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## **THIS IS HUGE: VICKI KENNEDY OPPOSES PAS**

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

Victoria Reggie Kennedy, the widow of Sen. Edward Kennedy, has joined the effort to oppose physician assisted suicide (PAS) in Massachusetts. She writes movingly about her husband's final months, and all that he was able to accomplish - in the additional year he had to live after his doctors had said he had only a few months! It is my hope that Mrs. Kennedy's words will be taken to heart by the voters of Massachusetts and they will defeat this inhumane effort to legalize euthanasia.

There is also a lesson here for the hierarchy and politically engaged Catholics. Do you think Mrs. Kennedy's decision to support the Church in its effort to fight euthanasia would have been made more likely, or less likely, if Cardinal Sean O'Malley had listened to conservative critics who thought he should not preside at the late senator's funeral? Do you think the decision by Bishop Robert McManus of Worcester to disinvite Mrs. Kennedy from a speaking engagement made it easier or harder for to link arms with the Church in this critical moment? Do you think the pro-life cause is well served when people call the Democratic Party "the party of death" or better served when the Church reaches out to prominent liberals like Mrs. Kennedy, Professor Steve Schneck and others to help make the case?

This is HUGE. I suspect Mrs. Kennedy's intervention could well tip the balance in the upcoming referendum. Will she still be persona non grata in some circles? Perhaps. But, I want to send her flowers today - and Bishop McManus should do so also, along with an invitation to speak from the pulpit of his cathedral!

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