



Advance Medical Directive
and
Health Care Proxy

In the November 19th issue of the *Diocesan Chronicle*, my article "Living Toward Death" encouraged parishioners to obtain copies of the National Catholic Bioethics Center's *Advance Medical Directive* and *Health Care Proxy* forms. However, I neglected to give the contact information that I should have provided.

To locate and order these forms go to:

- www.ncbcenter.org
- Home page
- "Store" (Top right)
- "Books"
- 2nd row left: "A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions" (\$2.50 per copy).

In addition to the directive and proxy forms, the *Guide* gives an excellent overview of Catholic end-of-life teaching that will help you decide in advance on foreseeable treatment options as your life draws to a close.

It is true that each state's laws are different, so the NCBC forms by themselves may not fully satisfy Oregon's requirements. However, with legal assistance you can customize the NCBC documents by writing in your own specific preferences for end-of-life care to make them compatible with Oregon law or attach them to other legally binding documents in clarification of your personal wishes.

Legality aside, I have found that when uncertain (and disagreeing) family members meet to discuss a loved one's final treatment options, a comprehensive statement of intention and will like the NCBC *Advance Directive* and *Health Care Proxy*, personally annotated and signed, carries a lot of *moral* weight. It makes it easier for decision makers to respect the sick person's wishes and more difficult to disregard them out of hand. I know of no other equally comprehensive and reliable statements of Catholic guidance for these situations.