

Kindness before death

Opinion

Life is hard enough. For some, life implicates some sorrow and undergoing constant punishment, given every day in small or bigger dosages of pain and suffering. This pain may come in different ways, basically two: mental pain and physical pain. For most of us the amount of emotional and mental pain is overwhelming, though fewer have experienced excruciating physical pain as a way of living.

Euthanasia has been a way out, of the physical pain and suffering, and in some countries such as Belgium and Holland; euthanasia has also been a way out of mental and emotional pain.

Is this right? Is this wrong? Who is there to say? Maybe is a close called for the societies to pay attention to the laws that are observing, and precisely about this, very few countries have approved euthanasia as a legal procedure.

Generally, in those countries (Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg among others) euthanasia was proved after a long period of debate. The number of deaths due to euthanasia increased in the Netherlands, in a proportion of 75% from 2000 to 2016 (Life news, August 1, 2016). It also applies to patients who have not requested euthanasia, annually the euthanasia deaths in the Netherlands, without prior request, are more than 3000.

Euthanasia in Netherland is applied even to patients with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's from the initial phases. Investment in palliative care and pain treatments, 70% drops and efforts are focused on euthanasia. The Faculties of Medicine in the Netherlands are no longer focused on teaching palliative care, but on the development and application of various euthanasia techniques

Although in the Netherland it took quite a few years the discussion of euthanasia there is another country that applies it and never discussed the matter with the people. This country went against the existing law and through a decree, not even a regular law created by the Congress, only a sentence from a Judge, which does NOT have the power to create laws, euthanasia entered a gray line called: decriminalized.

This means that the criminal code states in articles 106 and 107, that euthanasia and assisted suicide are felonies with punishment of jail. And even though euthanasia is a felony, according to the law; a judge from the Constitutional court stated in 1997, that the judiciary system should consider **not** prosecuting the conduct of a person that ends the life of another for pity. Such country is Colombia.

A little place of no more than 1.141.748 km² with less than 50 million people, through the same judge Carlos Gaviria, created

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decrees of unbelievable impact. Not necessarily all well especially because everything that is done based on an illegal act, will therefore be illegal. This is the case of euthanasia in Colombia.

How are the palliative care and the hospice system in Colombia where euthanasia takes place illegally consented by the government, for instance? Almost none existent. In Colombia the official data of the Atlas of palliative care in Latin America ALCP (2012) accounts for only 13 services / units of palliative care in hospitals of the third level that serve adults and children indiscriminately for the whole country. This is not enough.

That is why this brief article is a reflection on how important it is to see each other as brothers and sister belonging to the same race and exercising a little bit more compassion than we usually do, especially for those that are suffering physically and emotionally at the end of life. We are all dying, some faster than others for different reasons. But for those people that are in need of more appreciation because they are in fear, in pain and hopeless, it is necessary to give extra care, instead of trying to kill them through euthanasia.

We all need love, and with the global society, the media, the social networks, people seem more connected, however lonelier and separated from his or her peers. Sooner or later the planet will have to return to its roots and the human race will have to realize that only through love and compassion the spiritual ascend is possible. Love and kindness before death, before euthanasia, before excluding the fragile, the weak and the old ones.