



Speaking the truth in love

Eph 4:15

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ALEX GREENWICH'S KILL BILL

There's never a good time to introduce laws that sanction the killing of vulnerable human beings such as the terminally ill, elderly, frail and suffering. But to introduce such a bill in the middle of a pandemic and amidst lockdowns adversely affecting the lives and livelihoods of millions seems especially insensitive.

The people of NSW are currently accepting significant restrictions on their personal autonomy in order to protect those most at risk – particularly the elderly. In response to the latest wave of COVID-19, we've had a month of lockdown already and more is likely. Many of us have been unable to visit our elderly parents at home, in hospital or in aged care. Our sick and elderly have already suffered 17 months of increasing isolation and right now that is being intensified. Meanwhile, people are losing their jobs, businesses are going under, families are under the pressures of schooling and working from home, people's movements are severely restricted, and depression rates are up. The last thing we need to hear from our leaders in this situation is a pro-suicide message or any suggestion that the elderly and dying no longer deserve the resources or protections given to the rest of us.

The NSW Government is rightly focused on getting us safely vaccinated and out of lockdown as soon as possible, and leading the process of social and economic recovery.

The NSW Health System is rightly focused on keeping the elderly and sick safe, and ensuring the system can cope with the increasing pressures upon it. Our health professionals do not want a bruising controversy that will further disrupt their already very pressured work environment.

In the face of our present emergency precious parliamentary time and health resources should not be diverted to other causes, and especially not to a bill that would enable a small group of highly autonomous people to make their doctors complicit in their suicide. The state-sanctioned killing of the sick, elderly and frail of New South Wales is the last thing we need right now! I call on the Government to keep us focused on the present challenges and once they have been met, let us focus on medicine at its best and not its most lethal.

Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP
Archbishop of Sydney