



# NATIONAL HEALTHCARE DECISION DAY

## APRIL 16, 2013

*Imagine...*

You are in a hospital and cannot speak for yourself

*Imagine...*

Your mother is in a coma and you do not know her wishes

***We all hope to communicate to the very end, but it does not always happen that way.***

**90% OF AMERICANS HAVE HEARD OF A LIVING WILL**

**70% OF AMERICANS HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THEIR END-OF-LIFE PREFERENCES**

**...ONLY 29% OF AMERICANS HAVE A LIVING WILL**



Without a plan, your healthcare team won't know your wishes and your family may not know what to do.

***Advance Care Planning is about decisions - think about what is right for you...***

- ***What medical treatments would you want or not want if you were unlikely to survive?***
  - ***What is meaningful to you?***

***Spiritual Support? Having Family Nearby? Being at Home?***

Talk to your healthcare team. Talk to your Family. Write it down.

For more information about preparing advance directive documents and filing them with the Arizona State Registry, call 1-877-458-5842 or go to [http://www.azsos.gov/adv\\_dir/guide.pdf](http://www.azsos.gov/adv_dir/guide.pdf).

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CHAPLAIN

### Goodbye: A Blessing of Love

Hello. I love you. Goodbye. This is the stuff of life. While hello and I love you can sometimes be hard to say, it often seems nothing is as hard as goodbye.

Faith traditions call us to wrestle with the meanings of goodbye. They do this in part by telling goodbye stories. My own faith heritage, for example, tells of Abraham and Sarah who say goodbye to their home and find a life sojourning with God. Ruth says goodbye to her people and joins the family of Naomi. Mary says goodbye to her crucified son as she is given a new son. Jesus dies, yet is raised from the dead.

Other faith traditions have their stories about goodbye too, each with their own meaning and purpose.

In her book, *Praying Our Goodbyes*, Joyce Rupp says that the word goodbye was originally God-be-with-ye or Go-with-God: “It was a recognition that God was a significant part of the going.” But as Rupp also points out, goodbye was a blessing of love, given by one and received by another.

Today, this blessing of love is sometimes administered by an appointed individual using oil, water, prayers, vapors, or a familiar ritual. But a blessing of love is also given by family members or friends through the mere act of telling their dying loved one that it’s okay to let go. The blessing of love is given when a dying person says I love you to her or his child or when a hospice patient offers parting wisdom to a hospice caregiver. (Persons at the end of life have blessings to give as well as to receive.)

Some of us have said goodbye before, perhaps more times than we wanted. Unfortunately, not all of our goodbyes have been good, much less loving. Yet it seems that every goodbye is as much new and different as it is old and too familiar.

The story of gain and loss, joy and sorrow, life and death, union and separation, is and will be the story of our lives no matter who we are or where we are on life’s journey.

And so I humbly offer this blessing of love to you, no matter who or where you are:

Whenever it’s time for your goodbyes, may all your goodbyes indeed be good.

Be well,  
Greg Griffey, Chaplain



## NEWS YOU CAN USE

Enjoying spring? The warming of the weather this time of the year brings many good things...buds begin to appear on the endless varieties of cactus, promising remarkably clear colors amongst the thorns. Spring training and March Madness take up time that would probably be better used elsewhere, but it is, after all, spring!

Unfortunately, spring also brings a certain huskiness in the voice, a nagging cough, and the sneezing and runny nose that screams, "Allergies!" It seems that every object that is not actually dead is gaily broadcasting pollen into the air that we are trying vainly to breathe. I have had allergies for as long as I can remember. Dust, mold, pet dander, household dust mites, and the aforementioned pollen can set me off to the point that I feel truly abused. However, for many years, my breathing problems were made worse, much worse, by lung disease.

COPD, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease includes, among other diseases, emphysema and chronic bronchitis. COPD encompasses disorders that gradually damage or destroy lung tissue. COPD is normally found in the older segment of our population. There is no cure for COPD, and it is progressive, ever so slowly destroying lung function, the ability to breathe. Inhaled medications can help to relieve symptoms of chronic bronchitis. The only medication available for those with emphysema is supplemental oxygen.

I was diagnosed at age 55. My COPD had been gradually progressing for many years before the official diagnosis, but I took the traditional route of blaming my increasing shortness of breath on growing older, or being out of shape. I was on and off of supplemental oxygen for many years, trying to keep the saturation of oxygen in my blood at acceptable levels. A lack of proper oxygen levels, whether from lung disease or from the swelling and stuffiness of allergies, brings with it a restriction in our ability to function. We feel rotten, we commiserate with each other, and we seek help in the form of prescribed or over the counter medications, and in home remedies.

Allergies can be treated with varying degrees of success, but they generally simply go away with the end of pollen season. The same cannot be said for COPD. The only cure, if you want to call it that, is a lung transplant. Thanks to a very generous young man who signed a donor card, I was blessed with a double lung transplant in December of 2011. It literally saved my life!

Sadly, I still have allergies.....

Jim Nelson



***“It is spring again.  
The earth is like a child  
that knows poems by  
heart.”***

***-Ranier Maria Rilke***

Jim Nelson and his wife Mary are active with the American Lung Association in Arizona, with the national COPD Foundation, and with EFFORTS, an international online support group for lung disease. They have gone through the stages of a chronic, progressive disease together, and are now devoting their volunteer time to helping others, both patients and caregivers, to live well with compromised lungs. Mary is also a Carondelet Hospice Volunteer.

To learn more about  
becoming a Carondelet  
Hospice Volunteer call  
520-205-7567



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## HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

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### **The Gift that "Gives Back"**

Gifts are used to advance the mission of Carondelet Health Network, to help purchase equipment, enhance facilities, expand services, fund staff education and to reach out to meet the health care needs of our communities throughout Southern Arizona.

**You can also give by visiting the Carondelet Foundation Website at:**  
**[www.carondelet.org/foundation](http://www.carondelet.org/foundation)**

**Yes**, I would like to make a gift to Carondelet Foundation to support the mission of Carondelet Hospice and Palliative Care.

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