



**Statement and Recommendations following
the International Interfaith Symposium on Palliative Care**

OTTAWA, 24 October 2024 – Today, as a follow-up to the [International Interfaith Symposium on Palliative Care, “Towards a Narrative of Hope,”](#) a Post-Symposium Working Group has released its anticipated Statement and Recommendations as a key concrete outcome of the event which took place from 21 to 23 May 2024. The Symposium, organized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCBC) in partnership with the Pontifical Academy for Life (PAV), as well as other collaborators, was one of the first of its kind in terms of charting new paths for the promotion and expansion of palliative care.

The Post-Symposium Working Group that authored the Statement and Recommendations, comprised of leading academic experts in palliative care from Canada and the US, chaired by the Most Rev. Noël Simard, Bishop Emeritus of Valleyfield, and supported by the CCCBC Office for Family and Life, has helpfully recapped key insights from the event and proposed possible next steps as part of a shared vision dedicated to promoting a culture of palliative care that respects human dignity and the sanctity of life.

The Statement considers the Christian roots of palliative care as a “model of care” which seeks to prevent and ameliorate the physical as well as the spiritual and psychosocial suffering of those facing serious, life-threatening, or life-limiting illness. It highlights the “deep sense of resolve and concern” expressed by a growing network of stakeholders to ensure that comprehensive and quality palliative care is available to all at the end of life.

The Statement further highlights [Pope Francis’s message to the Symposium participants](#), in which he encouraged the practice of “authentic palliative care,” and it emphasises the Christian understanding that “staying with – or being present to – those who are ill and dying is a sign of the charity and hope that are at the heart of the ministry of caregiving.”

The six recommendations in the areas of education, policy and community engagement, with which the Statement concludes, outline tasks for the Working Group and its network of stakeholders who are interested in the expansion and promotion of palliative care. Following the release of today’s Statement, the Post-Symposium Working Group will begin a new phase of resource development and advocacy based on these recommendations.

The Post-Symposium Working Group encourages all individuals and relevant organizations to receive these recommendations as a means of fostering a more compassionate approach to end-of-life care.

For further details and to access the full Post-Symposium Statement and Recommendations, please visit: [Post-Symposium-Statement-and-Recommendations-FINAL_EN_2024-10-22.pdf](#)

Maribel Mayorga
Director of Communications
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCBC) Email: communications@cccbb.ca
Telephone: 613-241-9461, ext. 225