

# 60 REASONS TO SUPPORT NEW YORK'S MEDICAL AID IN DYING ACT

## Father Luis Barrios

A priest, certified medical examiner and college professor, Fr. Barrios supports medical aid-in-dying legislation



### Reason #13

***So that everyone can die in a way that's consistent with their own faith, values, and beliefs.***

I don't have a problem with the notion of death, because death is a part of life. It's how we face it and the way we go through the dying process that makes a difference.

It's a blessing that the New York State Legislature is considering a bill to authorize medical aid in dying. Terminally ill, mentally competent adults with a prognosis of six months or less to live should have the option to request a doctor's prescription for medication they can decide to take if their suffering becomes unbearable.

As a priest, I have been blessed to counsel many New Yorkers as they prepare for the end of their lives. I sat at their bedside as they begged for help to die. It is the memory of these people that has helped me to lend my voice to help authorize the medical practice of aid in dying.

There was something sacred about ministering to the dying who begged for relief. Little did I know these experiences prepared me for the day my brother Samuel, in light of his weakened and final stages of AIDS, said he wanted me to help him die peacefully.

Of course, this end-of-life care option may not be for everyone. Many good people of faith have different opinions about what decisions are right for them in the final stages of a terminal illness.

There are many ways to encounter God, and New Yorkers hold a wide array of spiritual beliefs and traditions.

**My God is a God of love and compassion. A God who would not abandon a dying person who is suffering, and refuse that person the means to die peacefully. I believe that our state should adopt a law that would allow terminally ill New Yorkers to die without suffering, in whatever way is consistent with their own individual faith, values, and beliefs.**

To join our mission, email Amanda Cavanaugh at [acavanaugh@compassionandchoices.org](mailto:acavanaugh@compassionandchoices.org).

