

Daily Telegraph

News

2015

17 August

# Carey wrong on assisted suicide, says bishop

By John Bingham

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A PROMINENT bishop insists it is possible to enable people to die with dignity “without killing them”, challenging calls from the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey to legalise assisted dying.

The Bishop of Bristol, the Rt Rev Mike Hill, emphasised that Lord Carey was a friend, but did not speak for the rank and file of Church of England clergy. The former archbishop and the Anglican Bishop of Buckingham, the Rt Rev Alan Wilson, were among a group of Christian and Jewish clerics who wrote to *The Daily Telegraph* at the weekend setting out a religious case in favour of assisted suicide.

They wrote: “There is nothing sacred about suffering, nothing holy about agony, and individuals should not be obliged to endure it.”

But Bishop Hill said: “We need more palliative care provision rather than handing out the right in law to take life.

The supporters of physician-assisted suicide are very clear that this is a simple matter of individual choice – choice being the great good of a consumerised society. Except, of course the choice they present us with is extreme.

“The Church of England – with the exception of a high-profile, now retired, archbishop (and friend) and some of our members and clergy – has been resolutely against a change in the law.”

MPs are due to debate an Assisted Dying Bill tabled by the Labour backbencher Rob Marris next month.

The Bill, which replicates proposals put before peers by Lord Falconer last year, would allow people thought to have no more than six months to live and a “settled intention” to end their life to be allowed be given a lethal dose of drugs on the authority of two doctors and a judge.

On Friday, cancer sufferer Bob Cole, 68, from Chester, Cheshire, recorded a plea to MPs to support the bill shortly before taking his own life at the Dignitas clinic in Switzerland.