



**ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE**

PASTORAL CENTER: [BISHOP'S OFFICE](#)

13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

March 9, 2015

Dear Brothers in the Lord,

As you know, the Church in California is again faced with another physician assisted suicide bill. This time, we are in it for the long run because the Hemlock Society (now renamed Compassion and Choices) has not only generated this bill (SB 128 -- "The End of Life Option Act") but also intends to present an initiative to the public if this legislation fails. Since there were only seven sponsors of this bill in the senate, we believe we have a very good chance of defeating it in committee - or failing that, in the senate itself. All we need to do is mobilize our parishioners and friends to register their opposition with our state senators and legislators. The California State Catholic Conference has made this quite efficient. Anyone can go to the California Catholic Conference site -- www.cacatholic.org - and click on the red icon which says "Urge a 'No' Vote on Assisted Suicide" - and simply follow the prompts.

The Presbyteral Council, at their meeting last month, suggested that this topic is so important that all should preach on it on Sunday March 22. Rev. Robert Spitzer, S.J., has written a wonderful homily that is attached here that all may use. It is also my suggestion that the excellent content given us by Father Spitzer be introduced with, and concluded by, a pastoral example and conclusion / application. For example, I intend to speak about my father's death and the experience of palliative care to illustrate the points I am going to make.

This well-crafted homily gives an overview of the populations and principles at risk with this new legislation, and has a call to action at the end which briefly explains how parishioners could help our efforts by going to the California Catholic Conference website and registering their opposition. This homily outline is a suggested guide, along with the included resources developed by our *Life and Dignity Task Force*, a group convened last year to support our education and advocacy efforts regarding this important issue.

In an effort to show united resolve I have requested that my brother Bishops encourage their presbyterates throughout California to deliver this homily - or something like it - on the same day - the fifth week of lent - three days before the senate hearing. Pastor Rick Warren of Saddleback has agreed to join us in solidarity and in delivering this homily. I realize how busy you are, and that time is short, but I believe that our effort could help to defeat this bill in the legislature. If we do defeat it, the Hemlock Society will present an initiative to the public in 2016, but when they do, we will have already begun the education process for our staff and parishioners - which will make subsequent efforts that much easier.

Thank you for considering this request. May the Lord's blessings be upon you and your community of faith.

Fraternally, in the peace of Christ,

Most Reverend Kevin W. Vann, J.C.D., D.D.
Bishop of Orange

KWV:mb

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