

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 27 October 2024

Thought for the Week

The Gospel this week is the wonderful account of Jesus's encounter with the blind beggar Bartimaeus and the beggar gaining his sight.

As Jesus and his disciples leave Jericho, Bartimeus cries out from the crowd 'Jesus, Son of David have mercy on me.' Bartimeus, without sight, sees Jesus for who he really is and is not deflected by the crowd shushing him; why would he, if blind as he is, he recognises and feels the power of Christ? Bartimeus is prepared to give up everything for his faith. Mark writes of him throwing off his cloak before springing up to see Jesus. Perhaps it is a small detail; however a cloak was a very valuable commodity; in Exodus and Deuteronomy if a cloak were taken as a pledge for a loan it had to be returned before sunset so that the owner could sleep in warmth - how much more valuable would that cloak be for a blind beggar? Bartimeus is throwing all he owns to one side to be able to see. I always wonder what it was like when the first thing that Bartimeus saw was the creator face-to-face; a repetition of God's first act in Genesis – 'Let there be light.' I hope that Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, smiled.

We have chances to see Jesus, present in the Eucharist at Mass, we also see Jesus in his church, in the community around us. We have a special opportunity to see Jesus one-to-one in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. On a Friday, come, be Bartimeus - it is a time to stop, to look, to be close to Christ to spend time in his presence; put things aside and see him for yourself.

Deacon Stephen

Date 26 Oct – 03 Nov	Mass Times	Mass Intentions at St Edward's & St Mark's	Mass Times	Mass Intentions at St Francis of Assisi
Sat 26 Oct <i>Ss Chad & Cedd</i>	18:00	Bartolomé & Ángela - RIP	10:00 17:30	Honorina Tomlinson - RIP
Sun 27 Oct <i>30th Sunday Ordinary Time</i>	09:30 11:00	People of the Parish - St Mark's Rosanna Pediconi - RIP	08:30 10:00	People of the Parish Dr Keith Thomson - RIP
Mon 28 Oct <i>Ss Simond & Jude</i>	10:00	Roger Thomas - RIP		No Mass
Tues 29 Oct	18:30	Silveria Esteban - RIP	18:30	James & Johanna Moriarty - RIP
Wed 30 Oct	10:00	Holy Souls	10:00	
Thur 31 Oct <i>First Mass of All Saints</i>	10:00	Isobel Young - RIP - St Mark's	18:30	Terry Johnston (<i>In Friars' Chapel</i>)
Fri 01 Nov <i>All Saints</i> Holy Day of Obligation	12:00 18:30	Canon Gerard Hetherington - INT Lucy Fitzhenry - RIP	10:00 18:30	Mary & John Kirwin - RIP Brown & O'Reilly Family Deceased
Sat 02 Nov <i>Commemoration of All Souls</i>	18:00	Maria Pawlik - RIP	10:00 17:30	John Overton - RIP
Sun 03 Nov <i>31st Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>	09:30 11:00	People of the Parish - St Mark's Margaret Leavy - RIP	08:30 10:00	People of the Parish Eileen Berkeley - RIP

Assisted Dying Bill

A letter from the Bishop is available at the back of the Church. In his letter it details a call to action; to write to your local MP, to ask them to stop assisted suicide being rushed into law. A template letter is also available. Please take a copy of this template to fill in and send to your MP this Sunday.

Link to video - https://youtu.be/GTZNVxP_eRw

The MP for Ascot and Windsor is Jack Rankin. Email:- jack.rankin.mp@parliament.uk

Address: House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

DATE	TIME	Diary – St Edward’s & St Mark’s	TIME	Diary – St Francis of Assisi
Sat 26 Oct	11:00 -11:30 12:00 12:30 14:00 17:30 - 18:00	Reconciliation Baptism - Vincent Clemens Baptism - Demetria Zbikowsak Baptism - Grace Gibson Reconciliation	09:30 10:30 12:00	Rosary prayed Reconciliation after 10:00 Mass Baptisms - Eloise Hills & Logan Stanbrook
Sun 27 Oct	12:00 12:15	Tea & Coffee - P/C Baptism - Robert Bergin	10:00	No Children’s Liturgy (Half-term)
Mon 28 Oct	18:30	SVP Meeting - St Brigid’s Room		
Tues 29 Oct	10:30 18:00 18:00-18:30 19:00 19:15	UCM Meeting Evening Prayer - Lady Chapel Reconciliation Choir Practice - St Edward’s Church RCIA - St Brigid’s Room	11:00 - 12:45	No Little Franciscan Toddler Group (Resumes after Half-Term break)
Wed 30 Oct	09:30	Morning Prayer - Lady Chapel		Colin Snowden - RIP
Thur 31 Oct	18:30	Mass Readings Explained - St Brigid’s Room		
Fri 01 Nov	10:00-16:00 12:30 12:30	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Rosary prayed after 12:00 Mass UCM Lunch with Farvin Gonsalves (Portsmouth Seminarian) - P/C	10:30 - 11:30	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction
Sat 02 Nov	11:00 -11:30 12:00 17:30 -18:00	Reconciliation Wedding – Nayan Metha & Maria Da Costa Reconciliation	09:30 10:30	Rosary prayed Reconciliation after 10:00 Mass
Sun 03 Nov	12:00 12:15 15:00	Tea & Coffee - P/C Baptism Preparation-St Brigid’s Room Remembrance Service - Light refreshments in P/C	10:00	No Children’s Liturgy (Half-Term)

Further dates and info on our websites:

CatholicWindsor.org

StFrancisAscot.co.uk

Live Mass Link

<http://catholicwindsorandascot.org/stedwardsmass>

Live Mass Link

<http://catholicwindsorandascot.org/stfrancismass>

Pastoral Area Notices

New Lectionary

The Liturgy team is offering two online sessions about the new lectionary which will be introduced in Advent. Each session, led by Fr Anthony Fyk, will be identical (so you need only attend one) and will cover what the lectionary is, its revisions and what they mean for us; there will also be an opportunity for Questions and Answers. If you wish to pose a question, please submit this in writing in advance to liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

The sessions are on Tuesday 5 November and Tuesday 19 November from 19:00 to 20:00.

To sign up the links are: **5 November:** [Online session 5 November](#) and **19 November:** [Online session 19 November](#), or see the diocesan website.

Parish Outreach Team - Please Can You Help

This week the Windsor/Ascot Parish Outreach Team will post a card through the doors in Aston Mead and surrounding Roads in Windsor, and Ravensdale Road in Ascot. The Parish will be praying for the people who live in these roads at Mass, and a candle will be lit for them in the Lady Chapels. **A big thank you to all Parishioners who have helped in their own roads.** If you can help distribute cards, please contact Lisa (Windsor) [07769 249568](tel:07769249568) or Lucy (Ascot) outreach@catholicwindsor.org. The Outreach Team.

Sunday 3 November is Bamenda Sunday – Golden Jubilee

Please give as generously as possible to the Bamenda Sunday collection, every penny will go directly to an approved project aimed at cementing this twinning. Online: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/donate?cid=136990#amount>

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

CAFOD-DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal

The conflict in the Middle East is getting worse and the families affected need our help. Please donate today to the CAFOD-DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal and support our local Caritas partners in Gaza and Lebanon as they continue to provide essential food, water and shelter: [Give to CAFOD](#)

St Edward's & St Mark's, Windsor

Night Shelter – Volunteers Needed!

During the cold winter nights before the Pandemic, a Night Shelter was offered to the homeless people of Windsor under the name 'More Than a Shelter' in the Parish Centre. The guests were offered a warm meal, a warm bed for the night, and breakfast.

The charity has merged with WCA and is now part of the Windsor Homeless Project. Last week, planning permission was granted to run a Night Shelter at the Homeless Project home, Alma Beacon.

To run the shelter, we need volunteers to cover 84 shifts per week:

- Evening Meal 07:00pm - 10:00pm
- Overnight 10:00pm - 07:00am
- Breakfast 07:00am - 08.30am

If we are going to run the night shelter this winter, we need lots of new volunteers to staff all the shifts each week. If anybody is interested in becoming a volunteer, can I ask them to complete this very simple form

<https://bit.ly/WHPNightShelter>

Churches Together in Windsor (CTW) Songs of Praise

Please come along and sing some favourite hymns at Windsor Methodist Church this Sunday 27 October at 18.30. The CTW AGM will be held at 18:00, followed by 'Songs of Praise', the evening will finish with refreshments. All welcome!

The HCPT Christmas Fair

This will be on **Sunday 8 December** in the Parish Centre from 12:00 - 14:00. Can you help with our fundraising? We are looking for people to help set up; run a stall; knit small angel decorations; donate prizes for the Tombola & Raffle; donate new gifts for the Present Stall; provide cakes; donate prizes for the Children's Lucky Dip. If you think you can help please speak to **Pat Burke** or email group128@hcpt.org.uk

Remembrance Service

A Remembrance Service will be held at **15:00 in St Edward's on Sunday 3 November**, to be followed by refreshments in the Parish Centre.

Pilgrimage and Thomas Merton

Following on from the talk to the UCM on 29 October Dr Judith sends on the following:

Pilgrimage can represent a personal journey of self-discovery and transformation. Thomas Merton, in his writings as a Trappist monk, writes of his inner life. He struggles to become 'who is really was.' He was engaged with many social issues, such as the Vietnam War, & Civil Rights. His passion for peace in a world that yearned for it so desperately is now more relevant than ever. There is much to learn from this Spiritual Master.

Congratulations

On Sunday at the 11:00 Mass, Archbishop Bernard Longley will present The Papal Order of 'St Gregory the Great' to Mr Philip Reynolds for his services to the National Church.

Deceased

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **(Maria) Fatima Gomez**. Her funeral will take place at St Edward's on Thursday 14 November at 10:30.

St Francis First Holy Communion - (Ascot)

Registration is open for children Year 3 and above to join our programme which runs January to May 2025. **Closing date for applications is 27 October 2024.** Forms are available from the church, by emailing the Parish Office and from the website. In order to run this we need volunteers willing to be DBS checked. Please contact the Parish Office if you would like to volunteer.

Lectionary Books

A huge thank-you to everybody who was able to donate towards the costs of the new Lectionary Books. Donations have exceeded the costs, and we hope to allocate the surplus towards offering a discount to the purchase price of individual People’s editions if purchased through the parish. More details to follow in due course.

Money and Maintenance

Thanks to all parishioners who provided contact details in response to Fr David’s comments about parish finances. If you missed it, Fr David encouraged parishioners to (1) periodically review their level of donations; (2) consider completing a Gift Aid form if they have not already done so; and (3) donate by bank standing order or numbered envelopes to help the budgeting process. Please contact Chris Sowinski at giftaid.asc@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk for more information.

SVP Tabletop Sales

SVP Tabletop Sales in Narthe raised £1,423 in September/October from items kindly donated by you the parishioners. A big thank you for your generosity. The Society of St Vincent de Paul helps very needy families locally.

Little Franciscan Toddler Group

The Toddler Group runs every Tuesday during **term-time only**, from 11:00 – 12:45. All welcome!

Children’s Liturgy

Every Sunday during the 10:00 Mass (**term time only**). We accept children from 3 years to Year 3. Enrolment forms are available in the Narthex. Further enquiries: please email Sue Roche sue.roche1@btinternet.com.

The Knights of St Columba are recruiting new members from Ascot and Windsor Parishes - anyone interested can pick a form from the foyer - or please contact Tony Berkeley [07377 168 356](tel:07377168356) or council984@hotmail.com for more information.

Fatima Rosary on Zoom

If you would like to join others in praying the Rosary via Zoom, please contact Tony Berkeley. The Rosary is prayed from Monday to Friday at 13:30. Tony will then add you to the group and send you all the information you will need to join. The Knights of St Columba Prayer Group are sponsoring this. For further information please contact [07377 168 356](tel:07377168356) or furtunato101@gmail.com or [KNIGHTS OF ST Columba, Knights, Columba, Ascot, Bracknell, Council, 590 \(council984.co.uk\)](http://KNIGHTS OF ST Columba, Knights, Columba, Ascot, Bracknell, Council, 590 (council984.co.uk))

Would you like to receive the newsletter by email or join the Catholic Windsor and Ascot News WhatsApp Group?

Sign up on <https://catholicwindsorandascot.org/subscribe> to receive this weekly into your inbox. We have set up a new WhatsApp group called **Catholic Windsor and Ascot News**. This will be dedicated to the weekly newsletter and important news such as Easter and Christmas services. Scan this QR Code with your phone’s camera app, to access this group via WhatsApp.



Parish Office: Windsor - [01753 865163](tel:01753865163)

Parish Office: Ascot - [01344 620591](tel:01344620591)

Patricia Brown: **Parish Secretary (Office Hours):**
Tues 11:30 - 14:00, Thur 11:30 - 16:00, Fri 09:00 - 13:00
office@catholicwindsor.org

Richard Flisher: **Finance**
finance@catholicwindsor.org

Pat Burke: **Safeguarding Rep**
safeguarding@catholicwindsor.org

Sharon Cole-Blows: **Youth Ministry co-ordinator**
youthcoordinator@catholicwindsor.org

Parish Secretary (Office Hours):
Tues 09:00 - 11:00 , Thur 09:00 - 11:00, Fri 14:00 - 16:00
stfrancisascot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Chris Sowinski: **Finance**
giftaid.asc@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Jaycie Warren: **Safeguarding Rep**
safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Charity number 1199568



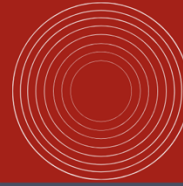
LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!

We are planning to open a Night Shelter at Alma Beacon, Alma Road, Windsor over the winter months.

Interested in becoming a volunteer? We'd love to hear from you. Various shifts available.

If interested use this link
<https://bit.ly/WHPNightShelter>

HELPING VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE WINDSOR COMMUNITY





PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE BISHOP
appointed to be read
in all churches and chapels of the Diocese of Portsmouth
on Sunday 27th October 2024, the Thirtieth of the Year.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
especially those of you caring for the sick and the dying,

I write to you today because our country faces a lethal choice. I refer to the bill before Parliament to legalise what they call 'assisted dying.'¹ I prefer to call it what it is: assisted suicide, helping someone to kill themselves.

"Thou Shalt not Kill"² is an instinctive principle written into every human heart. It grounds the laws that govern every civilised society on earth. It is the teaching of all major religions, and it is fundamental to Christian morality and Catholic social teaching. Yet now, campaigners such as Exit International, want to change this natural law to allow killing in certain circumstances,³ and they are conducting an intensive campaign in the media, highlighting sad cases and making emotional pitches.⁴ Yet if we yield to this and permit killing, we will cross a line from which there is no return. Like using nuclear weapons, once deployed, it's too late; there's only escalation.

Let me give you four plain reasons why assisted suicide and euthanasia is wrong. These four reasons will make appeal to reason, that is, to common sense.⁵ I will then add two more reasons that also appeal to faith, demonstrating why assisted suicide and euthanasia is gravely immoral and an offence against God.

1. The option of assisted suicide would put intolerable pressure on the most vulnerable, upon the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the dying. It would tempt them to feel they are an increasing burden and a financial drain on their family and others. They might start thinking "It would be best to die." In other words, the right to die inescapably becomes a pressure to die and then a duty to die.⁶

2. To legalise assisted suicide would completely undermine palliative care and the work of care-homes. It could spell the end of hospices, since it would be cheaper, more efficient and far less trouble to kill someone - or to permit them to kill themselves - than to care for them and generously fund their care.

3. Assisted suicide would place an unacceptable and immoral demand on medical staff, expecting them to become accessories to killing.⁷ It would undermine the trust we normally place in doctors, making us suspicious of their motives. It would darken the atmosphere of medical wards that care for the elderly, and it would inexorably lead to euthanasia, the right to make another person die, when difficult cases need to be decided by consultants and relatives, or lawyers and the courts. No wonder this legislation is opposed by more than eight out of ten doctors and palliative care specialists.⁸ It's easy to imagine a future in which doctors advise patients to seek suicide rather than treatment.

4. If the legislation is passed, even with the strictest limits for now, the thresholds of eligibility will keep creeping forward to cover ever more categories of persons such as the mentally ill, those with depression or dementia, the severely disabled, sick babies and so on.⁹ There are no limits, and fixed safeguards are unworkable. No government could guarantee that there will not be 'mission-creep'. In fact, mission-creep is happening in every jurisdiction where it is legal. In Canada, for instance, 5% of deaths are now by lethal injection. In other words, suicide, free on the NHS, would in time become socially acceptable, normal.

So four plain reasons. I could give more.¹⁰ Let me now add two further reasons why as Catholics we believe assisted suicide and euthanasia is gravely sinful.¹¹

5. Suicide is a grave offence against God, against neighbour and against self.¹² Against God, Who in His love has given us the gift of our life and so life is not ours to dispose of.¹³ - Against neighbour, because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family and others to whom we have obligations. - Against self, because it contradicts "the natural inclination of the human being to preserve and perpetuate" his or her life.¹⁴ Suicide is totally against the Law of Love.¹⁵

6. Suicide is gravely sinful, although the Church has always shown compassion to those who take their lives, relying on God's mercy whilst wondering whether they were fully aware what they were doing. Yet when suicide is done with full knowledge and deliberate consent, as in an assisted suicide, it is clearly a mortal sin.¹⁶ Likewise assisting someone kill themselves is also a mortal sin. How would it be possible to offer them the Last Sacraments? What justification could a person make when, crossing into eternity after death, they meet the living God to give an account of their life - and their death?

Campaigners for assisted suicide argue persuasively. They say that people should have the right to make their own decisions about their lives, including when and how they die. Yet, civilised societies also have to balance personal freedom with public safety. This is why, for instance, our roads have speed limits.

They also argue that the terminally ill fear severe pain, the loss of dignity and poor quality of life; assisted suicide would offer a quick end to physical suffering and emotional distress. Yet, modern medicine means that no-one need die

without dignity. It is true: frailty, pain and infirmity are a difficult trial. Yet, thanks be to God for the amazing advances medical science has made. Britain is a leader in palliative care with methods and drugs that have the capability to manage pain right to the end. Care is the answer, not suicide. We should continue investing in good palliative care. Care shows real love for the terminally ill, acknowledging their eternal value.¹⁷

Again, some argue that euthanasia for those with little hope of recovery would ease up the pressure on the health services. For instance, a politician in Guernsey has recently argued that “considerable savings could be realised” if assisted suicide were introduced.¹⁸ Yet, as this demonstrates, legalising assisted suicide and euthanasia only opens the door to abuse. If we love and care for someone, efficiency and cost-saving is irrelevant. How can helping someone to kill themselves be compassionate? This is evil masquerading as kindness.

Dear Diocese of Portsmouth, I am asking you to mobilise! Pray earnestly that our legislators will see sense. Correct those who use the double-speak of ‘assisted dying’; call it what it is: ‘assisted suicide.’ Don’t be seduced by the emotionalism of the media. Say a prayer for the terminally ill and for those who care for them. Speak out. Lobbying MPs works, so I attach a letter for you to send to your MP to ask him or her to vote against this sinister proposal. All you need do is to write your name and address on the top and put it in the post. Or you can download it from the diocesan website and send it by email.

In today’s Gospel the blind beggar cried “Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me”.¹⁹ That is our prayer too. To permit killing is wrong. It is to cross the line. It would be a shift of historic significance. It would be to capitulate to the very ideology Britain fought against in the Second World War.²⁰ So we need to mobilise. We need to campaign, and I’ve provided you with materials to help. And we need to pray. Please attend Mass; please undertake fasting; please offer every day a Decade of the Rosary for God’s grace and mercy and for the demise of this bill.

In Corde Iesu
+Philip
Bishop of Portsmouth

¹ Kim Leadbeater (Labour, Spenn Valley) ‘Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill’, a Private Members Bill that had its first reading in Parliament on Wednesday 16th October 2024. See <https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2024/october/mps-present-private-members-bills-to-parliament/> (October 2024)

² Ex 20: 13

³ Exit International was founded in Australia 1997 by Dr Philip Nitschke under the name the Voluntary Euthanasia Research Foundation (VERF). The organisation rebranded in 2001 as Exit International. Its founder has developed the “Sarco” pod, a capsule enabling a person to kill themselves. Like a gas chamber, when the user lies back and the lid is closed, s/he presses a button to activate it. Four litres of liquid nitrogen flood the cabin, causing the oxygen level to drop to less than 5% in under a minute. The user will at first feel a bit dizzy but then rapidly lose consciousness and die. See www.exitinternational.net (October 2024)

⁴ Well known here are the views of Dame Esther Rantzen, the journalist and BBC presenter: see for instance, ‘Esther Rantzen urges MP lobby over assisted dying’ (BBC 16th October 2024) on <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgj4q4z3yvdo> (October 2024)

⁵ I am reminded here of something the Second Vatican Council said: “Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working

conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others like them are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practise them than to those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonour to the Creator” (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 27.)

⁶ In Oregon, 46% of those requesting suicide cite the sense of burden on family: see D. Lawson ‘Euthanasia is for Pets. Humans are Different’ *The Sunday Times* (October 13, 2024) 20

⁷ “Most people regard life as something sacred and hold that no one may dispose of it at will, but believers see in life something greater, namely, a gift of God’s love, which they are called upon to preserve and make fruitful... No one can make an attempt on the life of an innocent person without opposing God’s love for that person, without violating a fundamental right, and therefore without committing a crime of the utmost gravity” Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, (Vatican: 5th May 1980) ‘I. the Value of Human Life’: see www.vatican.va. (October 2024)

⁸ Lawson ‘Euthanasia is for Pets. Humans are Different’

⁹ This is already happening even before this bill has been passed. There are many who feel its scope is too limited. See, for example, *Right to Life News* ‘Labour MPs call to extend assisted suicide to people without terminal illness’ (8th October 2024): <https://righttolife.org.uk/news/labour-mps-call-to-extend-assisted-suicide-to-people-without-terminal-illness> (October 2024)

¹⁰ For an extensive exploration of the ethics of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, see N. Pier Giorgio Austriaco *Biomedicine and Beatitude* (Washington, CUA Press: 2011)

¹¹ St. John Paul II gives an extensive treatment of assisted suicide and euthanasia in his Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*. See John Paul II *Evangelium Vitae* (London, CTS: 1995) 64-67: available online at www.vatican.va (October 2024)

¹² See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* – henceforth CCC - (London, CTS: 2016) 2281 and 2325.

¹³ “We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us” CCC 2280.

¹⁴ See CCC 2281.

¹⁵ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Mt 22: 37-40)

¹⁶ “Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God’s forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ’s kingdom and the eternal death of hell, for our freedom has the power to make choices for ever, with no turning back.” Even so, “although we can judge that an act is in itself a grave offense, we must entrust judgment of persons to the justice and mercy of God” CCC 1861.

¹⁷ “Whatever you did to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me” (Mt 25: 40)

¹⁸ ‘Assisted dying would help States save money’ *Guernsey Press* (August 30, 2023): <https://guernseypress.com/news/2023/08/30/assisted-dying-would-help-states-save-money/> (October 2024)

¹⁹ Mark 10: 46-52.

²⁰ In summer 1940, the Church in Germany became aware that the Nazi regime was quietly euthanatising sick and disabled people. Despite the grave personal risk such actions against the regime incurred, they resisted. Priests and bishops preached against it from the pulpit; people took to the streets in protest, and the Pope publicly condemned the policy: “This procedure is hailed by some as a manifestation of human progress, and as something that is entirely in accordance with the common good. Yet who that is possessed of sound judgment does not recognize that this not only violates the natural and the divine law written in the heart of every man, but that it outrages the noblest instincts of humanity?” (Pius XII *Mystici Corporis Christi* [Rome 1943] 94: available online at www.vatican.va). Our response today must be no less heroic and no less bold than that of the German church in the 1940s. We need to oppose this attack on the dignity of human life and on the lives of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. We must consistently and forthrightly oppose it.

Dear

I am contacting you as a very concerned constituent to ask you to speak and vote in opposition to Kim Leadbeater's assisted suicide Bill.

I am deeply worried about the risks that legalising assisted suicide would bring to vulnerable groups, particularly in light of the significant pressures that already exist on the NHS and a recent Marie Curie report. I am a passionate advocate of assisted living, not assisted dying. It is my firm view that investing in palliative care is a better way to support people suffering at the end of life.

Killing is always wrong, and suicide goes entirely against our natural instincts. To permit legally assisted killing and suicide is to cross a symbolic line. Like using a nuclear weapon, there would be no turning back.

I kindly ask you to consider the following four reasons why any change in the law to facilitate assisted suicide is gravely immoral and a danger to society:

- 1. The option of assisted suicide puts intolerable pressure on the most vulnerable, upon the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the dying, tempting them to feel they are a burden – and a financial drain – on their family and others. The right to die would inevitably become a duty to die - and in time the right to make another die.**
- 2. To legalise euthanasia and assisted suicide would undermine palliative care – Britain is a world-leader - and the work of care-homes. It could spell the end of care homes as we know them, since it would be cheaper and less trouble to kill someone rather than to care for them. Caring for the dying, looking after them, is true “dignity in dying” - not a lethal injection or a Sarco pod.**
- 3. Assisted suicide places an unacceptable and immoral demand on medical staff, doctors and nurses. It would make them accessories in killing. It would also undermine the trust we would normally have in them. It's easy to imagine a future in which doctors advise patients to seek suicide rather than treatment.**
- 4. Once the legislation is passed, like a line in the sand, it will keep creeping forward, expanding to cover more and more categories of persons. There are no limits. Fixed safeguards are unworkable. No government could guarantee that there will not be 'mission-creep'. In fact, mission-creep is happening in every other jurisdiction where it is legal. In Canada, for instance, 5% of deaths are now by lethal injection. In other words, suicide, free on the NHS, would in time become socially acceptable, normal.**

Please reassure me that you will oppose this legislation and instead support wider access to improved palliative care.

Thank you for your consideration and for all you do. I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,