

## **Euthanasia – Murder in sheep’s clothing<sup>1</sup>**

### (A) Definition of Euthanasia

“Euthanasia comes from the Greek word “euthanatos” and “thanatos” means “death”. Euthanasia literally means easy, painless death. Historically, it was recorded that Emperor Augustus Caesar had a “good death”. This word was first used by Francis Bacon in English.

In actual fact, euthanasia means the intentional killing of a person, i.e. murder. Euthanasia is really a more benign word for murder. There are three stages or forms of Euthanasia:-

- (i) Voluntary Euthanasia means assisted death by a doctor. Here the doctor sets up the IV drip with medication and the patient himself turns on the drip. In actual fact, it is the patient killing him (suicide) with the assistance of a doctor or “assisted suicide” by patient and “assisted murder” by doctor.
- (ii) Non-voluntary Euthanasia – here the patient may be unconscious or in a ‘vegetative state’ and the decision to end life is taken by the family member on “legal guardian”, i.e. decision made by others for a person not capable of making his/her decision.
- (iii) Involuntary Euthanasia – as was done by the German Nazis against the Jewish race and to people with mental illness for eugenic reasons. Once Euthanasia is tolerated by modern society, it can go from Voluntary Euthanasia to Non-Voluntary Euthanasia and then on to Involuntary Euthanasia. Once the flood gate is opened, there is no way to predict where it will end.

### (B) Morality of Euthanasia

Euthanasia or assisted murder or assisted suicide or assisted easy death – the socially progressive view in our modern society continues to white-wash euthanasia with ever more benign nomenclature or euphemism. Social pressure often leads to political pressure. In many present day European and western countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada) society appears to be quite comfortable and accepts “Voluntary Euthanasia”, some even permit “Non-voluntary Euthanasia”. It is very easy to proceed on to “Involuntary Euthanasia” i.e. euthanasia for eugenic or racial or religious reasons (as in Nazi Germany).

### (C) The Catholic Church’s Stand on Euthanasia

Based on biblical teaching and traditional Christian theology (teachings from different Popes and Synods of Bishops), life is always sacred and no one can take it away. Terminal illness and mental illness are no excuse for euthanasia. However, it is not necessary to take extra-ordinary means to sustain life, i.e. putting a “brain dead” person on a resuscitator or life machine.

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<sup>1</sup> We like to thank Mr. Dalton Forgarty for his permission to reproduce the above information.

(D) Conclusion

Euthanasia is plain murder or assisted murder, calling it “good death” or “assisted suicide” or “assisted easy death” – this is just euphemism to ease one’s conscience.