



## Archdiocese of Winnipeg

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### **STATEMENT FROM ARCHBISHOP RICHARD GAGNON ON THE SUPREME COURT DECISION ON PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE**

The Archdiocese of Winnipeg is disappointed with today's decision of the Supreme Court of Canada governing physician assisted suicide. We are in solidarity with Catholic Health Care in Manitoba in our support of the current law prohibiting physician assisted suicide. Our belief in the sanctity of life at every stage is premised on the unconditional value of every person. We believe that direct and intentional killing, whether of the aged, the sick, the disabled or the dying, is morally unacceptable. For this reason, the Church strongly supports, along with most Canadians, the need to increase the best palliative care for patients. We are blessed in Manitoba to have excellent palliative care support which is appreciated by so many of our fellow citizens. The Supreme Court decision does not take into consideration the effects of physician assisted suicide on society as a whole. We are presently spending time thoroughly reading the Supreme Court decision. We know that the Federal government will require time to determine whether or not it will invoke section 33 of the Charter of Rights commonly known as the Notwithstanding Clause. Further, the Federal and Provincial governments will need time to draft any necessary legislation to respond to the issues raised by today's decision of the Supreme Court. We urge all Catholics and all Canadians to follow this process closely and understand what it means for all of us.