

**Leader:** Take two minutes to discuss what the church teaches.

Spend five minutes discussing the following questions.

How can we defend what we believe?

How can we prepare ourselves to debate euthanasia, especially with someone who is in favour of it?

What arguments can we use against euthanasia?

Where can we get the information we need to back up our arguments?

**All (Closing Prayer):** Gracious God, You have created us in Your image and likeness. Help us to be advocates for our brothers and sisters whose lives are endangered. Give us the courage and strength to be diligent in our efforts to protect life at all stages. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

### **For more information**

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*

*Choose Life!* (a summary of *Evangelium Vitae* by Catholic Organization for Life and Family)

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition  
Box 25033, London, Ontario,  
N6C 6A8; Telephone: 519-439-3348;  
E-mail: info@epcc.ca

*The Catholic Women's League of Canada's Position Paper on Euthanasia, 1992*

Statements: *Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia* (1993) and *Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia* (1997), Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

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### **The Catholic Women's League of Canada**

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# Euthanasia

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Workshop for  
parish councils

of

The Catholic Women's  
League of Canada

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## w o r k s h o p   o n

# E u t h a n a s i a

**T**his workshop is designed for a parish council meeting. It should run approximately 15 minutes. You will need a leader and four readers.

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**Leader:** “Life is a gift from God, and the timing and circumstances of death are not ours to choose.” (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 21, 1997)

In his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*), Pope John Paul II described a “culture of death,” in which choices once unanimously considered criminal and rejected by the common moral sense are becoming socially acceptable. “This culture is actively fostered by powerful cultural, economic and political currents which encourage an idea of society excessively concerned with efficiency.”

One of the evils of a culture of death is euthanasia.

What is euthanasia?

**Reader 1:** Euthanasia is generally understood as an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, so that all suffering can be eliminated.

**Leader:** Why should we be concerned?

**Reader 2:** A private member’s bill, C-407 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (right to die with dignity)* has been introduced in the House of Commons. If passed, it would legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide.

**Reader 3:** The award winning movie *Million Dollar Baby* promoted the killing of disabled people as the solution to the “problem” of disability.

**Reader 4:** “The movement for legalized euthanasia is worldwide, organized and determined.” Alex Schadenberg (Executive Director, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition)

**Leader:** For the next two minutes discuss with the person next to you why you think there is so much interest in euthanasia at this time.

Let us now listen to what the Catholic Church teaches about euthanasia.

**Reader 1:** #2277 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* “Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable. Thus an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, his [or her] Creator. The error of judgement into which one can fall in good faith does not change the nature of this murderous act, which must always be forbidden and excluded.”