



FOR THE TERMINALLY ILL

“Let us pray that the terminally ill and their families always receive the necessary medical and human care and assistance.”

- Pope Francis -

Challenge for humanity and the Church's mission – February 2024

WHO IS A TERMINALLY ILL PERSON?



A terminally ill person is someone who has an **advanced, progressive and incurable illness**.

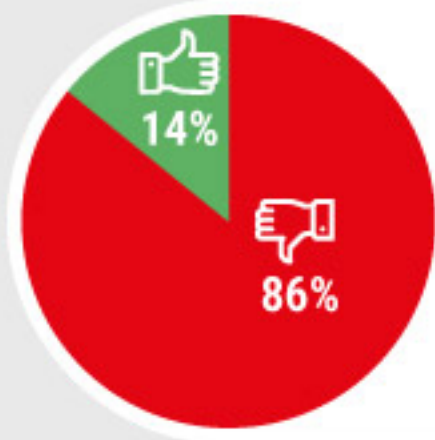
Palliative care is an alternative to maintain a **better quality of life for terminally ill patients and their families**.



The **proximity of death** creates a tremendous **emotional impact** for the sick person, their relatives and the therapeutic team assisting them.



In this type of situation, there are some countries in which the terminally ill person can choose **euthanasia or assisted suicide**.



Each year, **40 million** people throughout the world need palliative care, but only **14%** receive it.

“Cure if it is possible; always take care.”

Pope Francis

How is it possible to care for a terminally ill person?

The **Catholic Church** considers palliative care to be every person's right:

Medical Care



Medicine is not only a science. It is also a “therapeutic art”. This implies, above all, a close relationship with the patient in the critical and terminal phases of life.

Therapeutic excessiveness and the reduction of the physician-patient relationship to that of a mere contract should be avoided.

Psychological Care



The vulnerability of the terminally ill patient is natural. Space is necessary for the recognition of the patient's fragility and vulnerability.

To regenerate a sense of the patient's existence when they experience suffering, illness and the fear of the unknown.

Spiritual Care



To recognize the innate dignity of each person as a child of God.

To assist the sick person, like a brother or sister, supporting their relationship with God.

In the final moments of life, spiritual accompaniment instills hope in God's love.

Why is it important that family members assist the terminally ill person?



- So they are involved in the patient's care and in making decisions.
- For the emotional and mental support of the patient.
- In some cases, appropriate accompaniment by members of the family increases the probability of positive results in the treatment process.

WHAT DOES POPE FRANCIS SAY WE CAN DO TO HELP THE TERMINALLY ILL AND THEIR FAMILIES?

- **Accompany.** The spiritual assistance provided by families is a component of palliative care.
- **Provide care for their fragility.** Therapeutic care is not only medical, but also psychological and spiritual.
- **Accept vulnerability.** We cannot leave families alone in such difficult moments.
- **Be present and available.** Always offer care and the necessary assistance.
- **Openness to hope.** A cure may not always be possible, but the sick person can always be cared for.

“When illness knocks on the door of our life, the need arises in us that someone be close us, to look into our eyes, to take us by the hand, to show us tenderness and care for us, like the Good Samaritan”.

POPE FRANCIS