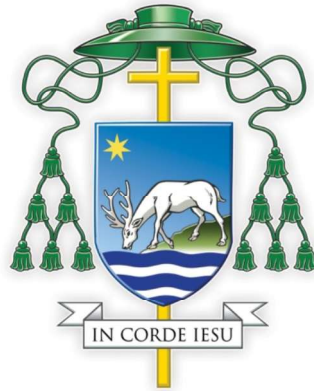


BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

Rt. Rev. Philip A. Egan BA, STL, PhD



MESSAGE FROM BISHOP PHILIP EGAN to the Clergy and Laity of Jersey on the Legalisation of Euthanasia (July 2026)

Dear Friends,

Last week, in a misguided move, royal assent was given to assisted suicide and euthanasia in Jersey, the first place in the British Isles to pass such legislation. By late 2027, terminally ill adults will be able to request from a medical professional a lethal injection. The service will be free to those who ask it.

This legislation is deemed a triumph by activists. Yet in reality, it is a terrifying development. It is a leap into the insatiable culture of death. *Thou shalt not kill* is a principle written into every human heart, a natural law that grounds the laws governing every civilised society. It is the teaching of all major religions, one fundamental to Christian morality and social teaching. Death, by contrast, is not what we are made for. It is eternal darkness: the domain of Satan (cf. Heb 2: 14).

The new legislation in Jersey will place an immoral and unacceptable demand on medical staff. It expects them to become accessories to killing.

It will irreparably damage palliative care and the work of care-homes, since it will be cheaper and more efficient to euthanatise than to care. It's easy to imagine a future in which doctors glibly advise patients to seek suicide not treatment.

It will place intolerable pressure on the vulnerable, the disabled, the sick, the elderly, the dying. It will tempt them to feel they are an increasing burden and financial drain on society, family and friends. The right to die will soon become a pressure to die, then the duty to die.

Yes, the current legislation is limited. Yet the thresholds of eligibility are bound to creep forward to cover more and more categories of persons such as the mentally ill, those with depression or dementia, the severely disabled, sick babies and so on. As experience elsewhere demonstrates, there is no limit. In Canada, already 1 in 20 deaths are by lethal injection. Suicide will become the norm.

For a Christian, taking one's own life or assisting someone to take their own life,

is a really grave offence against God. We believe that life is God's gift. We did not choose our lives nor is life ours to dispose of.

In Jersey, a red line has now been crossed. Please pray for the terminally ill and those who care for them. Pray too for the medical staff who will soon be pressurised to administer lethal injections.

As Catholics, we are people of life. We do not believe the argument is settled. Faithful to Christ and animated by the Holy Spirit, we will continue to campaign for what we know to be the Truth. Let's deepen our understanding and continue to speak out. Indeed, let's do our best to witness to a different way of life, the true way to human happiness, the Way which has a Name: Jesus Christ.

In Corde Iesu

+Philip

Bishop of Portsmouth

16th July 2026

The Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.