

# Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton

## Українська Католицька Едмонтонська Єпархія

July 1, 2017

### **Pastoral Letter to the Ukrainian Catholic Faithful Image and Likeness of God – A Ukrainian Catholic Response to “Medical Assistance in Dying”**

Слава Ісусу Христу! Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Dear Faithful,

In publishing a Pastoral Letter, entitled *Created in the Image and Likeness of God, A Ukrainian Catholic Response to “Medical Assistance in Dying,”* I invite you to reflect on Creation and God’s plan for humankind.

Through Creation, God calls us to become partakers of the divine nature, that is, to become holy, living in communion with God. Yet, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin, suffering and death entered our reality. Still, the love of God could not be restrained. We have salvation in Jesus Christ.

When confronted with the reality of our own sin, suffering and death, we need not go it alone. Jesus’ healing touch remains with us today, in prayer and in the Mysteries (Sacraments) of Repentance, Holy Anointing of the Sick, and the Divine Eucharist.

In a true desire to carry on the healing ministry of Christ, let us all – pastors, religious, monastics, and lay faithful alike – willingly journey with those who are suffering, those who are dying, offering them comfort and hope in eternal life with God.

Even when someone requests assisted suicide and euthanasia, may we continue to provide pastoral accompaniment in the hopes that God’s love and mercy will bring about *metanoia*, a change of heart and mind, where possible.

The family of a loved one who has died as a result of assisted suicide might request an ecclesiastical funeral. Pastors may respond by providing either a *panachyda*, *parastas*, Funeral Divine Liturgy, cemetery committal, or memorial service, according to circumstances and in consultation with the bishop, provided public scandal is avoided.

Through our prayers and actions during difficult times, we show our respect for life, which is always a gift from God, and comfort to those who mourn.

Yours in the peace of Christ,



Bishop David Motiuk  
Eparchy of Edmonton