



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CIRCLE - STATEMENT ON BILL C-218

“My prayer is to God and to you, my relations. Our final answer to the power of death is NO. And wherever you live on the earth, remember that we belong to each other and our purpose is to celebrate life.” – Arthur-baa Solomon, *Songs for the People*.

On 20 June 2025, Private Member’s Bill C-218 was introduced in the House of Commons. The bill proposes to repeal the planned 2027 expansion of eligibility for Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) that would permit mental illness alone to qualify for MAiD approval. After careful discernment and reflection on the urgent need for life promotion in Indigenous communities, the Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle supports Bill C-218.

We draw encouragement from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops’ statement of 4 February 2026, which reminds us of “our shared social responsibility to protect human life and provide care for the vulnerable and marginalized.” This responsibility is not abstract. It demands public policy that safeguards those who experience social and economic exclusion, unresolved trauma, poverty, racism, inadequate access to health services, and the enduring harms of colonization. In these conditions, the offer of MAiD for mental illness risks functioning as abandonment rather than accompaniment, especially where timely, culturally safe mental health care remains unavailable.

We are also compelled to name a serious failure of process. The Government of Canada has not meaningfully consulted Indigenous communities regarding the planned expansion, undermining the self-determination of Peoples disproportionately affected by mental illness, intergenerational trauma, and suicide. This concern was clearly articulated at the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly in *Resolution #22/2025*, which states that “First Nations voices, perspectives and rights have not been adequately heard or addressed” in the shaping of federal MAiD policies and legislative amendments that impact First Nations individuals, families, and communities. The resolution, passed with near unanimous consent in December 2025, calls for all MAiD-related federal policies, programs, and legislative initiatives to uphold First Nations rights to self-determination in health and to be rooted in First Nations values, including life promotion, cultural safety, ancestral knowledge, and equitable access to care across the lifespan.

For these reasons, we urge Members of Parliament and Senators to support Bill C-218 and to reject the 2027 expansion of MAiD eligibility based on mental illness alone. We further call on the Government of Canada to halt any discussions of expansion until there have been robust, Nation-to-Nation consultation and consent processes, and until there is demonstrable, equitable access to culturally safe mental health care, trauma supports, addictions services, disability supports, housing, and community-based healing.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle
March 2, 2026