

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am grateful for the work of the Catholic Community Foundation in developing this Catholic End of Life Planning Guide.

As Catholic Christians, we have faith that in Christ Jesus, “the hope of blessed resurrection has dawned” and “that those saddened by the certainty of dying might be consoled by the promise of immortality to come.” We find these words in the “Preface I for the Dead” that is often used at Funeral Masses.


We know that when we die our souls are entrusted into the hands of God. But, we also know that there are many practical realities that those we will leave behind and who will mourn our death will be responsible for. Desiring to make that burden, especially when it is faced at a time when others may feel overwhelmed by grief, as light as possible, many people desire to prudently plan for the issues that surround death to both ensure that their own wishes will be carried out and that their loved ones won’t be faced with difficult and even painful decisions that have to be made.

In some cases, difficult decisions must be faced prior to a loved one’s death when the person is no longer able to make informed decisions for him or herself. Here too, prudent planning and proper documentation can ease the burden of others.

And, while through our Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Cemeteries and Funeral Homes we have trained, compassionate, professionals that can assist and support those who are responsible for the planning of a person’s Funeral Rites, it is extremely helpful when a person has engaged in the prearrangement of their funeral planning.

In this resource, there is guidance to assist a person and their family to reflect on and plan for the various facets of the reality that we all will face “when this earthly dwelling turns to dust” and “an eternal dwelling is made ready for (us) in heaven.” It is my hope that this Planning Guide will be helpful to you now and that its use will, at a time we do not know, be a source of relief for our loved ones when we pass from this life into the promise of life eternal in heaven.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



+ Thomas J. Olmsted
Bishop of Phoenix



Photo courtesy Catholic Sun