



CHABC Newsletter

CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

9387 Holmes Street, Burnaby, BC V3N 4C3

Telephone: (604) 524-3427; Fax: (604) 524-3428; Website: www.chabc.bc.ca

April 2007



Cecilia Ferreira

That Love Which Gives Life to Others...

Fourteen year-old Cecilia Ferreira is a student at *Saint Michael's Elementary School* in

Burnaby, looking forward to grade eight at *Saint Thomas More Secondary School* in the fall. When she graduates, she wants to pursue a career as a singer or perhaps a medical doctor. She is also eagerly anticipating a trip to Bangkok, Thailand in August to participate in the World Transplant Games. She plans to enter the 100m dash and the swimming competition. Last year at this time, Cecilia's future was not so certain, as she patiently waited for a heart transplant.

On July 31st last year, Cecilia underwent successful surgery to receive that new heart at *Sick Children's Hospital* in Toronto. Hers is the story of an amazing young lady and of the power of faith and prayer, according to *Saint Michael's* Principal, Caterina Kennedy.

Cecilia and her family have known since she was born that her deteriorating heart condition would

necessitate a transplant at some point. After forty-seven surgeries and countless other medical procedures, she and her Mom travelled to Toronto last June and prepared to wait for up to two years for a donor heart. It was only a few weeks later that they were called to the hospital for the life-saving surgery. Her recovery was so swift and successful, that she and her Mom were back home in Burnaby by the end of October.

Cecilia is one of the fortunate ones... *The BC Transplant Society* reports that there was a record number of transplant surgeries in 2006 - - 223 of them in BC. But the current waitlist for transplants is

328, with forty-two procedures having been done so far in 2007 (as of mid-March). *BCTS* statistics indicate that 85% of British Columbians say they support organ donation and intend to register their decision. Sadly, just 14% of them have done so.

Cecilia has several words of encouragement to those who have yet to register their wish to become an organ donor. She says that she has a new lease on life and that, while losing a loved one is sad, families will be comforted in their loss knowing that they have made a decision to save someone else's life.

continued on page 3...



Pastoral Care Visits while in Hospital

We remind the faithful that privacy legislation in BC prevents the free release of information regarding hospital admissions. If you or someone you love are admitted to a hospital or another care facility and if you want a visit from your pastor or a Eucharistic Minister from your parish, you must call your parish office to make this request of your pastor. Pastors may wish to include a note about this in an upcoming Sunday bulletin. ■

Bill 32 - - Adult Guardianship and Personal Planning Statutes Amendment Act (2006)

While Bill 32 died on the order paper when the House rose last April, it is expected to be re-introduced. *CHABC's* submission to the office of the Attorney General last December expressed some significant concerns that were satisfactorily addressed in a meeting with officials from the Ministry of Health and from the Attorney General in February.

Individuals who wish to have a legally recognized written advance care directive may be assured that these points have now been addressed in the revised legislation:

- Written advance care directives will not be mandatory. They

will be available to those who wish to have them.

- Patients and residents will not be required to sign such a document upon admission to a care facility.
- Programs are being developed in each of BC's health authorities to ensure that individuals will know what care and treatment options are available to them.
- There will not be one form that will be prescribed for purposes of developing a written directive - - individuals will be able to develop their own document provided that it include specific

components that will be set out in the legislation.

- Individuals will be able to state the care and treatment they wish to receive as well as to indicate the care and treatment that they do not wish to receive.
- The current law in BC allows a person to have a Representation Agreement under which another individual is appointed to speak for him or her in the event that he or she cannot communicate. Under the legislation that has been proposed, an individual may have either a Representation Agreement or a written advance care directive or both.



CHABC Welcomes New Members ...

The *Catholic Health Association of BC's* membership is comprised of individuals, families, parishes and groups such as CWL and Knights of Columbus councils, as well as Catholic hospitals and other care facilities in BC. The benefits of membership include direct mailing of our newsletter and regular mailouts regarding health care. Members have access to our library of books, tapes and videos and are kept up to date on current health care issues. Membership supports our work to protect and promote Catholic health care in BC and enables *CHABC* to communicate, share and work with other health care groups in BC and Canada. We count on personal and professional contributions to enable us to carry out our mission. An individual membership costs \$45 for a year. Family membership is \$65 and associate membership (for groups and organizations) is \$160. If you wish to enquire about membership, call the *CHABC* office at 604-524-3427 or send an email to smhouse@shawlink.ca. ■

CHABC has recently been invited by the *Centre on Aging* at the *University of Victoria* to partner with them on a five-year research project on the use of advance care directives in long term care.

CHABC believes that there is a way of developing an advance care plan that respects our faith and the dignity and sanctity of life. The overwhelming majority of those we have surveyed in the Catholic community on this subject have expressed the wish to have this option available to them. We will continue to monitor the progress of the legislation, giving input to the provincial legislators as it is needed. We will also continue to consult on this matter with the BC and Yukon Bishops. ■

Transition Workshop



In February, CHABC's Pastoral Care Committee sponsored a half-day workshop facilitated by Jo-Ann Tait on *"Easing the Transition from Community to Care Facility"*. Thirty-five individuals gathered at Saint Michael's in Burnaby to discuss how care givers can assist those faced with such a move. ■

Resources for Members

CHABC's Pastoral Care Committee has developed various print resources that are available for use in health care facilities and parishes. Please call our office if you would like to have any of these publications:

- *"Pray for Me ... Now and at the Hour of My Death"* - - a book of Catholic prayers that can be read at the bedside of someone who is dying
- *"How to Pray the Rosary"* - - a laminated page that has been updated to include the Luminous Mysteries
- *"What You Need to Know about a Catholic Funeral and Burial"* - - a brochure that summarizes the Guidelines that were developed in 1999 by the Bishops of BC and Yukon
- *"A Simple Guide for Confession"* - - a brochure intended for those who require assistance in preparing to receive the gift of God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We also have a supply of wallet cards that identify individuals as Catholic to medical personnel in the event of a serious illness or accident.

There is no cost for these resources. We are able to produce them because of the annual membership dues we receive and the generous tax-deductible donations of individuals and organizations throughout the province who support our work. ■



(continued from pg 1)
That Love Which Gives Life to Others...

She added with a smile that those who benefit from such an act of generosity and kindness "appreciate it very much!"

The faithful are reminded that the Church is fully supportive of organ and tissue donation. The late Pope John Paul II referred to the gift of organ donation as "a great gift of love". Before he became Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger revealed to the press that he was a registered donor.

One of the questions that often arises when discussing organ donation is that of "brain death". This term refers to the medical judgement that a person is dead by using "neurological criteria". It is important to note that such neurological criteria are compatible with Catholic teaching. For more information on this matter, visit the website of the *National Catholic Bioethics Center* (Philadelphia) at www.ncbcenter.org/FAQ_BrainDeath.asp or call the *Catholic Health Association of BC* office at 604-524-3427 and we will send you a copy of the question and answer document from *NCBC* on this issue.

To register as an organ donor, you may visit www.transplant.bc.ca or telephone 1-800-663-6189. The CHABC office also has a supply of registration forms and these are available by calling 604-524-3427. ■

Advance Notice: Annual Conference in September

Mark your calendars!

CHABC's annual conference will be held:

Thursday, September 20th at the
Executive Plaza Hotel in Coquitlam.

Our speakers will be Bishop James Wingle of the Saint Catharines, Ontario Diocese who is the former representative of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to the *Catholic Health Association of Canada*. He will speak about the role of the Church in health care, the responsibility that the faithful have to care for the sick and the vulnerable, and how parishes can be involved in this work. Sister Carol Keehan, President of the *Catholic Health Association of the United States*, will speak about the differences in the health care systems in our two countries, the number of individuals who are without health care insurance in the United States and the work that her organization undertakes to fulfill the mission of ensuring that there is a just and fair provision of care for all who need it.

Further details about the conference will be available in the coming months. ■



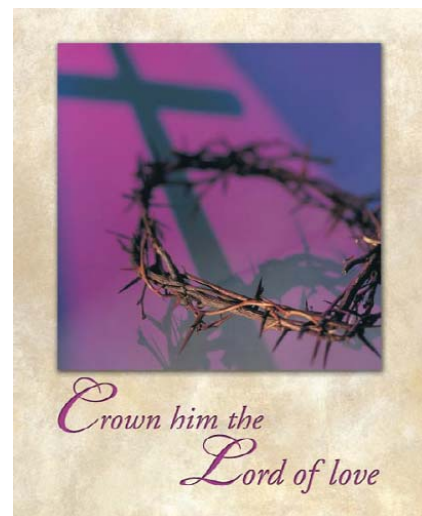
Conversation on Health

The Conversation on Health is a provincial initiative of Premier Gordon Campbell that is about listening to and facilitating discussion among BC residents to gather their ideas on health and health care.

CHABC's Executive Director, Susan House, who is also the Executive Director for the *Denominational Health Association*, was invited to participate in this discussion at the session held in Burnaby at the end of March. On behalf of both Associations, a submission was made that addressed the vital

nature of spiritual, pastoral and religious care as a part of health care.

The submission outlined the state of spiritual, pastoral and religious care in BC's regional health authorities and the emphasis that faith-based organizations put on such care. The Premier and the Health Minister were encouraged to urge all of BC's health authorities to recognize the vital nature of caring for the spirit and to ensure that funding is available and that the service is accessible to all who wish to receive it. ■



The CHABC board of directors wishes everyone a Holy and Blessed Easter. "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad!" ■