



Archdiocese
of Toronto

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MEMO

TO: All Parishes

FROM: Neil MacCarthy, Director, PR & Communications, Archdiocese of Toronto

DATE: March 8, 2017

RE: Update re Call for Conscience Campaign – February 6 – March 31, 2017

A huge thank you to all those who have been so deeply engaged in the Call for Conscience Campaign, which began on February 6, 2017. I'd like to provide parishes with a brief update on some of the key activities that have taken place and ask you once again to provide your support in the days ahead.

Outreach

To launch the campaign, we held a series of four webinars to explain the Call for Conscience initiative to a variety of audiences. These included clergy, doctors, nurses, prominent organizations within the community and other stakeholders as appropriate. We asked you to help spread the word by sharing the resources available at: <http://bit.ly/callforconscience> or www.archtoronto.org/euthanasia - please note we now have French and Chinese resources available on this site.

We are grateful to the many doctors, nurses, clergy and other advocates that have helped coordinate presentations in churches or other venues over the past month. While it is difficult to track all the activity, we know that well over 10,000 letters have been shared with Members of Provincial Parliament. Many supporters have also called their MPP and/or arranged for a meeting with their elected member. These are extremely impactful and we urge you to continue this activity. Earlier this week, Cardinal Collins wrote directly to Premier Kathleen Wynne. He has also met with the Minister of Health and Attorney General on this issue. In total the coalition has visited with approximately 60 MPP's.

Status of Bill 84

Second reading debate of Bill 84 is currently underway in the Ontario Legislature. We anticipate that shortly, debate will wrap up, at which time, a standing committee will be formed, to receive submissions and feedback on the current Bill before the legislature. The Coalition for HealthCARE & Conscience, along with many of our members, will provide submissions and request to appear as witnesses for these committee hearings.

Media

More than a dozen doctors and nurses have participated in a media training session to prepare to answer questions around this topic. We will now begin a more proactive approach in urging journalists to cover this important issue in the days ahead.

Action Items

We must continue to let our Members of Provincial Parliament know that this is a critically important issue. Here are some tangible ways you can assist the coalition:

- Pray for the campaign, those who seek assisted suicide and for health care workers conflicted over this most difficult dilemma.
- Utilize bulletin announcements, information leaflets and template letters to MPP's in your church or place of worship. All these resources can be found at: <http://bit.ly/callforconscience> or www.archtoronto.org/euthanasia
- Visit www.canadiansforconscience.ca and share your email address to ensure you are in the loop on the latest activity.
- Arrange for a speaker to present a short 3 minute pre-approved presentation at the end of Mass to raise awareness on this issue. Have your community sign letters after the presentation. Whether it's 50, 300 or 1,000 letters, each one makes a difference! Note – even if it is after March 31, 2017, please send your letters! A template presentation and checklist for organizing this activity is available at: <http://bit.ly/callforconscience>
- If you've already written to your MPP, consider a phone call to their constituency office to let them know how important the issue is to you – be sure to let them know you are a constituent.
- View or share the 3 minute coalition video which can be found at: <http://bit.ly/consciencevideo>

Thank you for your ongoing support of this initiative. Your efforts continue to fuel all those who are working diligently to protect conscience rights in the Province of Ontario.