

PRESS RELEASE



At the end it is preferable to live a better than a longer life – the European Family Associations' comments on palliative medicine

Berlin, 22.01.2009: The Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) welcomes the resolution application "Palliative Care", which the Council of Europe will discuss on January 28th, 2009 in Strasbourg. By stressing the quality of life palliative medicine makes this a matter of priority respecting at the same time the unavailability of life as well as the right on a good life, Ms Elisabeth Bussmann, President of the FAFCE said. For families with incurably ill members this comprehensive approach was a good alternative to "apparatus medicine" aiming at all costs at a lengthening of life. A more positive and a more comprehensive life concept ought to be opposed to a logic that has in sight only the illness but not the individual. However, the patient's autonomy as well as his need for a personal and pastoral company ought to be taken into account.

Palliative medicine makes an intense time full of meaningful experiences possible in the end of life, and thus personal relations can be shaped full of hope and the inevitable parting from close relatives can be done in dignity. Ms Bussmann gives her expressive thanks to all the doctors and nursing staff as well as the voluntary helpers of the hospice movement: "Bearing in mind the person-despising euthanasia debate and the culture of death expressed therein, the hospice-staff is practising a humanizing culture of life!"

The Catholic Family Associations of Europe give courage for a social political debate on the positive value of life particularly also at the end of life. They invite the European States to implement sustainably - for instance by means of a legally unambiguous phrasing of the living wills - the promising possibilities of the palliative medicine into the organisational everyday-life of their public health systems.

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The Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) is recognized by the Council of Europe as a non-governmental organisation. The FAFCE is in contact with the Institutions of the European Union such as the *European Commission* and the *European Parliament*. FAFCE considers itself as a European liaison platform for the international exchange of experiences in family political and family pastoral issues. Our member organisations provide important Catholic expertise and contacts on local level and the Federation serves as a European umbrella organisation. We consider ourselves a political representation for family interests from a Catholic perspective.

Mitgliedsorganisationen:

Familienbund der Katholiken (FDK), Deutschland
Confederation Nationale des Associations Familiales Catholiques (CNAFC), Frankreich
Family Solidarity, Irland
Forum delle associazioni familiari (Forum), Italien

FAFCE

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