



DIOCESE OF PORTLAND OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

December 19, 2025

Dear Monsignors, Fathers, Deacons, consecrated men and woman, and the members of the faithful of the Diocese of Portland,

Our society is facing ever-increasing challenges of secularization and modernization. Technologies are rapidly advancing, and with them, ethical choices are not always clear. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has approved the Seventh Edition of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* (ERDs). The ERDs provide crucial guidance in dealing with the modern challenges in healthcare, including the issues of reproductive health, end-of-life care, and the growing field of medical technologies. They not only provide assistance to the lay faithful, but also to the healthcare providers. They ensure the rights of conscientious objections and provide guidelines for care that is consistent with our Catholic values.

The ERDs reflect and enshrine our Catholic teachings in order to renew our commitment to serve the marginalized and vulnerable. The ERDs are designed to make sure that the whole person is addressed, not just physical care, but the social, psychological and spiritual dimensions as well. As our society changes and the ethical questions become more complex, the ERDs provide moral clarity to assist healthcare providers and institutions in aligning decision-making with our Catholic teachings and values.

It is for these reasons that I am promulgating the Seventh Edition of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* as particular law for the Diocese of Portland. These norms are effective immediately.

With an assurance of my prayers, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,

Most Reverend James T. Ruggieri
Bishop of Portland