

September 19, 2020

My friends in Christ,

Here's hoping you are all staying healthy and safe in these unprecedented times. Our world is very different right now as everyone is dealing with this pandemic in their lives and getting used to a 'new normal'. Zoom wasn't even heard of a year ago! I'm thankful for it as it has kept me connected with my son in Abu Dhabi who we haven't seen now in over a year and also a weekly connect with my sisters in Ontario. In the words of Pope Francis from his daily message on Friday, September 18, 2020, ***"The Christian response to the pandemic and to the consequent socio-economic crisis is based on love, above all, love of God who always precedes us. He loves us first. He always precedes us in love and in solutions."*** God knows what He is doing; we have to trust Him and pray for a vaccine.

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:** As you all know, the first session of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament was prorogued on August 18<sup>th</sup>. The second session is scheduled to open on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2pm. *"Prorogation of a Parliament results in the termination of a session....the principle effect of ending a session by prorogation is to terminate business. Members are released from their parliamentary duties until Parliament is next summoned.....Bills which have not received Royal Assent before prorogation are 'entirely terminated' and, in order to be proceeded with in the new session, must be reintroduced as if they had never existed. On occasion, however, bills are reinstated at the start of a new session at the same stage they had reached at the end of the previous session."* ([www.ourcommons.ca](http://www.ourcommons.ca))

One of the Bills that I mentioned in my 8<sup>th</sup> communiqué, May 10<sup>th</sup>, included **Bill C-7 An act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)** Some comments from the September 2<sup>nd</sup> letter from Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director from *Euthanasia Prevention Coalition*: "Bill C-7 was the government's response to the Québec *Truchon* decision striking down the requirement that natural death must be reasonably foreseeable before dying by lethal injection. Bill C-7 went even further. The bill would permit euthanasia for an incompetent person, if that person had been previously approved. One reason someone may become incompetent is dementia. Recently I published an article on the EPC blog ([www.epcblog.org](http://www.epcblog.org)) explaining how permitting euthanasia for people with dementia paves the way for euthanasia without consent. This provision in Bill C-7 removes the right of an incompetent person to change their mind. Bill C-7 is an irresponsible bill that uses undefined expansive language. Parliament will not debate Bill C-7 until late September and the Superior Court of Québec agreed to suspend the *Truchon* decision until December 18. I think that the political time frame for the bill is impossible to meet." ([www.epcc.ca](http://www.epcc.ca)) Please take the time to sign the

EPC petition, ***Reject Euthanasia Bill C-7***. In April there were 17,000 signatures and as of September 18<sup>th</sup>, there are over 34,000 signatures! You still have time before this Bill is debated, to contact your MP to express your concerns, ask for the process to slow down and ask them to consider vulnerable Canadians, especially those with disabilities, mental illness or dementia. I have also attached a sample letter, drafted by Domenica Spina (Resolutions chairperson, Kamloops diocese) for Bill C-7 to send to government officials.

**PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT:** The provincial government will resume its sitting on Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. You can stay informed by going to their website, [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca).

**DELTA HOSPICE SOCIETY:** Many of you are keeping up to date on the situation at the Delta Hospice. The BC Court of Appeal has agreed to hear the case of the Delta Hospice Society (DHS), which is trying to keep assisted suicide out of its Irene Thomas Hospice. No date has been set for the hearing. DHS have launched a membership drive campaign across Canada to protect palliative care from euthanasia.

Contact Angelina Ireland, Executive Director, Delta Hospice Society at 778-512-8088 to join. The membership fee is \$10.00

Sheila Doherty  
Chairperson of Legislation