



CATHOLIC IDENTITY &
**SPONSORED
ORGANIZATIONS**



St. Joseph's
Health Care Society



Distinctive Elements of Catholic Organizations

The Code of Canon Law and the Health Ethics Guide articulate distinctive elements that are necessary for any health care organization to be considered a ministry of the Church. These core commitments and characteristics illustrate, in essence, the organization's Catholic identity.

Communion with the Church

To be recognized as a Catholic organization a health care provider must be in a formal relationship with an authorized Catholic sponsor.

Have a Spiritual Purpose

This means that the health care organization participates in the mission of the Church through enacting the spiritual and corporeal works of mercy.* This work is designated as a ministry because it is motivated by the Gospel and is part of an enduring faith tradition.

Provide Care to People Without Regard or Judgment about a Person's Race, Faith or Circumstances

In adhering to values such as compassion, equality and justice, the organization carries forward the Gospel accounts of healing, accompaniment, and concern for marginalized individuals and in turn demonstrates its commitment to the inherent dignity of every human person. The Health Ethics Guide is used as a foundational resource for both clinical and organization ethical discernment.



Have a Strategic Priority of Responding to Unmet Needs

Ministries of the Church must have a genuinely useful purpose. Catholic health care providers are called to regularly assess the needs of the communities they serve and develop mission-driven responses. Moreover, supporting care for the most vulnerable in society is central to the healing ministry of Jesus.

Show Evidence of Providing High-Quality, Sustainable Services

A commitment to quality and excellence is central to any work carried out in the name of the Church. This motivates Catholic health care providers to be on the leading edge of service and care. Moreover, great care is given to creating the systems and structures necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of services.

Be Financially Stable

This follows from the commitment to ensuring sustainable services and speaks to the need for health care organizations to be good stewards of their resources. Organizations must have the financial assets necessary to provide high-quality care and services, hire qualified personnel and make any necessary capital investments.

*The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are actions that extend God's compassion and mercy to those in need. This mission of Catholic health care is a wonderful example of the works of mercy in action.

The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts that assist our neighbours with their physical needs, including:

feed the hungry
shelter the homeless
clothe the naked
visit the sick and imprisoned
bury the dead
give alms to the poor

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion toward our neighbors that attend to their emotional and spiritual needs, including:

instruct
advise
console
comfort
forgive
bear wrongs patiently

[adapted from: https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/catholic-basics/catholic-beliefs-and-practices/corporal-and-spiritual-works-of-mercy/](https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/catholic-basics/catholic-beliefs-and-practices/corporal-and-spiritual-works-of-mercy/)