

Palliative Care and Religion

Today the palliative care scientific community recognizes the important role that religions play in advancing this form of accompaniment of the sick or dying, given the ability of religions to reach the peripheries of humanity, those who in every community are in some way most in need. While this is certainly true, religions are and do much more. Religions are not only able to facilitate a greater presence of palliative care where it is needed, but they are one of the true component forces of palliative care itself. Total attention to the person is made much more difficult by economic hegemonies that colonize contemporary cultures and societies. The result of this situation can be only a culture, or rather anti-culture, of wastefulness. An understanding of human existence and of reality that values religious experience allows us to see and affirm a good that surpasses and is not limited by economic calculus. Recognition of the integral openness of the person to transcendence makes it possible to state that in human life, even when it is fragile and seems to be defeated by illness, there is inalienable value. Palliative care represents a vision of man that is preached and protected by the great religious traditions. In terms of motivation and inspiration, this is the most profound and trenchant contribution palliative care can receive.

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