

Open letter published 27th September 2023 by Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Romain



Dear colleagues,

If you have not already come across them, I thought you might like to see two news items:

1. *The Times* survey earlier this month amongst clergy which, among many other topics it covered, revealed increased support for assisted dying among Church of England priests, and critically that opposition to law change among them has dropped.

The survey shows a clear direction of travel among Church of England ministers. Not only has support for compassionate choice at the end of life gone up from 22 to 35 per cent, opposition to assisted dying has reduced significantly from 70 to 55 per cent.

2. A YouGov poll published yesterday showed that:

7 in 10 people of faith would support legalising assisted dying

- *More than three quarters of Church of England Christians, and 2 in 3 Roman Catholics, believe that the UK's ban on assisted dying should end.*
- *Major new report brings together evidence of multiple harms the ban inflicts on dying people and their families.*
- *Westminster facing mounting pressure to act, as majority of British public demand change and bills move forward in devolved administrations.*

Around 7 in 10 (69%) of people who follow a religion in England and Wales have indicated that they would support assisted dying becoming a legal option for terminally ill people in the UK, according to new research released today by [Dignity in Dying](#).

A poll of 1,844 people in England and Wales, of which 766 belong to a religion, found that those who would back a change in the law included more than three quarters (78%) of people who described their faith as Church of England, Anglican or Episcopal, and more than two-thirds (68%) of Roman Catholics.

The poll is 'hot off the press' but the stats confirm what previous polls had also shown (and perhaps you own anecdotal evidence too) that while the Church hierarchy is against assisted dying being legalised as an option for the terminally ill who request it, the majority of the laity are in favour, with a clear disconnect between the leadership and the membership.

With best wishes,

Jonathan

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