book, he also acted in and directed several movies and worked tirelessly to get funding for victims of paralysis. He never gave up trying to walk. He became a real superman.”

Crying Out for Peace with Iran



“War only brings death and destruction. I call on all parties to keep alive the flame of dialogue and self-control and avoid the shadow of enmity”

-Pope Francis, January 5, 2020

“War, as we know, often begins with the inability to accept the diversity of others, which then fosters attitudes of aggrandizement and domination born of selfishness and pride, hatred and the desire to caricature, exclude and even destroy the other. War is fueled by a perversion of relationships, by hegemonic ambitions, by abuses of power, by fear of others and by seeing diversity as an obstacle. And these, in turn, are aggravated by the experience of war. “

Message of Pope Francis

“Peace As A Journey Of Hope:

Dialogue, Reconciliation and Ecological Conversion” For The Celebration of The 53rd World Day of Peace

January 1, 2020

Wording of our 2020 Public Policy petition

To: Governor Cuomo/New York State Senator/New York State Assembly Member

I strongly oppose any legislation to legalize assisted suicide in New York State. Allowing doctors to prescribe a lethal dose for patients to end their lives devalues human life. There is also significant potential for abuse. I urge you to focus instead on improving palliative care, to ensure compassionate, comprehensive care and pain management for those who are terminally ill. We need to accompany rather than abandon them.

Advice on Gathering Petition Signatures: The Power of the Clipboard!

Let's work together to collect thousands of signatures from around our diocese.
Let's show our state elected officials that we really do care about human dignity!



Over the years, we've learned practices that help to inspire more parishioners to join in and sign the petition. There are more effective ways to gather petitions signatures than to table after Mass, when everyone is leaving church. Try this instead:

In the weeks leading up to Public Policy Weekend:

- Include the bulletin notices
- Print the text of the petition in the bulletin two weeks prior to Public Policy Weekend
- Give time during Mass for a short presentation on the issue by social ministry committee members one week prior to Public Policy Weekend

On Public Policy Weekend:

- Place the petition on clipboards with pens in every pew (or every other pew)
- Talk about the issue during the homily and invite people to sign the petition right then
- Collect the petitions with the second collection OR
- Give a short presentation after Communion and invite people to sign the petition right then
- Have them leave the clipboards in the pews and collect them after Mass

Thanks to Deacon Claude Lester for sharing the best practices from his parish, St. Benedict's of Canandaigua /Bloomfield. His parish regularly collects 400+ signatures on the petitions!



January is Poverty Awareness Month: Test your knowledge of the realities low income people face at www.povertyusa.org/poverty-quiz

Once a day reflections and challenges on how to respond to poverty here: www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/povertyusa/upload/poverty-awareness-month-calendar-full.pdf

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