

10 June 2022

Letter to all those ministering on behalf of the Catholic Church to those contemplating medically assisted dying

Kia ora koutou,

Firstly, on behalf of all the Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa, I wish to express our admiration and gratitude to all of you who accompany and provide pastoral care to persons at the end of their earthly lives and their families. As *Samaritanus Bonus* notes, our aim always is to be with people in a way that fosters their personal encounter with the merciful love of God.

In late October 2021, in the weeks leading up to the enactment of euthanasia legislation in Aotearoa, we published two documents: a Pastoral Letter to all Catholics and a set of Principles and Guidelines specifically designed to assist Catholic ministers who find themselves called to accompany people contemplating euthanasia. We know that some of you have already found yourselves having to negotiate these situations.

It is part of the nature of documents dealing with the application of Church teaching into new pastoral situations that they evolve in light of the concrete lived experience of practitioners. Now, more than six months after the legalisation of euthanasia, and responding to a wide range of feedback received - both positive and negative - the bishops have decided to evaluate that feedback and incorporate it into a revised document.

The changes are designed to add greater clarity in places, provide expanded commentary in other sections and address certain issues not adequately dealt with in the first version.

The revised version of the Principles & Guidelines is attached. The document can also be found by visiting this link: <https://www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Ministers-of-Consolation-and-Hope-20-May-2022.pdf>

Yours sincerely in Christ,



✠ **Stephen Lowe**
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Te Huinga o ngā Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa