



We are
one people

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We, the Sponsors of Providence St. Joseph Health, are called to reflect deeply on how our Gospel-rooted faith shapes our identity and influences our ministry, our communities, and our society.

Our Pastoral Reflection leads us to call attention to the beliefs that have grounded our response to the on-going call of the Gospel to meet the needs of the times and places in which we live.

Today, there are members of our communities in which we serve who are more adversely impacted by divisions: those who are marginalized because they are poor and vulnerable, suffering from racism, struggling with health inequities or mental illness, or are experiencing discrimination on the basis of sex or gender identity.

We invite all associated with us to a renewed reflection on the beliefs stated below, which are framed in the context of our Mission and Values. These beliefs continue to be foundational to discernment, collaboration, decision-making, formation, and the direction of Providence St. Joseph Health.

The Mission

As expressions of God's healing love, witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, we are steadfast in serving all, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

This commitment frames the essence of who we are, our faith and heritage, our relationships, our reading of the signs of the times and ultimately how we gauge our fidelity to our place in God's plan.

Our Mission calls us to examine our consciences relative to our role in continuing to heal lovingly as Jesus did. In that spirit, we are committed to addressing the unique challenges presented in attending to the concerns of people who identify as lesbian, gay, or transgender.

As we do with all our "dear neighbors," we emphasize a particular focus on our core values of Compassion, Dignity, Justice, Excellence, and Integrity.



COMPASSION

Jesus taught and healed with compassion for all.

–Matthew 4:24

First and foremost, Jesus loved and was merciful. The litany of people he healed is not just particular to his time, but continues in its recognition of those who suffer today: their conditions of birth, gender, differences in physical abilities, mental illnesses, occupation, age, or poverty carry physical and psychological pain, and are often compounded by stigma, social isolation, and adverse legal structures.

For Jesus, healing first meant **a loving encounter** with the person who carried the suffering by name, by touch, by solace, by alleviating the pain, and by inviting the person to join in the community of family and friends.



DIGNITY

All people have been created in the image of God.

–Genesis 1:27

The first few words of scripture speak of the creation of humans in the image and likeness of God. This act of creation in God's image endows all humans with a sacred dignity rooted in the wholeness of person, body and soul, no matter what the circumstances of life, genetics, nurture, or personal expression. Every person created in the image of God is unique, is known by, and can know the Spirit, and is personally called and uniquely gifted. **Each person is worthy of love.**

Because all people have equal inherent dignity, Jesus invited all manner of people to be his followers. He so strongly identified with people who suffered that he said, "Whatever you do for the least you do to me" (Matthew 25:40). When others pushed strangers, children or the socially marginalized away, Jesus welcomed them, called them by name, walked with them, ate with them, and invited them to be part of his life. Our promise to answer the call of every person we encounter – to "know me, care for me, and ease my way" – expands beyond embracing the dignity of one person to building a community characterized by dignity and respect.



JUSTICE

*Act with justice, love with kindness and walk humbly
with your God. –Micah 6:8*

From the time of the Judaic Covenant with Moses, we are saved as a people. As further witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, our mission of caring extends to all “dear neighbors without distinction.” Humans live and are called to wholeness in relationship with other humans. Humans flourish in others’ affirmation and they wither in isolation. Christ’s love and attention to well-being includes finding food for crowds of hungry people, comforting the sorrowful, weeping with families, and celebrating joy together.

Jesus actively invited all to be part of a community in which everyone is welcome, protected, and able to contribute, especially those who are left suffering on the margins of society. Christ did not wait for suffering people to present themselves to him; he actively encountered them, and he sent his disciples out into the world to further his mission. Jesus created a bridge between the suffering person and religious-social practices. He knew and loved the Law that expressed the Covenant. He also questioned the deeper meanings of prohibitions on cleanliness, activities on the Sabbath, or ritualistic prayer. He exhibited the underlying call to **a pure heart**, the priority of mercy over adverse social structures, and the need for humility instead of righteousness in judging others; and presented this in the simple prayer of “Our Father.”



EXCELLENCE

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart.

–Colossians 3:23

Jesus and his disciples lived in a real world of people who labored with the best skills they had and who trusted in each other's work. He recognized that the sick needed physicians who served likewise.

While the **human being is a mystery** beyond comprehension, we have been entrusted with understanding and a commitment to provide high quality health care to everyone based on ethical principles and the best clinical and social science research available; as well as through personal interactions – we heal even when we cannot cure. We ask for and give the daily bread of wisdom, knowledge and understanding that is the sign of our care, and a promise of the Bread of Life.



INTEGRITY

*Let us love not merely with words or speech
but with actions in truth. –1 John 3:18*

The two great commandments, love God and love your neighbor, define the core of integrity. Jesus was a living expression of love. He recognized the essential goodness in people, and he affirmed the goodness in them as they continued God's plan.

He also warned about the presence of all manner of blindness in the forms of dishonesty, injustice, imposing heavy burdens, false prophets, misdirected piety, and pride. Choosing good, integrating into unity the diverse strands of **goodness found in all people**, and choosing between goods, calls for attention to the Spirit, who knows the inmost heart of all people. In common listening, the Spirit shares such gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, and knowledge, that comes from lived experience, faith tradition, and revealed truth.

This understanding of integrity draws from personal and communal experience and is expressed in prophetic voice as a light for all to see, words of witness, and actions, and wholeness of being.



OUR MISSION

As expressions of God's healing love, witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, we are steadfast in serving all, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

OUR VALUES

Compassion, Dignity, Justice
Excellence, Integrity

OUR PROMISE

Know me, care for me, ease my way.