

To Be or not To Be ?



Start your meeting with the Sign of the Cross and your prayers.

Someone read: A reading from the Gospel of St. John Ch.19: 23-30
“When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, “They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. So this is what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

... When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. ” The Gospel of the Lord.

Listen to the cd (tracks 1 & 2) **or read the script**

With thanks to **John Kleinsman** from the **New Zealand Catholic Bioethics Centre** - see over page for contact details

Music: *En La Palaya* by *Isaac Abeniz*

Share *Use only those questions that are appropriate for your group at this time*

- * What are your thoughts on this presentation?
- * Have you ever accompanied someone on their journey to death?
- * What can we learn about accompanying another from Mary at the foot of the cross?
- * What might you say to a friend without faith contemplating a premature end to their life?
- * What are your hopes or fears for your own death?

Instruments of Divine Mercy

The love of God for all in Christ is at the very centre of the Christian message. Marists see Mary as Mother of mercy who has a heart for humanity, especially those who suffer greatly, are lost or excluded. Marists receive this mercy of God and in turn want to be instruments of mercy to others.

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Prayer time: Prayers from the Marist Prayer Card and/or for your own intentions

Conclude the meeting with the following:

Lord God,

May you always be our strength and support till shades lengthen
and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.

Then in your mercy may you give us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at last.

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)

PTO for more ...

KEY POINTS Euthanasia is NOT:

- * withholding or withdrawing ineffective or overly burdensome treatment
- * to be confused with the administration of pain relief - even if it is thought to shorten life (the evidence today is that it is more likely to prolong life)



The above actions are legal in NZ and are currently practiced by doctors and hospitals.

The Dangers of Euthanasia

Our individual choices are constrained by the pressures generated by cultural, societal and economic factors:

- * Isolation of the sick, dying, disabled and elderly
- * Fragmentation of families
- * Average age of death rising
- * Economic pressures on our health-care system

There is more detail of John Kleinsman's material on our web site.

For more information and articles about palliative care of the dying and the implications of euthanasia legislation, see the web site of the **The New Zealand Catholic Bioethics Centre:** www.nathaniel.org.nz To find the relevant articles, enter "euthanasia" in the search box or click on "The end of life". There are also links from this site to other useful information.