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MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Distribution

Cardinal Collins Presses for Protection of Conscience and the Vulnerable as Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide Legislation Prepared *- Canadians coast to coast encouraged to take action -*

TORONTO (March 2, 2016) As legislation is prepared to legalize euthanasia/assisted suicide in Canada, the Archbishop of Toronto is calling on the federal government to protect the vulnerable and those who care for them. In a statement released Wednesday, Cardinal Thomas Collins expressed shock at federal joint committee recommendations that would force health care workers and institutions to offer or refer assisted death:

“Physicians across our country who have devoted their lives to healing patients will soon be asked to do the exact opposite. They will not be asked to ease their suffering by providing them with treatment and loving care, but by putting them to death.”

The archbishop highlighted other committee recommendations that would profoundly impact the vulnerable, including:

- A desire to allow, in three years from now, access to euthanasia/assisted suicide for minors (those under 18).
- The ability for those suffering from conditions like dementia to pre-schedule the date of their death.
- Insistence that those with psychiatric conditions be eligible for euthanasia/assisted suicide.

Cardinal Collins stated: “Once we make people’s worthiness to live dependent on how well they function, our society has crossed the boundary into dangerous territory in which people are treated as objects that can be discarded as useless.”

The archbishop has invited all those who share his concerns to visit **CanadiansforConscience.ca** and join the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience. The coalition includes more than 5,000 Canadian doctors with a common mission to respect the sanctity of human life. The **CanadiansforConscience.ca** portal provides numerous resources, including an opportunity for people to easily share their concerns directly with their local member of parliament.

Cardinal Collins’ statement will be read or shown by video this weekend in more than 200 Catholic churches across the Archdiocese of Toronto.

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On Sunday, March 6, 2016, Cardinal Collins will deliver his statement at St. Paul’s Basilica at the 11 a.m. Mass. He will meet with the media following Mass.

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