



Following the release on February 25, 2016, of the report *Medical Assistance in Dying: A Patient-Centred Approach*, by the Special Joint Committee of the Government of Canada on Physician-Assisted Dying, several declarations and reactions have been published beginning with the [pastoral statement](#) of the Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., Bishop of Hamilton and President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB). His Eminence [Thomas Cardinal Collins](#), Archbishop of Toronto, also issued a statement, as well as the [Most Reverend J. Michael Miller, C.S.B.](#), Archbishop of Vancouver, and the [Catholic Bishops of Alberta](#). Furthermore, the Assembly of Québec Catholic Bishops (AECQ) has just made available the English version of its pastoral letter, *Approaching Death in the Company of Christ*. This pastoral letter was published in French in December 2015 and includes a proposal of a number of steps that may be taken as part of the spiritual journey to accompany the dying.

[Link to the pastoral letter by the AECQ \(PDF\)](#)

Other resources promoted by dioceses across the country:

-**The Archdiocese of Edmonton** is sponsoring a campaign to promote the true dignity of life

and death. The *Every Life Matters* campaign includes a website with a video to help parishes and Catholics understand the issues involved, and provides a list of practical suggestions on how to choose life. The website is <http://www.commitlife.com/>

-**The Archdiocese of Toronto** is part of the *Respect for Conscience project*. This involves a detailed proposal on how to respect the conscience rights of doctors and health-care facilities without interfering with the patient's choice for assisted death. The project, and its website <http://www.canadiansforconscience.ca/>, is an initiative of the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience, which involves the Archdiocese of Toronto, the Christian Medical and Dental Society of Canada, the Catholic Organization for Life and Family, the Canadian Federation of Catholic Physicians' Societies, the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, and Canadian Physicians for Life. The project also represents some 5,000 physicians across Canada. The website allows concerned Canadians to indicate their support for the proposal, as well as providing an opportunity to write to the appropriate officials in each province or territory with respect to its plans to protect the conscience rights of health-care workers.



-**The Archdiocese of Vancouver** has launched a campaign to protect and safeguard freedom of conscience and religion for health-care workers. It includes a petition to the House of Commons for a national strategy on palliative care, as well as a postcard to the Minister of Justice on ensuring protection for the freedom of conscience of those who cannot ethically participate in assisted suicide. Information about the campaign, as well as copies of the petition and the postcard, are available at <http://rcav.org/assisted-suicide/>

Submissions received by Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying:

The CCCB intervention, together with other written submissions received by the Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying, has been posted on the latter's website, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/PDAM/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=8765254> .