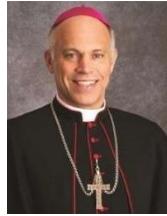


Message from Archbishop Cordileone

Every human person is a unique and unrepeatable manifestation of God, and every human life is a precious gift from God. Yet each of us must face the inescapable fact of death; “death is a consequence of sin” says the Catechism (CCC 1008), although “death is transformed by Christ” (CCC 1009). Just as our human life has dignity, the end of human life does as well. Indeed, “because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning” (CCC 1010) because, although sad for those still in this life, “in death, God calls man to Himself” (CCC 1011).



As we approach the end of life, it is of particular concern to continue to acknowledge that dignity, and recognize that what may be a diminished physical capacity in no way indicates diminution in the value of each human life – indeed, as the physical ability wanes, the spiritual may actually increase. Pope St John Paul II gave a wonderful witness to this, as his failing physical abilities were unable to dim his spirit. In any case, the Church’s teaching is clear: all human life is of inestimable value, from conception to natural death.

In acknowledgement of this dignity, and in response to the unfortunate passing of California’s Physician-assisted Suicide Law, the bishops of California have partnered with healthcare providers throughout the state to develop the Care for the Whole Person Initiative, to ensure that parishioners and patients are lovingly attended, accompanied and cared for in their serious illness and end-of-life journey. In partnership with healthcare professionals, the initiative will oversee the training of parish leaders to provide each parish with tools, resources, guidance, and other supports to implement Whole Person Care. May our Lord Jesus Christ, His Blessed Mother, and St Joseph, patron of a happy death, accompany our volunteers, and be close to each of us as we prepare for our own final passing

Every human person is a unique and unrepeatable image of God, “a masterpiece of God’s creation” according to Pope Francis.

Thus, **human life is sacred**, and each person is to be treated with their full God-given dignity, from conception to natural death.

Responding to the needs of the people of God in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, the **Care for the Whole Person Initiative** offers support, education and consolation for those with critical illness or at the end of life, and those who care for them.

If you or a loved one are seeking support for someone with a critical illness or nearing the end of life, please contact our parish team using the information below.



Care for the Whole Person ministry
Archdiocese of San Francisco
www.sfarch.org/wholeperson



Our parish is a member of the
Care for the Whole Person *ministry*

Bringing Christ to family members with
critical illness or near the end of life

Every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of the living and holy God.

CCC 2319



What is the Care for the Whole Person Initiative?

The Care for the Whole Person Initiative is a collaborative project of the California Catholic Bishops and Catholic Health Systems, which seeks to ensure that parishioners and patients are accompanied, loved and supported in their serious illness and end-of-life journey. To that end the Initiative will provide each Parish with tools, resources, guidance, trainings and other supports to implement Whole Person Care.

What is the Mission of the Initiative?

Based in Catholic tradition, Caring for the Whole Person (CWP) ministry provides individuals and families with compassionate, caring, spiritually centered care. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus we commit ourselves to serving all persons in health, serious illness and through the end of life.

What are the goals of the Initiative?

- To provide comfort, spiritual, and emotional support to individuals and families in health or facing serious illness and through the end of life.
- To provide education and resources to individuals and families for making informed decisions to achieve medical, spiritual and personal goals.



What are components of the ministry?

- **Support for individuals and families**
 - Offering support calls or visits to those who are critically and/or chronically ill, respecting appropriate boundaries and confidentiality
 - Offering spiritual support through prayer, and bringing the Eucharist to those homebound or in care facilities.
 - Offering emotional support, being physically present and offering a listening ear, while respecting the diversity of cultural practices around death and the dying.
 - Offering physical support as needed and as appropriate
- **Education about caregiving**
 - What care can and should be offered at the end of life
 - What are the signs and symptoms of the dying process
 - What are the physical, emotional and spiritual changes to expect
 - What is an advanced care directive
 - What is appropriate advanced care planning
 - What is a POLST
 - What is palliative care, and how does it work in California
 - What is hospice care, and how does it work in California
 - What is the difference between the two, and what are some common myths about each

- What are some of the common burdens of caregiving
- What community resources are available, for individuals and for caregivers
- **Education on Church teaching about terminal illness and end-of-life issues**
 - What is Catholic Social Teaching
 - What are Catholic Ethical and Religious Directives
 - What does the Church teach about:
 - End-of-life decisions
 - Suicide/Physician-assisted suicide
 - What spiritual and ethical resources does the Church offer
- **Assistance with mortuary and funeral care**
 - What are responsibilities /concerns after a death
- **Bereavement/grief ministry**
 - What are the common stages of grief
 - Where are support groups found
 - What are common effects of grief on children? On parents?

St Joseph,

*Patron of a happy death,
pray for us*

