

Advance Health Care Directives - A Good Resolution

It's the end of March... do you even remember your New Year's resolutions? Me neither. Which is why I typically don't make them in the first place! However, I recall one year, when our kids were really little, we challenged our friends (who also had young kids) to a race to see who could get their wills done first. The losers took the other couple out for supper. We won.

I think we should change the whole resolution idea to New Year's contests — now that's more motivating! Here's a challenge for you (and a friend): first one to do your Advance Health Care Directive wins! I realize you may need a bit of an education on this (especially if you want to win).

Confusion persists when it comes to advance care planning. Generally, advance care planning is an over-arching term that speaks to the reflection, research and conversations that one might undertake to express their wishes should they lose capacity (the ability to make their own decisions) during an emergency, serious illness or at end of life.

When planning, you may want to consider how you define medical interventions and pain relief, family support and spiritual or religious beliefs that might affect your care. In addition, you may want to consider whether you would find aggressive measures burdensome or of little benefit at end of life. Engaging with medical (and sometimes legal) professionals, your priest or pastor, and particularly, family members, is par for the course.

With this groundwork, you are ready to develop a written document — often referred to as a health care directive, advance directive or living will. There is no "official form" for this, and many versions and templates are available.

(However, it should be noted that legislation does vary — and some provinces and territories require you to complete certain legal forms, and forms to identify your proxy.)

A proxy is often appointed on the same form as an advance directive is made. Many people assume that if they have an executor of their estate or power of attorney established,

that this is all the same. You may want that, however, when considering medical decisions, you may choose to appoint a single, a number of single (or successive) proxies who can act independently, or a group of joint proxies who make health-related decisions. In Saskatchewan, The Health Care Directives and Substitute Decision Makers Act (1997) articulates that any person, 18 years of age or older, with capacity, can be appointed as a proxy to make decisions on your behalf. If you don't create a directive, or appoint a proxy, the nearest relative becomes your substitute decision-maker (using a ranked priority list — spouse, adult son or daughter, etc.).

As mentioned, advance directive forms vary, and some legal

requirements vary according to province, but most directives generally focus on your wishes regarding medical interventions (such as CPR, surgery, mechanical life support, amputation, etc.), treatments (pain relief, sedation, nutrition and hydration) and what would be preferred under various medical circumstances. Again, discerning your wishes regarding such interventions can be assisted by conversations with people such as your doctor, lawyer, spiritual leader and family.

As a "death-defying" culture, many of us are either too uncomfortable or too intimidated to work through the

Did You Know?

100% of Canadians will die



8 out of 10 Canadians have never heard of Advance Care Planning



Advance Care Planning is a process of reflecting on and communicating your wishes for end of life care with your family, friends and health team

Only about half of Canadians have had a discussion with a family member or friend about what they would want or not want if they were ill and unable to communicate

That means 50% of their families don't know their loved one's wishes — and may have some very difficult decisions to make



Make your wishes known today

Speak Up www.advancecareplanning.ca

Thank you to our project funders: 

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variety of scenarios that could play out in our technologically advancing world. Many of us, if we do think of our mortality, envision a peaceful death at home surrounded by family members. This, scenario, however, is becoming the exception rather than the norm. Just like your Last Will and Testament provides direction and peace of mind to your family and loved ones to deal with your affairs and assets, an advance care directive provides direction and peace of mind to your family and loved ones as they navigate medical decisions during crisis or complexity when you are unable to make those choices for yourself.

It can't be stated strongly enough that an advance care directive is only referred to once you have lost capacity. Only when you are unable to make medical decisions for yourself will it be consulted. If that happens, be clear that your proxies or substitute decision-makers are there to fulfil your wishes as you have outlined. They do not override your established wishes. They are there to uphold the spirit of your directive — to be your voice should clarity be needed. This written document, that is signed, dated and witnessed is a tool for you. You can amend it at any time — just remember to keep your loved ones and medical team informed of any changes.

On that note, let the contest, ahem, challenge begin! If you are looking for a good date to start, may I suggest **April 16th — National Advance Care Planning Day!**

For more information/resources please contact:

- www.advancecareplanning.ca — a national site providing information, templates and links to provincial-specific resources
- printed booklets (developed by Rev. Mark Miller) of *A Faith-Based Advance Directive For Health Care: A Catholic Approach* and *An Advance Directive for Health Care Based on My Christian Faith* are available for purchase (\$5 plus shipping) from the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan. Contact 306-655-5330 or cath.health@sasktel.net to order.
- www.stpaulshospital.org (Patient and Family Services — Ethics) for a variety of Saskatchewan-based ACD templates, including downloadable pdf versions of the booklets listed above.

*By Sandra Kary, CHAS Executive Director
(Originally published in the Jan 23/13 issue of the Prairie Messenger)*

XXI World Day of the Sick – February 11, 2013

"It is God who governs the world, not we. We offer Him our service only to the extent that we can, and for as long as He grants us the strength."

Pope Benedict the XVI wrote this in "God is Love" which was published a mere eight months after he assumed office as the leader of Catholics around the world in 2005. On February 11, 2013 during World Day of the Sick, a holy day for the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI publicly announced his resignation and cited declining strength and advanced age as rationale for the decision.

World Day of the Sick was instituted by Pope John Paul II in 1992 - just a year after he himself was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. It is observed each year on the liturgical memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes and is a special day of prayer in the Catholic Church for the sick and suffering and those who care for them.



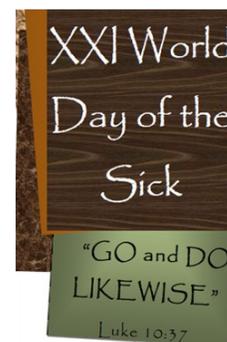
Vincent van Gogh -
The Good Samaritan

When asked why the pope chose Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, as the day to announce his stepping down, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman said, "The pope chose this significant occasion with

the gathered cardinals as the best moment to announce his plans." Father Lombardi said he felt "great admiration" for the pope's "great courage" and "freedom of spirit" and "great understanding of the significance of the moment" in making this decision. The spokesman said it shows the pope is not only fully aware of the great responsibilities involved in leading the universal church, but his hopes that "the ministry of the church be carried out the best way" possible.

As a humble yet Christ-filled man, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has been a great witness of faith. I believe his love for God and the Church is what brought him to step down and serve as a gracious model of truly embracing the essence of World Day of the Sick. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has given up his office as he is getting older and unable to shoulder much further the weight of the leadership of the Universal Church. Let us commend him to our Lady of Lourdes, and remember him always in our prayers through his retirement.

By Sandy Normand, CHAS Mission Education Coordinator



Critical Conversations – Spring 2013 Tour

For the second year running, CHAS is hosting 'Critical Conversations.' In our post-modern, secular, and multi-faith society, we experience the increasing complexity of providing faith-based health care. This conversation-style forum is set up to provide a place to espouse a confident Catholic/Christian perspective that invites a response and call to action, with great respect to other opinions, and with the wisdom to understand the grey areas. We do so by bringing our experts to the podium. Critical Conversations allows for a broader audience to engage - from our member facilities, public facilities, parishes, or community - anyone interested in a topic is invited to attend the one hour educational event.

This year, the question for *Critical Conversations* will be: "Tell me again, why do I work here?" This conversation extends an invitation to discover the deeper meaning of 'our work' and how we respond to that meaning within ourselves. CHAS wishes to provide meaningful conversation right in the moment and in the space of where people do their work and provide the opportunity to recognize, affirm and promote the spirituality dimension of work as integral to the health and well-being of each person. Mission Education Coordinator for CHAS, Sandy Normand will take to the road having *Critical Conversations* come to most Catholic facilities in the months of April and May, 2013. Please check our website - www.chassk.ca - for a listing of dates and times.

**Tell me again...
why do I work here?**

- A. It's been a while since I thought about it.
- B. I fit in with the mission here.
- C. You tell me, then we'll both know.
- D. It pays the bills.
- E. I know I am called to do this kind of work.
- F. I've never asked myself this.

Want to join this critical conversation?

Important Date Change for Award Nominations

Please note that nomination deadlines for both the CHAS Mission award and the Moola Freer Palliative Care Award and Scholarship have been **moved forward to June 30th** (from September 30th). Presentation of these annual awards will still occur at the banquet of the provincial CHAS conference held in the fall.

For complete information regarding the awards, criteria and application, please visit our website at www.chassk.ca or contact the office at 306-655-5330 or cath.health@sasktel.net.

What if God was your boss...

Have you ever had a day in your life when you asked yourself, how do I 'discern' the right job for me? I started working at the age of 16, right after high school graduation. I needed to work, and at the same time study full-time at University. I have been working now for more than half of my life. I have worked in different fields: food industry, catholic education, marketing, administration in a multi-national company, banking & finance and catholic health care in different countries.

Recently, I asked myself, how do I 'discern' the right job for me? I always pray to God in every single decision that I make; it is not that I don't trust my judgment, but it is because I trust God's will. I fully believe God works all things for good, even when we miss His will in individual decisions. I can make a bad decision, but it is up to God to finish my story, His way. As Proverbs 16:9 says, "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps." In an article I read about discernment, the author

mentioned that *you will know when you are doing the right job when you are utilizing all your skills and talents to do your job... when you are sharing your gifts... when you are performing as if God is your boss... and most of all when you are sharing the same*

mission with Christ. We live on earth to do God's mission and to be "men and women for others" (I learned this from the Jesuit School where I used to teach). This advice about discernment has guided me on my path, and I feel blessed to share it with all of you. Being new to CHAS, I always pray that God will finally tell me that, "you are now where you should be my child." I am happy to be able share my talents and skills and really enjoy being part of the CHAS family. Most of all, I pray that through CHAS, I will be "continuing the healing ministry of Jesus."



By Marissa Alarcon, CHAS Executive Assistant

National Gathering

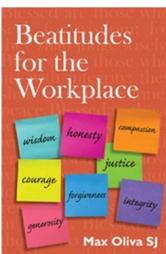
The annual national conference of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada is fast approaching: **May 1-3, 2013 at the Fairmont Palliser Hotel in Calgary.** The impressive line-up of Keynote Speakers include: Dom Laurence, Ronald Hamel, Dianne Doyle, John L. Allen Jr. and Nancy Kehoe. These speakers, as well as those offering workshops, will offer participants a well-rounded look that explores the conference theme: **“Who is my neighbour?”** For more information: www.chac.ca/conference/index_e.php.



Leaders' Library...

Send us your favorite quotes to win!

Most know that CHAS has a library, but did you know that we also have a **Leaders' Library** program for all of our facility members? By gifting each of the 14 facilities with a new title twice a year (winter and summer), we hope to give relevant and engaging reading material to encourage and support those who work and serve in Catholic health.

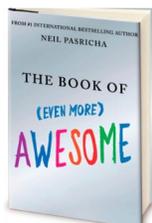


Some recent titles include: **“Beatitudes for the Workplace”** by Max Oliva, S.J. and **“The Book of (Even More) Awesome”** by Neil Pasricha.

Whether you work in one of our member facilities, or are a personal or associate member, you have a chance to win a **new Kindle e-reader!** Send us

your favourite quote (from the titles listed above), and tell us what you liked best about the book.

For an additional ballot, include a suggestion of a book that CHAS could provide for the next Leaders' Library selection.



Deadline to respond is June 14, 2013. Simply email cath.health@sasktel.net using the subject line: Leader Library Favourite Quote. The Kindle will be awarded by June 21 - just in time to take with you on summer

holidays! (The winner, and quotes/comments will be featured in the next newsletter.)

2013 CHAS Convention

This year marks a very special time for CHAS as it celebrates its **70th Anniversary!** You are invited to “save the date” for **October 27-29, 2013** to attend the convention at the **Sheraton Inn, Saskatoon.**

The theme – **Gamechangers: how people of faith change the landscape of healthcare** – will provide opportunities to celebrate our legacy, to give attention to areas of ministry that CHAS has nurtured over the years, and to be invited to consider our own journey of formation that fosters a more personal understanding of our commitment to Catholic health care.



Our first keynote, **John L. Allen Jr.** will address the broad themes in the global Catholic Church and how that will affect our health care ministry. Our second keynote, **Bill Brinkman** will offer his expertise using the experience from Ascension Health in the United States to share stories and unfold the charism of mission formation as integral in Catholic health ministry. Finally, CHAS will bring an inspirational session to encourage our participants and leave them with a hope-filled message.

Registration information and full conference details will be available in June. For further information, please contact the CHAS office at (306) 655-5330 or email cath.health@sasktel.net.

Take Note

- CHAS wishes to extend best wishes to **Carol Unchulenko** on her retirement from St. Anthony's Hospital, Esterhazy, and extends a warm welcome to **Daniela Fiske** who is taking on this role.
- Welcome also to **Edgar Neudorf**, Director of Spiritual Care/Mission Effectiveness of Providence Place in Moose Jaw since February 2013.
- **Advanced Care Planning Day is April 16th.** Check out the website: www.advancedcareplanning.ca/
- Hats off to all our volunteers! April 21-27 is recognized as the 71st **National Volunteer Appreciation Week** - thank you for your dedicated service throughout the entire year! <http://volunteer.ca/content/about-national-volunteer-week>.
- Mark your calendars for **National Hospice Palliative Care Awareness Week** from May 5-11, 2013. www.chpca.net/news-and-events/national-hospice-palliative-care-week.aspx
- June 13-14th: **2013 Saskatchewan Hospice Palliative Care Provincial Conference, Out of the shadows ~ Extending the boundaries of Hospice Palliative Care**, Delta Hotel, Regina. Please visit www.saskpalliativecare.org.