The ESSENTIALS OF CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE

A reflection on Catholic Health Care in today’s world.
The purpose of this presentation is to clearly articulate the “essentials” that make Catholic health care what it is.
Most of the Catholic health care organizations across Canada were established by women religious in the Catholic/Christian tradition.
In recent years, women religious have transferred the ownership of these organizations to lay persons.
This reality is reflective of Catholic health care today, as we continue to

*live out the Christian values that make our work even more meaningful in today’s society.*
Many of the orphanages, homes for the sick and the elderly, hospices and other centers for health and social services were founded by women religious such as the Grey Nuns and the Sisters of St. Benedict.
Their ultimate goal was to serve humankind by **responding to the unmet needs** in our society and, through their ministry of compassion, to “**manifest God’s love**” to the people they served.
Catholic Health Care

Respect for the dignity of every person

Human life is sacred and inviolable in all of its phases and in every situation (CHAC Health Ethics Guide)

An openness to and a desire to be inclusive of all cultures and all faith groups and beliefs.

Catholic health care is committed to respond to the needs of the entire community
Catholic Health Care
is a service to all people

“Catholic health care should distinguish itself by service to and advocacy for those people whose social conditions puts them at the margins of our society and makes them particularly vulnerable to discrimination”  (Ketteler, 2007)
A ministry of care and compassion

The main focus of the Catholic/Christian Church is to reflect God’s love by building “a more humane and compassionate world”
The Gospel values of love and compassion towards all people continue to guide our actions and decisions in Catholic Health Care.
We bring comfort to people by giving them an experience that will strengthen their confidence in life.

We give those who are ill or suffering, a reason to hope founded on our belief in the presence of God in the human experience.
A holistic approach to health care

We form a community of healing and compassion and the care we offer is not limited to the treatment of a disease or bodily ailment but it embraces the physical, psycho-social and spiritual dimensions of the human person.
We actively support and attend to the spiritual growth of those in our care.

This is done without imposing specific religious beliefs upon either the care providers or those receiving our services.
Our organizations have spiritual care services with qualified staff and when possible a suitable space for prayer or reflection.
Catholic Health Care

Working with others to improve the health of our communities

Working in partnership with others:

- public and private (profit and non-profit sectors)
- Manitoba Health and the RHA’s
- the voluntary and religious sectors
- other religions
- people of good will

to serve community needs and to deliver care and services
Our vision of a more just and humane society and our concern for health requires that we advocate for the attainment of social and living conditions that allow people to grow towards full physical, psychological, mental and spiritual maturity.
Advocacy for those in need
A commitment to social justice
We share a responsibility to respect, protect and care for all creation and for ourselves.

We demonstrate stewardship over all material by refraining from abuse or the squandering of nature’s resources.
We act **creatively** with the intention of contributing to God’s world with humility and kindness.
Catholic Health Care

Sound ethical reflection that leads to informed decision-making

The ETHICAL guidelines of the Church as presented in the CHAC Health Ethics Guide help us to define the manner by which our decisions are made in respect of the Christian values that sustain our work in health care.
The Catholic Health Network Ethics Services located at St. Boniface General Hospital offers assistance and consultation on ethical issues.
Catholic Health Care in Manitoba continues the work started by women religious by:

« ... being present to people at the critical points where life can be fostered, where people are born and die, where they learn and are taught, where they are cured and healed, and where they are assisted when in trouble. »

(CHAC Health Ethics Guide)