



21 January 2018

Re: Call for Conscience Campaign

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I would like to thank you for all that you currently do to support and strengthen our Catholic community. I would also like to ask for your help and prayers.

In 2017, many churches across the province were involved in the “Call for Conscience” campaign to advocate for the protection of conscience rights for doctors, nurses and other health care professionals who are asked to participate in assisted suicide/euthanasia. Despite more than 30,000 letters sent to Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP’s), this campaign did not achieve its desired goal: legislation that would protect health care workers from being forced to participate in causing the death of their patients. Health care workers in Ontario are being forced to choose between their careers and their conscience.

Ontario remains one of the few jurisdictions in the world without adequate protection for conscientious objectors. As a provincial election is approaching this June, we need your help to highlight this issue for MPP’s and those seeking office. The 2018 Call for Conscience campaign has the following goals:

- 1) To renew the call to protect the right of health care professionals to abstain from any involvement in causing the death of their patients.
- 2) To provide protection for faith based facilities that do not wish to participate in assisted suicide/euthanasia.
- 3) To ask elected Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP’s) and those seeking office to increase access and funding for palliative care in Ontario.

I am asking all parishioners to provide their name, postal code and email address on lists that will be available at your church on designated “Sign-Up Sundays”. You will then be sent an email with an online link to contact candidates in your riding and the leaders of the parties to express your concerns. The whole process, done electronically, takes only five minutes. For those without an email account, draft letters will be available which you can send to your MPP.

I am pleased that dioceses and other faith traditions across Ontario are also participating in this initiative. Our goal is to build a database of 100,000 contacts by the end of February 2018. Your personal information will be kept confidential. You will only be contacted by our Arch/diocese with my permission for this or other important initiatives that may be of concern to the Catholic community, or by the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience on issues of conscience protection or euthanasia.

I hope that you will assist me by participating in “Sign-Up Sunday”. It is critical that we use modern technology to communicate effectively, ensuring our voice is heard in the public square. We continue to pray for all those suffering and for those entrusted to care for them.

Sincerely in Christ,

✠ Terrence Prendergast S.J.
Archdiocese of Ottawa