

RESUMO - DOUTRINA SOCIAL DA IGREJA

FRATELLI TUTTI AND THE CARE OF ABANDONED ELDERLY PATIENTS: FRATERNITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY IN MEDICAL PRACTICE

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Introduction: Population aging has increased the number of elderly patients living with chronic diseases, dependency, loneliness and family abandonment. In many cases, these individuals experience not only physical suffering, but also emotional, social and spiritual neglect. The encyclical Fratelli Tutti emphasizes

the importance of fraternity, solidarity and the rejection of the “throwaway culture,” especially in relation to the most vulnerable members of society. Objective: To reflect on the contributions of Fratelli Tutti to the care of abandoned elderly patients and to discuss how the principles of fraternity and human dignity may strengthen medical practice. Methods: This is a reflective and theoretical study based on the analysis of Fratelli Tutti and on scientific literature addressing elderly abandonment, chronic illness, palliative care, loneliness and physician-patient relationships. Results: The encyclical highlights that every human being possesses intrinsic dignity regardless of age, illness or functional status. In contemporary medicine, elderly patients are often reduced to their diseases, limitations or economic costs, which contributes to isolation and dehumanized care. Fratelli Tutti proposes a model of care centered on compassion, solidarity and recognition of the patient as a whole person. The document reinforces the physician’s role not only in treating disease, but also in alleviating loneliness, abandonment and emotional suffering. The principles discussed in the encyclical may contribute to more humanized approaches in primary care, geriatrics, palliative medicine and long-term care institutions, encouraging active listening, family support and respect for patients’ autonomy and spirituality. Conclusion: Fratelli Tutti offers important ethical and humanistic foundations for medical care of abandoned elderly patients. Its reflections on fraternity and human dignity may help physicians develop more compassionate, patient-centered and socially responsible practices.

Palavras-chave: fratelli tutti; elderly patients; abandonment; human dignity; humanized care.