

David Tennant's terminally ill Reverend dad calls on Church of Scotland to back right-to-die

THE Very Reverend Sandy McDonald, a former Moderator of the Kirk, says it is time to take seriously "the provision of a peaceful end of life for all those who want it".

THE dying father of Dr Who star David Tennant has urged the Church of Scotland to back the right-to-die.

The Very Reverend Sandy McDonald, a former Moderator of the Kirk, is terminally ill with pulmonary fibrosis - a serious lung condition.

The retired minister said that the first steps for society is to stop referring to such end-of-life care as "assisted suicide."

The Kirk is formally against a change in the law such as the Assisted Suicide Bill, currently being debated in Holyrood.

The ex-Moderator, who was a minister for more than 50 years, currently lives in retirement accommodation in Paisley.

He does not know how long he has left to live but has made an end-of-life plan.

Rev McDonald told the Herald newspaper: "I have pulmonary fibrosis. It just gets worse. There is no cure. I have to address it and decide what to do.

"I have an advance directive which says 'do not resuscitate.' I do not want to be fed by something in my stomach.

"What I do want is the right to a peaceful end to my life."

He added: "I think we have the wrong slant, the wrong emphasis.

"The phrase - assisted suicide - has criminal overtones in the minds of many people,

"We need to take seriously the provision of a peaceful end of life for all those who want it.

"Of course there would have to be safeguards, and that should be discussed."

The Bishopbriggs-born retired minister, whose wife Helen passed away in 2007, said the issues should be debated at the Kirk's General Assembly in May.

Rev McDonald was Minister in Longriggend, North Lanarkshire, Bathgate and Ralston before being appointed as the General Secretary of the Church of Scotland's Board of Ministry until he retired in 2002.

Earlier this month, son David dedicated his special recognition accolade at the National Television Awards to his father.

Rev McDonald said he was delighted with the dedication saying of his son: "For a relatively young man he has had a great career.

"The event brought a great deal of joy.

"Friends from all over have been ringing since the broadcast. Some people I have not heard from for years have been in touch to say how delighted they were.

"It was good to talk to them. Some have been generous in their interest in their interest in the work I have done in the Church."

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/david-tennants-terminally-ill-reverend-5243794>