

# Coalition for the Defence of Human Life

Newsletter April 2017

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## 2017 Rally for Life: Join with us on the 23rd of May!

Our annual Rally for Life is again fast approaching! Join us on the evening of the 23rd of May on the steps of Parliament House at 7pm for a service incorporating prayer, Scripture reading, and a brief message, followed by the Rally from 7:30pm.

The keynote speaker for this year will be Mr. Paul Russell, one of Australia's leading advocates against euthanasia and physician assisted suicide. Paul has been a leading force behind many campaigns against legalizing euthanasia, particularly in his home state of South Australia.

While he is in WA, Paul will also be meeting with politicians to educate them on the issues surrounding euthanasia, and its impact on society.

The Rally for Life is a grass-roots project, which relies on the support of ordinary people to be a success. A simple way you can do this is to pass on information on the Rally to others in person, and to find and 'share' the facebook event with your friends.

Another important way you can support the Rally for Life is to spread awareness of this event

through your local Church. We encourage you to ask your priest or pastor to promote the Rally for Life.

If you would like extra promotional resources to share with you friends, family, Church or any other group, please contact Michelle Pearse at [perthrallyforlife@gmail.com](mailto:perthrallyforlife@gmail.com) or Dwight Randall at [dwight@lifeministries.org.au](mailto:dwight@lifeministries.org.au)



*Up to 1500 people were at last year's Rally for Life—how many people can we bring this year?*

## CDHL Special Appeal: Help make the Rally for Life happen!

As the Rally for Life approaches, many people are working behind the scenes to ensure this event has the greatest possible impact.

While enthusiasm and commitment are in no short supply, we are asking for special help to fund this event. There are significant costs associated with organising the Rally for Life, including promotional expenses, event insurance, AV equipment hire, and of course bringing keynote speakers from interstate.

The Coalition for the Defence of Human Life is a not-for-profit organization which operates solely on donations, with almost all of them from individual supporters. We are asking that you would consider making a donation to enable us to hold the Rally for Life and other works. Even the smallest amount is greatly appreciated, and will help make a difference for life in our state.

*And big big thankyou from the CDHL to all of our generous ongoing supporters!*

# Euthanasia: Why not??

***The new state Labor Government has indicated that they will introduce euthanasia legislation to Parliament before this year is out. In anticipation of this proposed legislation, this and subsequent editions of the CDHL Newsletter will be providing you with a series of informed responses to some of the common myths and arguments in favour of euthanasia and assisted suicide.***

## **1. Euthanasia and assisted suicide are not killing, they are acts of mercy.**

Euthanasia refers to the deliberate action, usually by a medical professional, to end the life of another person (e.g. by lethal injection).

Assisted Suicide refers to when a person ends their own life, with the help of a medical professional (e.g. by prescribing or providing lethal quantities of drugs).

These two distinct terms are often incorporated into 'Medical Aid in Dying' or similar phrases. Whatever names you use, these are actions which have the deliberate intention to directly end a person's life: in other words, these are murderous acts which are incompatible with any form of medical care. True health care is about supporting and nurturing life from conception to natural death.

## **2. Euthanasia or assisted suicide is about enabling people to 'die with dignity'.**

This argument presupposes an erroneous idea about what human dignity means. Our dignity is not about being independent, autonomous, and free. It is not found in the subjective 'quality' of our lives, but in the objective fact of our being human. Nothing we can do, and nothing that can happen to us, can affect our inherent human dignity. People do not 'lose their dignity' in the face of death, pain, incapacitation, dementia, incontinence or any other limitations.

Living - and dying - with true dignity means to see the inherent and inviolable worth in every human person, despite their life circumstances and to offer them the care they need. A disabled, sick or elderly person is not a 'burden' on society, but a person to be loved and cared for: a person who can teach us where true human dignity is found. There are many of these such people who live full and meaningful lives with the same symptoms that are labeled as 'unbearable' or 'inhuman' by so many advocates of medically assisted dying.

Ironically, euthanasia and assisted suicide denies true human dignity, and reduces it to a subjective concept measured by categories which are constantly changing in perception.

The way that supporters of medically assisted use the word 'dignity' should cause us all to re-examine our understanding of human dignity, and ask ourselves if our actions towards other people, especially the sick, elderly and disabled, truly reflect our convictions. If we as a society do not witness to what true human dignity means, then calls for the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide will only get louder and stronger.

## **3. Euthanasia or assisted suicide is a compassionate option for people who suffer unbearable pain at the end of life.**

No-one wants to die a prolonged and agonizing death. However, according to Mary Brooksbank, the former chair of Palliative Care South Australia, "no-one dying an expected death needs to die in extreme, agonising pain. If they do, it's because they haven't had access to good quality palliative care."\*

Unfortunately, even in Australia, many people still do not have access to appropriate palliative care. Instead of offering to help end these people's lives, we should be working to provide compassionate, comprehensive and life-affirming care to all people.

In some cases, it is true that it is sometimes necessary to use high doses of morphine or other drugs in order to relieve extreme pain for those in palliative care, which may have the consequence of shortening the life of the patient. However, this is very different from providing euthanasia: the intention here is to eliminate the suffering, not the sufferer. When death does occur, it is not deliberately caused by an intentionally murderous act. Rather, the medicines administered have an unintended side effect of contributing towards, but not directly causing, the person's death.

\* Quoted from *Expert Opinion: The Euthanasia Debate*. Read the whole article at <http://palliativecare.org.au/palliative-matters/expert-opinion-the-euthanasia-debate/>

## **Pro-Life Prayer Vigils: a Powerful Witness to Life!**

Can you spare an hour or two a week, for those who may not see the next hour of their lives?

40 Days for Life Perth hold peaceful prayer vigils outside local abortion clinics every week, and are always looking for new volunteers to join them. If you are interested in being a voice for the voiceless in this most important way, please contact Joanne at:

40daysforlife@justicemandate.org

Regular prayer times are:

Marie Stopes Abortion Centre, Midland:

1st Friday: 9:30am Mass at St Brigid's, followed by procession and prayer from 10:30 until 12pm

All other Fridays: 8-10:30am

Nanyara Abortion Centre, Rivervale:

Monday 8:30 - 10am

Friday 8:30 - 10am

1st Saturday: 8:30am Mass at St

Augustine's Church, followed by procession and prayer from 9:30 until 10:30am

2nd, 4th and 5th Saturdays: 9 - 10:30am

3rd Saturday: 10 - 11am