

November Thoughts/Suggestions

Advance Medical Directives.

Do you have on file at your doctor's office an Advanced Medical Directive/Durable Power of Attorney For Health Care? If not, November is a very good time to pick up a form from your medical provider and to sit down with family members or another person to whom you would want to entrust medical decisions in the event you are incapable of doing so. It is surprising how many people "put this off" until it is too late and family members or another person are left to make agonizing medical decisions without any direction as to what someone may have wanted.

On a separate form with today's Bulletin is an addenda that can be attached to your Advanced Directive document that addresses the issues of artificial nutrition (feeding tube) and hydration as well as the state of an irreversible coma in accord with Catholic moral teaching. Also included on this addenda is the expressed desire requesting the Sacraments of Anointing of the Sick, Penance, Viaticum (the last reception of Holy Communion) and the related Rites and Prayers for the Dying and Prayers After Death. Many times in the emotionally charged atmosphere of a terminal illness nearing its end these aids of the church are not requested either because those making decisions simply are too stressed to think about them or are no longer themselves practicing Catholics or are members of another denomination which does not offer these aids.

Deacons Alan Christy and Ron Smith along with Jarrett Wendt recently completed training offered by the archdiocese to assist anyone in drafting this document and being updated on end of life care. Of course, I am also available to assist you with questions or concerns.

Wills.

Do you have a will? Like the Advanced Medical Directives a will relieves those left behind following your death with instructions as to the disposal of your personal property and other requests you may have. Have you included the parish in your will? A bequest from your estate is a final act of stewardship in thanksgiving for the spiritual gifts you have received from God through the parish. **You are welcome to contact the parish office and we can direct you to someone who can assist you in setting up a special bequest in your will as a memorial to St. Cecilia Church.**

Funeral Planning.

Along with the Advance Directives, having a will, many people today are choosing to pre-plan their funeral liturgy. At the time of death the emotional strain along with the myriad of other details that need to be attended to can be overwhelming and planning the funeral liturgy can become another level of stress. **Members of our parish Bereavement Committee are available to assist you in pre-planning your funeral liturgy. Just call the parish office.** Some individuals choose to have the parish retain a copy of their plans in our files which we are happy to do so that when needed they are readily accessible to family members or whomever will be responsible for arranging for the funeral.

- Fr. Jim

(AMES SEMINARIAN CHRIS STOKER SHARES HIS FAITH JOURNEY. SEE REVERSE SIDE)

Christopher M. Stoker

Why I am discerning God's Call

My name is Christopher Stoker. I am currently a student at Loras College and a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Dubuque. I was born in El Paso Texas, but have lived in Ames, Iowa since I was five years old. Ames is home to me. I have two older siblings and my wonderful parents are Robert and Roxann Stoker. I grew up in Ames playing soccer, hanging out with friends, and eating amazing dinners that my mom cooked. I was involved in many different sports and extracurricular activities at Ames High School, and loved being part of the Ames Community.



My faith journey is an interesting one. My family was not big into our Catholic faith and we did not attend mass very often. One day my parents sent me to confirmation classes at St. Cecilia, and not even knowing what confirmation was, I fell in love. I do not know what it was, but through confirmation I fell in love with The Catholic Church, with scripture, with the saints, with the St. Cecilia community and with the Eucharist. I became very involved with youth ministry at St. Cecilia, but the key turning point in my life was daily Mass. I started going to daily Mass every day of the summer after my sophomore year of high school. It was in this time of spiritual growth through daily Mass that God first called me to think about priesthood. I explain this call as an overflowing of joy within my heart that I could not contain within myself; God was calling me to share that joy through religious life.

I put the call of priesthood on the backburner and continued as a normal student. I graduated from Ames High and went to Loras College. In this time I suffered through many personal struggles and greatly struggled with my relationship with God. I realized now that I needed this time of suffering growth and healing so I could mature in my faith and deepen my relationship with God. Then in the summer, after my sophomore year at Loras, I spent time with my extended family in Panama, learning Spanish, and volunteering. In this summer I had a lot of free time to go to daily Mass again, pray the rosary, do some spiritual reading, and simply sit in silence. It was in this time of spiritual growth that God called me deep in my heart saying "join seminary now." Trusting in this call, I followed God's will and have been in the seminary since December of 2016.

I have loved being in the seminary and it has been a beautiful time of personal growth. I am no more special than anyone else because of this call. We all have a vocation – a calling in life. One of the greatest problems facing us today is that our lives are filled with so much noise that we are not able to hear God's voice. God is silence, He comes to us in the ordinary. Whether you are a young person thinking about religious life, a married spouse, or a grown adult, my greatest advice is to cultivate silence into your daily routine. St. Cecilia already has the greatest tool to foster this silence, and it is what helped me in my vocation – perpetual adoration. When we can recognize God's voice in our own life we can find our calling, but more, we will begin to recognize that we are loved greater than we can dare to imagine. It is this Love that gives me the strength to live out my calling and I pray it is what drives you in your own callings. I am forever grateful for the St. Cecilia community, I would not be where I am at without St. Cecilia, and the parish is in my daily prayers.

If you'd like to send Chris and his fellow seminarians a note of encouragement, he'd welcome that and he asks that you pray for all the men of the diocese in discernment.

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**Advance Directive and Durable Health Care Power Of Attorney
General Statement
Addenda**

1. Artificial Nutrition and Hydration Statements in Accord with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church (April, 2010)

General Statement:

It is my desire that medically assisted nutrition and hydration not be administered if this procedure cannot reasonably be expected to prolong my life or if it would be excessively burdensome for me or cause me significant physical discomfort.

Irreversible Coma

If I should be in a state of permanent unconsciousness from which, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, there can be no recovery, it is my desire that medically assisted nutrition and hydration not be administered if this procedure cannot reasonably be expected to prolong my life or if it would be excessively burdensome for me or cause me significant physical discomfort.

2. Sacraments of Anointing of the Sick, Penance, Viaticum and related Rites of Prayers for the Dying and Prayers after Death.

It is my desire that, if it is reasonably possible, a priest be summoned to administer to me the church's last sacraments and/or at the immanent approach of death, a priest, deacon or other pastoral minister be summoned to offer the Prayers for the Dying and/or Prayers after Death as given in the official ritual books of the church.

Name _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

Saint Cecilia Parish



**CHRISTMAS
MARKET**

Saint Cecilia Social Hall

Saturday, November 18

4:30PM - 6:30PM

Sunday, November 19

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Featuring:

Ames Alternative Gift Market - Gift donations to non-profits

Adam Finnegan Recovery - Towels, hot pads, picture frames, cookbooks

Catholic Daughters - Baked goods, jams, religious items, crafts

Days For Girls - Homemade fudge, sewn items

Honduran Coffee Ministry - Coffee

ISU Students for Life - Rosaries, medals, quiche, fritata, crab rangoon

Knights of Columbus - Christmas cards

Nicaragua Mission Group - Poinsettia plants

Rosary Makers - Rosaries

Saint Cecilia Giving Tree - Tags for the Giving Tree

Saint Cecilia Social Justice - Recycled Christmas decorations

Saint Cecilia Social Justice - Wool mittens

Pancake Breakfast served by the Saint Cecilia 5th Grade Class following the Sunday Masses (free will donations to support their parent-sponsored end-of-year class trip).

This is a wonderful opportunity to buy Christmas gifts for family and friends and support great causes!