

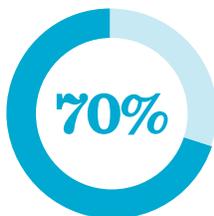
Faith Communities and Leaders Support Medical Aid in Dying

PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS SUPPORT MEDICAL AID IN DYING



Two-thirds of Americans agree that:

“When a person is facing a painful terminal disease, it is morally acceptable to ask for a physician’s aid in taking his or her own life.”



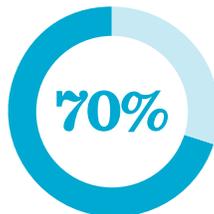
of Catholics



of all Christians



of Protestants



of people in other religions

*According to 2016 LifeWay survey

PEOPLE ACROSS LEVELS OF OBSERVANCE SUPPORT MEDICAL AID IN DYING



Nearly three out of four Americans agreed that:

“When a person has a disease that cannot be cured ... doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient’s life by some painless means if the patient and his or her family request it.”



attend church weekly



attend church monthly



attend church seldom/never

**According to May 2020 Gallup poll

HERE ARE THE FACTS:

1. Medical aid in dying is a personal decision. One individual’s beliefs or faith should not limit another’s right to choose the end-of-life medical option best for them and their families.
2. No faith leader will ever be forced to participate in medical aid in dying. A faith leader may be asked for spiritual or emotional support, but this medical practice involves a dying person and their healthcare providers.
3. Freedom of religion means that everyone can make their own decisions about end-of-life care grounded in their own faith and beliefs, no matter what that decision is.

FAITH LEADERS ON END-OF-LIFE CHOICE

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Dying is part of life ... And since dying is part of life, talking about it shouldn't be taboo. People should die a decent death. For me that means having had the conversations with those I have crossed in life and being at peace. It means being able to say goodbye to loved ones — if possible, at home.

– Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Cape Town, South Africa

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Grant me a choice! Allow a physician to prescribe a drug to aid me which I would administer personally in potentially dying peacefully and whole. Only God knows whether I would actually make that choice, but choice will be the final blessing of my individuality I will ever have.

– Rabbi Donald R. Berlin, Temple Oheb Shalom, Baltimore, Maryland

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As a priest, I have been blessed to counsel many New Yorkers as they prepare for the end of their lives. I sat at their bedside as they begged for help to die. It is the memory of these people that has helped me to lend my voice today to help authorize the medical practice of aid in dying. My God is a God of love and compassion. A God who would not abandon a dying person who is suffering, and refuse that person the means to die peacefully.

– Father Luis Barrios, pastor at Iglesia Episcopal Santa Cruz/Holyrood Episcopal Church and professor at John Jay College in New York City

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As a faith leader, I know families and friends want a peaceful passing for their loved ones instead of being haunted by images of deterioration and pain. I would support a parishioner who may choose this option when they are facing a terminal illness with the prognosis of it ending in terrible suffering. A colleague in ministry has said it very well: 'When dying persons have alternatives — a final measure of control — they feel a sense of comfort and peace that allows them to truly live during their last days. This is the greatest gift we can grant our dying friends and loved ones.

– Rev. Cedric A. Harmon, ordained pastor affiliated with the National Baptist and Missionary Baptist, and executive director of Many Voices, Washington, D.C.

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Do we really feel that life is so precious that we should deny someone who suffers from constant, agonizing pain the right to end the torture? As modern technology continues to make dramatic advances, we need to reconsider just whose interest is served by prolonging the agony of the terminally ill, and whether preserving these lives, against the will of those who suffer, is truly in line with Jewish ethics and tradition. I believe that the right of the terminally ill patient to make their own end-of-life choices fits squarely within our religious tradition and morality.

– Suzanne Singer, former rabbi of Temple Sinai in Oakland, California

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