



“Committed to Loving Care”: The Vincentian Family of Portugal on the Legalization of Euthanasia

“Committed to loving care”

The Vincentian Family of Portugal issues a communiqué after the approval of a bill decriminalizing euthanasia.

The Vincentian Family is composed of religious congregations and lay Catholic movements inspired by the charism of Saint Vincent de Paul.

In Portugal, the Vincentian Family is made up of the following branches: the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Vincentian Marian Youth, the International Association of Charities, the Association of the Miraculous Medal and Collaborators in the Vincentian Mission.



In our country, thousands of members continue the work begun by Saint Vincent de Paul in 1617, dedicating themselves directly to the service of their sisters and brothers who are in the most diverse situations of poverty.

On Friday, January 29, 2021, the deputies of the Assembly of the Portuguese Republic approved a bill that allows medically assisted death by decision of the person, thus, decriminalizing the practice of euthanasia in Portugal. In view of this approval, the Vincentian Family of Portugal issues the following **COMMUNIQUÉ**:

1. The whole world, and Portugal in particular, is currently experiencing a health crisis caused by contagion resulting from the spread of Covid-19. The Portuguese society is focused on saving the greatest number of human lives, trying to avoid the death of the brothers and sisters who unfortunately suffer firsthand from the wounds caused by this virus;
2. At this time, in which the pandemic has united everyone in the fight for the preservation of human life, dissonantly the majority of the deputies of the Assembly of the Republic, against the opinions of professionals in the health sector and the National Ethics Council for Life Sciences, approved the decriminalization of euthanasia, allowing individuals to end their life;
3. As a Vincentian Family, our mission for hundreds of years has been to care for the life of all men and women, to support our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, including those affected by

disease and to attempt to comfort them physically and spiritually in their homes, in hospitals, in nursing homes, in palliative care units;

4. We, members of the Vincentian Family, believe that everyone's life is a gift and are also convinced that all lives matter and therefore believes that the decriminalization of euthanasia raises a legitimate question about the true reasons for this precipitation and represents a clear setback of civilization and an unacceptable abandonment of the life of our brothers and sisters weakened by disease.

5. We vehemently repudiate the approved bill, insofar as it expresses a position of the State that prefers to abandon human life to the detriment of guaranteeing the right to health protection, as stated in the Code of Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic ... the State opens the door to the culture of death instead of reaffirming the culture of life;

6. Despite this setback, the Vincentian Family reaffirms that it will always continue to defend life in all its forms and stages, and we will never abandon our brothers and sisters who are in a situation of illness. Rather we will do everything possible so that they can reap the benefits of bodily and spiritual care and also maintain their dignity

7. Finally, we make a special appeal to the President of the Republic, to do everything in his power to prevent the now approved bill from taking effect, specifically by requesting the review of its constitutionality by the Constitutional Court, in order to stop the decriminalization of euthanasia in our country.

Committed to loving care!
Lisbon, January 30th, 2021.

Portuguese Province of the Congregation of the Mission
Portuguese Province of the Daughters of Charity
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Vincentian Marian Youth
International Association of Charity
Association of the Miraculous Medal
Collaborators in the Vincentian Mission