

Will I choose to serve my own interests or the good of others?

At his Baptism, Jesus heard the Father's words from heaven: *"You are my Son, the Beloved. My favour rests on you"* (Lk 3:22).

Jesus knows that the Father, the source of all life, wants us all to share the fulness of life. It was Jesus' mission to offer the fulness of life to every person, but especially to those most in need: the marginalised, suffering or excluded.

Today, the Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness, where he experiences very human temptations: to satisfy his own wants first; to gain and exercise power; to put God's love and care to the test by taking dangerous risks. Jesus resists all of these because he wants to keep his heart fixed on his mission.

In the Christian's life, 'keeping our hearts fixed on our mission' means imitating the example of Jesus:

- Respecting every person, and being attentive to their needs as well as our own;
- Offering practical care and genuine compassion to everyone we meet;
- Maintaining a close relationship with God, marked by humility and gratitude.

In 2007 Pope Benedict said:

... the human being ... is not a 'monad', an isolated being who lives only for himself and must have life for himself only. On the contrary, we live with others, we were created together with others and only in being with others, in giving ourselves to others, do we find life.

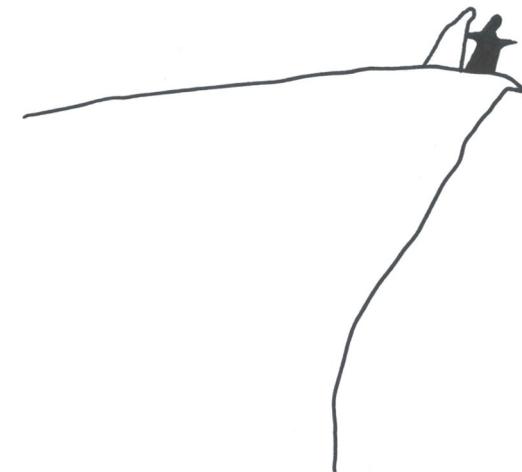
Jesus practiced this in his every word and action, and in the end gave himself totally to us – and for us. It was only through his Cross that he came to the Resurrection that really is 'the fulness of life'.

It has been said that we can only make sense of our lives if we can make sense of our deaths.

Jesus makes sense of our deaths not only by showing us the Resurrection, but by showing us that living lives of practical care and compassion for others, even when it comes at great cost to ourselves, is the one way for us to come to 'the fulness of life' here and now.

Indeed, in Mathew's Gospel Jesus makes practical compassion the rule by which our lives will be measured:

"Insofar as you did this to one of the least of these sisters and brothers of mine, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40).



.. being tempted for forty days ...

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Reflection

Is God calling me to serve myself first, or the needs of others?

What behaviours do I need to change to become more faithful to God's call?

Laws to permit euthanasia are not inevitable in WA

Western Australia is currently debating whether we should change our laws to let a doctor intentionally end the life of a patient.

Some people think this is a good idea. Their motivation seems to be an idea of compassion that says when a person's suffering becomes too great, we should end that suffering by allowing a doctor to end the person's life.

While no reasonable person can think that suffering is a good thing, there are many good reasons to question the wisdom of allowing doctors to do this.

Every experience of suffering and dying is very complex, and as the lawyers say, 'hard cases make bad laws'. This is because every person's living and dying is unique, every person's illness and social circumstances are unique, and everyone's sense of hope and meaning in life is unique.

Any law that tries to account for all of this complexity only creates new uncertainties. People feel much more exposed in systems

that accept direct killing as a legitimate medical procedure.

When the blunt instrument of law is used to try and fix such complex and delicate matters, accidents and abuses always follow. In countries like the Netherlands, Belgium and Canada it is quite clear that regulations meant to make euthanasia 'safe' are regularly ignored, not reported, or not enforced.¹

The medical profession has always led the search for better treatments and better access to care, and we trust doctors to do this research because we all want to benefit from better care.

Of all doctors who work closely with the dying, the vast majority agree that euthanasia has no place in medical practice.

To Jesus' temptations in the desert we might add a new temptation to which we all might be prone: the temptation to think that because other States and countries have introduced euthanasia laws, they are inevitable in WA as well.

However, laws to allow a doctor to intentionally end the life of a patient are by no means inevitable in WA.

All Members of Parliament have a conscience vote on this issue, and all of them are ultimately answerable to you.



Call to Action

Bad laws are passed only when good people say nothing. Let your MPs know what you think.

To find out how contact *Care for Life*

Email: care@careforlife.net.au

Telephone : 9242 4066

Visit our website www.careforlife.net.au

¹ See for example <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/10/e017628>
For other examples see www.careforlife.net.au