



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 20, 2006

For More Information:
Mike Farmer
(913) 722-6633

6301 ANTIOCH • MERRIAM, KANSAS 66202 • PHONE/FAX 913-722-6633 • WWW.KSCATHCONF.ORG

Catholic Bishops of Kansas Issue *Catholic Declaration on Life & Natural Death*

(Merriam, KS) – Today the four bishops of the Catholic Dioceses of Kansas released a letter to parishioners throughout the state announcing the publication of a new document to assist Catholics in making end of life decisions. The ***Catholic Declaration of Life & Natural Death*** is a revised and updated replacement for a form developed by the bishops in the 1980's.

The document released today through the office of the Kansas Catholic Conference “is designed to reaffirm the teaching of the Church on the dignity of human life, and to help others both to know and, in the case of the other’s incapacity, to follow another person’s wishes about health care decisions.” It is intended to be an instrument for communicating a person’s desires and directions regarding treatment or care in the event of irreversible and terminal illness.

The letter with accompanying documents was distributed to pastors for their use in informing parishioners about the ***Catholic Declaration of Life & Natural Death*** either by letter, bulletin inserts, public announcements, or from the pulpit. It is also the desire of the bishops that the document be available to diocesan office personnel, Catholic attorneys, Catholic Charities, and to Catholic health care providers.

In announcing this new publication the bishops further clarify the Church’s teaching on life and death. “While we accept our obligation to care for the gift of life that God has entrusted to us and never to do anything by act or omission to end our life or the life of another, at the same time *we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.* We need not fear our death, for it is our birth to Eternal Life. We can therefore face death with dignity and grace, ever thankful to the God who gives us life.”

Copies of the bishops’ letter and the ***Catholic Declaration of Life & Natural Death*** can be downloaded from the Kansas Catholic Conference website at: www.kscathconf.org.

XXX

MOST REVEREND RONALD M. GILMORE, S.T.L., D.D.
DIOCESE OF DOGGE CITY

MOST REVEREND JOSEPH F. NAUMANN, D.D.
Chairman of Board
ARCHDIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS

MOST REVEREND PAUL S. COAKLEY, S.T.L., D.D.
DIOCESE OF SALINA

MOST REVEREND MICHAEL O. JACKELS, S.T.D.
DIOCESE OF WICHITA

MICHAEL P. FARMER
Executive Director

MOST REVEREND JAMES P. KELEHER, S.T.D.
ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS - ARCHDIOCESE OF K.C. IN KS

MOST REVEREND EUGENE J. GERBER, S.T.L., D.D.
BISHOP EMERITUS - DIOCESE OF WICHITA

MOST REVEREND GEORGE K. FITZSIMONS, D.D.
BISHOP EMERITUS - DIOCESE OF SALINA

MOST REVEREND MARION F. FORST, D.D.
RETIRED