Archbishop Hilarion: 'Euthanasia is a Crime of Man against himself and against Society"

On 7 November 2009, the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk took part in "The Church and the World" TV Programme and answered questions on health care. He commented on the news of the Swiss authorities' intention to tighten the legislation allowing euthanasia in the country.

"Euthanasia is a crime of man against himself and against society," he said. " From Christian point of view, neither birth, nor death depend on man: we shall die when the Lord summons us. A man who ends his life artificially or prematurely does not believe in the future life and responsibility for his actions. He ends his earthly life with bitter feelings and disappointment rather than with prayer and trust in God."

Archbishop Hilarion underscored that euthanasia allowed in the entire country shows a global spiritual illness. Propagation of euthanasia could turn into deadly state ideology when the number of the elderly people becomes a social problem. "WE do not think that a man has a right to kill, be it a killing of a foetus or an old sick person", Archbishop Hilarion said.

Answering questions about the flu epidemic, he called the audience not to yield to agiotage, but seek the help of the Church, as sick persons need physicians not only for their bodies, but also for their souls. "I am confident that people who go to church do not bring any harm to themselves, while the Holy Communion is a source of healing rather than illness."

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