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Office of the Territorial Commander

Giving Hope Today

January 23, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister and Privy Council
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister

Re: Medical Assistance in Dying and Palliative Care

We are writing to thank you for your recent reflections on the complexity of decisions relating to medical assistance in dying, and your acknowledgment that we as a society need to ensure there is top quality palliative care.

As a national organization that serves vulnerable Canadians in hospital, long-term care, palliative care and other settings, we acknowledge and accept that Canadians hold a diversity of views about MAID.

Our experience in both in-patient care settings and chaplaincy settings tells us that coming to terms with our own mortality and that of our loved ones is difficult at any time. It can be complicated by family dynamics, the challenges of understanding complex medical information and miscommunications during emotionally charged times.

Our experience in palliative care tells us that effective palliative care can make a significant difference in the lives of those who are suffering. We hope that, as laws regarding MAID are liberalized, there is an equal commitment at all levels of government to ensure patients have access to quality palliative care, genuine options and genuine choice.

We appreciate the many difficult choices you and your Cabinet and Parliamentary colleagues must make and we wish you great wisdom and strength as you continue to serve Canadians.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide further input as you continue to consider policy options.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Floyd J. Tidd
Territorial Commander
The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory