



## **Code of Ethics**

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## ***General Overview of the Code of Ethics***

*“Church agencies, with their transparent operation and their faithfulness to the duty of witnessing to love, are able to give a Christian quality to the civil agencies too, favouring a mutual coordination that can only redound to the effectiveness of charitable service.”*

— Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 30b

The Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code is based on a fundamental ethical assumption that the agency is a moral agent and carries out its moral obligations as a corporate entity which is, essentially, to carry out its role in the social mission of the Church and to assure that all of its policies and activities are conducted in an ethically responsible manner.

The Code of Ethics serves as a broad guide to the organizational behavior of the staff and the agency in carrying out the Mission of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. This Code of Ethics is to be adhered to by all staff, board members and volunteers of Catholic Charities. It is our further hope that this Code of Ethics, based in the Judeo-Christian experience and in the Teaching and Tradition of the Catholic Church, will add to the wisdom and knowledge of other human service providers in this country, in terms of how universal principles and values apply to ethical reflection by organizations, institutions and agencies.

### **Use and Limitations of the Code of Ethics**

The Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics serves to guide the organization in the concrete implementation of the broad moral philosophy of its mission of justice and love. The Code applies to the organization as a whole, agency leadership and staff.

The Code serves several purposes:

1. To identify the core principles and values on which the agency’s mission is based.
2. To provide ethical standards to guide organizational and practitioner/staff behaviors.
3. To serve as a tool in the education of staff and other stakeholders to their ethical obligations in carrying out the mission of the agency.

4. To orient Catholic Charities leadership, staff, volunteers and recipients of service to the basic values, rooted in the Teaching Tradition of the Catholic Church that guide, motivate and inform Catholic Charities activities and services.
5. To assist staff in identifying areas of ethical concern and in resolving issues where ethical obligations conflict.
6. To provide standards against which the community can hold the agency accountable.

The Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics, like codes of ethics in general, has limitations. The Code provides a set of principles, values and standards to guide decision-making and conduct. It does not, however, provide a set of rules that prescribe how one should act in all situations. More specific applications of the Code of Ethics must take into account the uniqueness of each situation in which ethical issues are embedded.

Ethical decision-making is a process that requires informed ethical judgments. It requires a careful identification of the ethical issues at stake, the underlying moral values and all relevant considerations related to the issue. In such cases, supplementary resources may be needed. There are a number of resources available for ethical thinking and problem-solving. These include:

- Ethical principles and theory
- Research in specific areas of ethics, such as social ethics, bioethics, organizational ethics, client-centered ethics
- Workshops and seminars on ethics
- Ethical consultation with knowledgeable colleagues and supervisors
- Agency-based Ethics Committees
- Relevant ethics literature
- Laws, regulations and agency policies
- Relevant teachings from the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, such as those on Catholic Social Teaching
- Reflection on experiences similar to the dilemma(s) in question

An important aspect of ethical decision-making, often overlooked, is reflection on the impact of one's own culture, values and religious beliefs on the ethical decision-making process.

## **Other Professional Codes of Ethics**

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. recognizes that many of the employees, board members and volunteers at our agency are professionally trained and may recognize and adhere to various professional codes of ethics. These may include, but are not limited to, codes of ethics for social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, attorneys, physicians, accountants and fund-raisers/development professionals. In addition, such organizations as the Independent Sector work to encourage the development and implementation of codes of ethics in the myriad of types of organizations they represent. Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. recognizes and respects the contributions of all of these entities in the development of codes of ethics.

When personal values of staff or ethical obligations to clients conflict with agency policies or procedures or laws or regulations, responsible efforts should be taken to resolve the conflict in a manner consistent with this organizational Code of Ethics. To their best ability, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. will honor and respect our staff, board members and volunteers' adherence to such professional codes of ethics, but will reserve the right to require that each staff person, board member or volunteer respect and adhere to the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics.

## **Structure of the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics**

This Code of Ethics is divided into the following sections:

1. Scriptural/Theological Foundations
2. Principles of Catholic Social Teaching
3. Fundamental Values
4. Ethical Standards

The Scriptural/Theological Foundations section addresses the mission of Catholic Charities. The following two sections explicitly articulate the Principles and Values operative in Catholic Charities, as articulated in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

This Code of Ethics then provides general Ethical Standards for use by Catholic Charities. The Ethical Standards, rooted in the Scripture and Tradition of the Church, are based on the Principles and Values. Each of the Ethical Standards is based on an application of such a Principle and/or Value for differing stakeholders in Catholic Charities.

The stakeholders that have been identified for specific ethical reflection include: the client, staff/volunteers, the Board, the executive leadership/management group, funders/contracting agents and our social responsibility to the general community.

## ***I. Scriptural/Theological Foundations for Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics***

*“The Church’s deepest nature is expressed in her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God (kerygma-martyria), celebrating the sacraments (leitourgia), and exercising the ministry of charity (diakonia). These duties presuppose each other and are inseparable. For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being.” — Benedict XVI, God is Love, 25a*

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. is an expression of the Church’s very nature in its exercise of the ministry of charity. The human services and social outreach of the Church’s work is rooted in the history of the Judeo-Christian community, with its foundation in the Scriptures and with ongoing reflection in the Tradition of the Catholic Church. In this section, a brief survey of the Scripture’s and Tradition’s call to serve is explored in order to better articulate the core Principles and Values, which in turn root and form the various Ethical Standards found in the Code of Ethics of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.

The Church’s emphasis on the fundamental dignity and worth of the human person is deeply rooted in the Scriptures, beginning with the story of creation as recounted in the Book of Genesis. There we are told that the human person is created in the very image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:27) This opening book of the Scriptures further reflects that as God created all the aspects of the universe, along with man and woman, God looked upon creation and noted that it was “good.” In fact, God ultimately proclaims that all God had created was indeed “very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

These insights root Catholic Charities in the foundational principles that: 1) each person is made in God’s image, and from that flow the inherent dignity and rights of every individual; 2) there is a universal destination of all the goods of creation, so that the common good is served; and 3) each creature is “good,” in fact, “very good.”

Another foundational insight about Catholic Charities is noted when Abraham and Sarah welcome three strangers by the terebinth of Mamre (Genesis 18:1-10) with genuine and heartfelt hospitality. An icon, *The Holy Trinity*, “written” by Andrei Rublev (1410), reveals an important insight on this chance encounter: God visited and ate with us. Hospitality, service and love are hallmarks of the work of the Christian community. As St. Augustine writes: “If you see charity, you see the Trinity” (*De Trinitate*, VIII, 8, 12:CCL50, 287). Catholic Charities is called upon to be that welcoming community that expresses hospitality and love in all that we do, since we are reminded that we must “not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.” (Hebrews 13:2)

In the Hebrew Scriptures within the Torah and the Prophets, we hear about the challenge of the community to hear and to proclaim the word of God, to worship God alone and to

care for each other. We hear the great commandment given to the followers of Torah, that “Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:5) and “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18). We hear over and over again that the community, and individuals, are to care for each other, especially care for, and execute justice for, those who are widows, orphans and strangers in the land (see for instance, Deuteronomy 10:18).

The people were constantly reminded by the prophets that they had a responsibility to ensure that justice and mercy should be lived, because they too were once aliens and slaves in a foreign land (see Leviticus 19:34). The prophets continued to challenge the followers of Yahweh, and the leaders of their community, that they would be judged by how well they responded, both individually and communally, to the commandment to love their neighbors, especially those who were widows, orphans and strangers (see Jeremiah 22:3).

In the New Testament we hear Jesus tell his followers that the two greatest commandments, of loving God with one’s entire being and loving one’s neighbor (see Mark 12:31; Matthew 22:39), are ultimate expressions of how one’s life is to be judged at the end times. In Jesus’ proclamation of the Beatitudes, we are provided with a framework to live, both personally and communally. Loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves are signs of how the Kingdom of God is lived each day, especially with a call to live our lives with new attitudes about our love, not only for our direct neighbors or siblings, but for each person that we meet (Matthew 5:3ff; Luke 6:20ff). The Beatitudes establish the “attitude” or “perspective” on how we as Catholic Charities are to organize and structure our organizations and relationships with those we serve, those who govern, those who lead and those who work and volunteer in our agencies. The framework of the Beatitudes marks our difference: we are called to be witnesses to this Kingdom of God in our operations, policies and actions.

This message is expressed more fully in Jesus’ story about the Last Judgment (Matthew 25: 31-46). In this powerful reflection, we hear how Jesus’ disciples and others did not recognize Him in those who are hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, ill or in prison. Jesus challenges us today to continue to recognize Him in the very people who are in need among us, “the least of these,” and to respond with love, kindness and mercy. This story further tells us how the “nations” will be judged on how they as a community responded to those with basic and urgent needs (Matthew 25:32).

Jesus then opens our minds to a more inclusive understanding of our role in helping our neighbor in need through the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37). In this story, a scholar of the law wants to assure his salvation; Jesus praises him for his answer to the question about the greatest commandments: love of God and love of neighbor. But the scholar wants to know, really, who is his “neighbor?” Jesus continues with that great story of the Good Samaritan who stopped on his journey, cared for the half-dead man’s wounds, brought him to the inn, paid for his care and promised the inn-keeper that he would repay him for care given beyond the expenses already paid. According to some

scholars (see Venerable Bede), Jesus himself is the model of the Good Samaritan, and we as Church are called upon to be like the inn keeper, called upon to organize care for those in need – anyone in need is our neighbor – and we will be repaid at the end of time.

The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, reflects on the importance of this story for the work of the Church, especially Catholic Charities: “The Church is God’s family in the world. In this family no one ought to go without the necessities of life. Yet, at the same time, ‘caritas-agape’ extends beyond the frontiers of the Church. The parable of the Good Samaritan remains as a standard which imposes universal love towards the needy whom we encounter ‘by chance’ (cf. Lk 10:31), whoever they may be” (Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 25b).

Again, Pope Benedict XVI notes that “The Christian’s programme – the programme of the Good Samaritan, the programme of Jesus – is ‘a heart which sees.’ This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly. Obviously, when charitable activity is carried out by the Church as a communitarian initiative, the spontaneity of individuals must be combined with planning, foresight and cooperation with other similar institutions” (Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 31b). “This proper way of serving others also leads to humility. The one who serves does not consider himself superior to the one served, however miserable his situation at the moment may be. Christ took the lowest place in the world – the Cross – and by this radical humility he redeemed us and constantly comes to our aid. Those who are in a position to help others will realize that in doing so they themselves receive help; being able to help others is no merit or achievement of their own. This duty is a grace” (Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 35).

In conclusion, “Following the example given in the parable of the Good Samaritan, Christian charity is first of all the simple response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc. The Church’s charitable organizations, beginning with those of Caritas (at diocesan, national and international levels), ought to do everything in their power to provide the resources and above all the personnel needed for this work. Individuals who care for those in need must first be professionally competent: they should be properly trained in what to do and how to do it, and committed to continuing care. Yet, while professional competence is a primary, fundamental requirement, it is not of itself sufficient. We are dealing with human beings, and human beings always need something more than technically proper care. They need humanity. They need heartfelt concern. Those who work for the Church’s charitable organizations must be distinguished by the fact that they do not merely meet the needs of the moment, but they dedicate themselves to others with heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity. Consequently, in addition to their necessary professional training, these charity workers need a ‘formation of the heart’: they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others. As a result, love of neighbour will no longer be for them a commandment imposed, so to speak, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love (cf. Gal 5:6)” (Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 31a).



## **II. Principles of Catholic Social Teaching**

In light of this reflection on the Scriptures, Catholic Charities reaffirms its commitment to living out the great commandment of Love of God and Love of Neighbor, and as institutions, proudly proclaim their commitment to the Principles and Values of the Church, which are more fully explained in the sidebars, as well as in more complete form in Appendix A.

“The permanent principles of the Church’s social doctrine [341] constitute the very heart of Catholic social teaching. These are the principles of: the dignity of the human person...which is the foundation of all the other principles and content of the Church’s social doctrine; the common good [342]; subsidiarity; and solidarity.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 160)

“Besides the principles that must guide the building of a society... the Church’s social doctrine also indicates fundamental values.” The relationship between principles and values is undoubtedly one of reciprocity, in that social values are an expression of appreciation to be attributed to those specific aspects of moral good that these principles foster, serving as points of reference for the proper structuring and ordered leading of life in society. These values require, therefore, both the practice of the fundamental principles of social life and the personal exercise of virtue, hence of those moral attitudes that correspond to these very values [426]. “All social values are inherent in the dignity of the human person, whose authentic development they foster. Essentially, these values are: truth, freedom, justice, love” [427]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 197)

### **A. Human Dignity**

Catholic Charities affirms that each person is made in the image of God and has inherent dignity. Each person must be respected from conception to natural death. Each person is endowed with rights and duties.

Catholic Charities affirms that each person served and engaged with our work will be held in great esteem and with great respect.

### **B. Common Good**

Catholic Charities affirms that there is a universal destination of all created things, that all persons have the right to access all that they need in order to reach their fulfillment and that all persons have the concurrent obligation to work for the rights of others as well.

### **C. Subsidiarity**

Catholic Charities affirms that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level, should involve those who are capable of participation in decision-making and who will be impacted by those decisions, and should empower those who are most in need.

Concurrently, we commit to creating and renewing structures and institutions that provide assistance and aid, as required, appropriate and necessary.

Catholic Charities, as members of the civic society, affirms that we should actively participate in the public discourse at both the national and local community level, seeking justice for all, but especially for those who have no voice of their own. We affirm that we should both advocate and serve, advocating both for individuals and for just social structures.

#### **D. Solidarity with the Poor**

Catholic Charities affirms that the most poor and vulnerable persons and families have a special claim to our services and programs.

Catholic Charities affirms that our staff and boards should engage those served to have representative voice in decisions impacting policies and programs. Accordingly, we affirm the need to create structures and processes for obtaining appropriate input from stakeholders.

Catholic Charities commits ourselves to continue to be a voice with poor and vulnerable individuals and families in the public discourse.

### ***III. Fundamental Values***

#### **A. Truth**

Catholic Charities affirms that transparency and accountability will always be pursued in our communication and work.

Catholic Charities affirms the truth of the intrinsic dignity and worth of the human person as a social being and will witness to our Catholic identity in fulfilling our roles in Church and in society.

#### **B. Freedom**

Catholic Charities affirms that we will always assist our clients, staff and volunteers to live in socially responsible freedom, to exercise their authentic autonomy in light of objective truth and to actualize their inherent potential as beings created in the image and likeness of God.

Catholic Charities will respect and affirms the autonomy of each organization/entity with whom we are in relationship.

## **C. Justice**

Catholic Charities affirms that it is a matter of justice that all clients have the right to self-actualization and to reach their potential as beings created in the image and likeness of God.

Catholic Charities affirms that we will work to achieve greater justice in our communities through our social policy advocacy efforts – locally, nationally and internationally.

Catholic Charities affirms that all contracts and agreements and all relationships with stakeholders will be based on norms of justice.

Catholic Charities affirms that we will work to expand and maintain diversity and excellence in our membership, board, leadership positions and staff.

## **D. Love**

Catholic Charities affirms that love – caritas – will be the chief identifying characteristic and element of our work and life.

## **IV. Ethical Standards**

*“Love of neighbor, grounded in the love of God, is first and foremost a responsibility for each individual member of the faithful, but it is also a responsibility for the entire ecclesial community at every level: from the local community to the particular Church and to the Church universal in its entirety. As a community, the Church must practice love. Love thus needs to be organized if it is to be an ordered service to the community.”*  
— Benedict XVI, *God is Love*, 20

A word about the application of principles and values, in the form of standards, to be applied at the practical level: as a faith community Catholic Charities relies on the cardinal virtue of prudence for both individual and corporate ethical decision making. Prudence is “that virtue that makes it possible to discern the true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means for achieving it. Thanks to this virtue, moral principles are applied correctly to particular cases.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 547) Further, “prudence makes it possible to make decisions that are consistent, and to make them with realism and a sense of responsibility for the consequences of one’s action...It is a characteristic of practical reason and offers assistance in deciding with wisdom and courage the course of action that should be followed, becoming the measure of the other virtues.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 548)

The following ethical standards flow from the Principles and Values articulated in the previous two sections. Catholic Charities relate to a wide variety of individuals, groups and institutions in the day to day work of carrying out our mission. These standards are

divided into sections that attempt to address the diverse functions of Catholic Charities, as well as the variety of “constituencies” with whom our agency interacts.

The standards are divided into the following sections:

1. Responsibility to Clients
2. Board/Governance
3. CEO/Management Team Responsibilities
4. Staff/Volunteer/Agency Relationships
5. Social Responsibility
6. Resource Development/Funders/Investments
7. Research

Although there are a wide variety of levels of organizational development and size within the Catholic Charities, the following broad statements are to be prudentially applied.

## **1. Responsibility to Clients**

### **1.01 Client Rights**

- a) All staff are expected to respect the dignity and worth of all persons served at all times.
- b) All clients have the right to confidentiality and to privacy.

### **1.02 Boundary Issues/Dual Relationships**

- a) Staff are expected to avoid dual or multiple relationships with persons served and with past recipients of service.
- b) Where such relationships are unavoidable, staff and supervisors are expected to be vigilant to safeguard clients from any possible exploitation or harm.
- c) Staff are expected not to engage in sexual harassment, or to exploit clients, students or supervisees or to engage in sexual intimacies with clients.

### **1.03 Beginning of Client Relationship**

- a) Staff are expected to follow the criteria and conditions set by agency policy in accepting clients for service at Catholic Charities.
- b) Staff are expected to engage persons served from a person-centered philosophy, involving them in all aspects of care toward realizing their goals.
- c) Staff are expected to represent themselves, their qualifications and their skills truthfully in all relationships.

#### 1.04 Informed Consent

- a) Clients shall be appropriately informed about the purpose of the service and the role of the staff in providing that service.
- b) Care shall be taken that clients understand the purpose of the service and have opportunity to ask questions.
- c) The client should be given information about appropriate alternative services that are consistent with the mission and values of the agency.
- d) Staff are expected to obtain the informed consent of the client before audio-taping or video-taping clients; consent should also be obtained for the use of client cases/material for training purposes, including the observation of services by another.

#### 1.05 Confidentiality

- a) All staff are expected to respect the privacy of all persons served and shall, in accordance with all regulatory requirements, confidentially maintain all information obtained except for compelling professional reasons.
- b) The agency is expected to develop procedures to assure that all staff persons are aware of any limits of confidentiality and to inform persons served of any pertinent laws and/or limitations.

#### 1.06 Clients as Research Subjects<sup>1</sup>

- a) The agency is expected to protect the rights of human research subjects and to follow nationally-recognized guidelines developed for protecting and evaluating research.

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<sup>1</sup> Research standards are constantly evolving. Current standards include best practices, such as the use of Institutional Review Boards.

- b) Sensitive administered, written informed consent and assent shall be obtained from research participants as dictated by governmental and professional mandates.

#### 1.07 Release of Information

- a) Staff are expected to provide persons served reasonable access to their records, at reasonable times and circumstances; staff will limit access to records, based on legal standards and/or professional judgment, as applicable to the individual circumstance.
- b) Staff are expected to release information to third parties only when indicated and agreed upon by the person(s) served.
- c) Staff are expected to adhere to agency policies and procedures and to applicable state and federal regulations regarding release of client information.

#### 1.08 Quality Service/Competence

- a) All staff are expected to provide services within the scope of their training and expertise.
- b) Staff are expected to provide services that are new to them only after adequate training and appropriate supervision/consultation.
- c) Services provided should be consistent with the best practice<sup>2</sup> for the needed care.
- d) Agencies are expected to continually evaluate the quality of service delivery to clients in an effort to improve the services delivered and to maximize client outcomes.

#### 1.09 Duty to Warn/Duty to Protect

- a) All professional staff are expected to be aware of their legal and professional duty to warn and duty to protect.
- b) Agencies are expected to be aware of federal, state and local case law that requires professional staff to warn/protect third parties from harm that may be perpetrated by a client(s) in their care.
- c) Agency policies governing the circumstances and procedures for warning potential victims shall be available to all staff.

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<sup>2</sup> Best practice includes both empirical based data and “practice wisdom.”

#### 1.10 Duty to Report

- a) Professional staff are expected to be aware of legal statutes that require professional staff to report alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and/or neglect of protected groups.
- b) Agency policies governing the circumstances and procedures for reporting shall be available to all staff.

#### 1.11 Best Interest of Client

- a) All staff are expected to demonstrate a genuine concern for the best interests of all persons served.
- b) Professional staff are expected to focus their intervention efforts on assisting and empowering clients to help themselves in so far as possible.
- c) Agencies are expected to strive, in all of their services, to be client-centered and client-directed consistent with the ethical principles of social responsibility and authentic autonomy.

#### 1.12 Non-Discrimination

- a) The agency shall not engage in unjust discriminatory behaviors against individuals served or refuse services to individuals on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or nationality.
- b) The agency shall not engage in harassing behaviors against individuals served on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or nationality.

#### 1.13 Religious Identity

- a) While Catholic Charities agencies respect the religious beliefs, values and identities of all individual clients, staff, volunteers and board members, the identity of the agency is clearly Catholic. As such, agencies adhere to the social and moral teachings of the Catholic Church.
- b) While acting in accord with Catholic Charities religious identity, policies and procedures, staff shall respect the religious beliefs and values of all clients and shall not directly or indirectly attempt to proselytize in their interaction with clients.
- c) Agencies shall clearly indicate, prior to the creation of any client relationship, that the agency does not provide services contrary to the teachings of the Church, such as abortion counseling.

- d) While indicating the ethical standards of the agency, and those services not provided by the agency, staff shall provide services for clients in accord with professional standards applicable to the situation.

#### 1.14 Cultural Sensitivity

- a) Professional staff are expected to have knowledge of the cultures of the persons served and to demonstrate competence in providing services that are sensitive to the respective cultures and differences among people and cultural groups served by Catholic Charities agencies.

#### 1.15 Conflicts of Interest

- a) All agency personnel (board, administrators, professional staff, direct service volunteers and other agency staff persons) are expected to be alert to and to avoid conflicts of interest that jeopardize the care of persons served and that interfere with the staff's delivery of services.
- b) Agencies are expected to specify their organizational policy and procedures for disclosing and offsetting potential conflicts of interest.

#### 1.16 Standard for Service

- a) Staff are expected to demonstrate a standard of care that is reasonable, prudent and appropriate to the presenting and assessed needs of the person(s) served.

#### 1.17 Fees

- a) Agencies are expected to set fees that are fair, reasonable and commensurate with the services performed.
- a) Fees should be regularly reviewed and adjusted as appropriate by the responsible agency administrators.
- b) Persons served shall be made aware of fees, and consideration should be given to their ability to pay.

#### 1.18 Non-Involvement of Clients in Colleague Conflicts

- a) Staff are expected to not discuss with clients anything regarding conflicts between themselves and colleagues.



### 1.19 Referrals

- a) Staff are expected to refer clients to other providers when the needs of the client can best be served through an alternative source/alternative provider subject to the limitations of 1.13.

### 1.20 Termination of Service

- a) Professional staff are expected to terminate services when these services are no longer required or cannot be appropriately provided.

## **2. Boards/Governance**

### 2.01 Corporate Integrity<sup>3</sup>

- a) The Board of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. is expected to approve the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics and to periodically review the Code and its implementation.
- b) The Board is expected to participate in educational and formational opportunities on the content and application of the moral and social teaching of the Church to contemporary issues within Catholic Charities.
- c) The Board is expected to exercise their authority in the corporation consistent with the moral and social teachings of the Church.
- d) The Board is expected to be faithful to the corporation's purposes and to exercise their best, independent judgment concerning the best interest of the corporation on any matter committed to them by the organizational documents of the corporation.
- e) Each Trustee is expected not to use his/her position of governance in the corporation for personal, private gain. In all transactions with individuals or with other organizations. Trustees are expected to act in the best interest of the corporation.
- f) The Board, in accord with the authority in each body described in the organizational documents of the corporation, is expected to assure that all assets of the corporation are used for the charitable purposes of the corporation in accord with the norms of law.

### 2.02 Autonomy of Governance of the Board of Trustees

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<sup>3</sup> The terms "corporate" and "corporation" are used throughout this section to refer to Catholic Charities as a civil entity that is bound by federal and state laws that define the structure of such organizations.

All authority to manage the affairs of the corporation is vested in the Board of of Trustees in accord with the organizational documents of the corporation. The Board is expected to implement Catholic moral and social teaching in all of its decision-making.

- a) Each Trustee is expected to exercise independent judgment in the best interest of the corporation in matters before the board, taking care to make decisions free from any personal, financial or professional conflict.
- b) Each Trustee is expected to be responsible for adequately preparing for board meetings and regularly attending board meetings.
- c) The Board of Trustees is expected to provide for regular evaluations of the CEO/Executive Director.
- d) The Board of Trustees is expected to provide for periodic review and comparative study of management compensation with other similarly situated corporations.
- e) The Board of Trustees is expected to periodically review the corporation's processes for engaging legal, accounting and other professional relationships, as well as letting of major contracts and to evaluate the benefits and costs of such relationships for the corporation.

## 2.03 Fiduciary Duty

Each Trustee has a fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of the corporation. In fulfillment of this duty:

- a) Each Trustee is expected to fulfill the duty of care by adequate preparation for meetings, monitoring board practices and keeping informed of the nature and purpose of the corporation, its core values, its religious identity and the needs of the communities the corporation serves.
- b) Each Trustee is expected to keep informed about and to make every best effort to have the corporation comply with accreditation, regulatory and other applicable standards relevant to the quality of services provided by the corporation.
- c) Each Trustee is expected to fulfill the duty of loyalty to the corporation by exercising independent judgment in protecting all business opportunities of the corporation and by guarding against any use of a director's/trustee's position for personal gain inconsistent with the best interest of the corporation.
- d) Each Trustee is expected to execute annually a conflict of interest statement. Each Trustee is expected to disclose any business transaction between the Trustee and the corporation in accord with policies in the bylaws of the corporation.

- e) Each Trustee is expected to fulfill the duty of obedience by adhering to the purposes of the corporation and by providing that its activities are in furtherance of its purposes as stated in the organizational documents.
- f) The Board of Trustees is expected to monitor any joint ventures to ensure that they are consistent with the purposes and identity of the corporation and to ensure that the purpose and structure of any joint venture is consistent with the corporation's organizational documents and with federal and state law relevant to charitable corporations.

#### 2.04 Financial Accountability

- a) The Board of Trustees is expected to be vigilant that the corporation's charitable funds are not directly or indirectly diverted from the achievement of the corporation's mission and purposes.
- b) The Board of Trustees is expected to provide for regular financial reports from management that are in an easily understood form and that clearly show the ratio of use of monies for services, investments and administrative expenses.
- c) The Board of Trustees is expected to provide for regular review of accountants and auditors and financial reviews or audits appropriate for the size of the corporation.
- d) The Board of Trustees is expected to provide for a regular review of the financial practices of the corporation and to require management to present to the board and to maintain adequate procedures for the receipt, deposit and disbursement of cash.
- e) The Board of Trustees is expected to require that management present to the board and maintain adequate procedures to monitor both the quality of services and the accountability of the use of revenues from contracts.
- f) The Trustees are expected to individually and collectively review the financial audit of the corporation, as well as Form 990.

#### 2.05 Relationships of the Corporation

- a) The Board of Directors/Trustees is expected to be accountable to donors, the local Church and the community for the corporation's use of funds and provision of services by providing accurate, easily understood and accessible information to each stakeholder of the corporation.

### **3. CEO/Management Team Responsibilities**

#### **3.01 Ethics Leadership**

- a) The CEO/Management Team are expected to ensure the implementation and promulgation of the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics within the agency, recognizing that this code guides the agency as an organization and as a moral agent.
- b) The CEO/ Management Team are expected to incorporate the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics into the agency's organizational and employee policies.
- c) The CEO/Management Team are expected to ensure that introduction and discussion of this Code is included in the hiring process and in new employee/volunteer orientation.
- d) The CEO/Management Team are expected to ensure that their own personal and professional behavior are consistent with the norms of the Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics; in so doing, they shall model ethical behavior and decision-making for those whom they are appointed to lead.
- e) The CEO/Management Team are expected to ensure that there is periodic employee training on the topics of ethical behavior and decision-making for all employees and volunteers of the organization.
- f) The CEO/Management Team are expected to lead with integrity.

#### **3.02 Organizational Renewal and Development**

The CEO/Management Team are expected to work with agency board(s) and staff to regularly engage them in processes that ensure ongoing organizational integrity, renewal and development.

- a) These processes should include orientation and periodic development opportunities for all staff, board and service volunteers, regarding the mission of the Catholic Charities agency as foundational to all aspects of the agency's operations and activities.<sup>4</sup>
- b) These processes shall include, at a minimum, program and regulatory compliance, regular fiscal and program audits and all generally accepted practices that ensure transparency.

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<sup>4</sup> Ongoing promulgation of the mission may also include such things as posting the mission statement in visible locations throughout the agency and the use of group meetings, discussions, prayer opportunities and social gatherings to heighten ongoing awareness of the mission

- c) These processes may include periodic strategic planning, continuous quality improvement processes, staff development opportunities for all employees and volunteers, voluntary accreditation processes and staff renewal processes that focus on the mission of the Catholic Charities agency.

### 3.03 Staff Competence

The CEO/Management Team are expected to ensure that human resource policies, procedures and practices are comprehensive and are adequate to promote the competence of staff and volunteers at all levels of the organization.

- a) In order to assure fairness and predictability for staff, there should be written job descriptions for all positions, which clearly state the minimum educational and experience qualifications required of paid staff and volunteers and which reflect the responsibilities of the position.
- b) There should be annual staff and volunteer evaluation processes in place for staff at all levels of the agency. These processes should include:
  - 1. Compliance with the mission, values and ethics of the agency.
  - 2. Review of position objectives established in the previous evaluation, as applicable, and feedback regarding performance evaluation in relation to those objectives
  - 3. Establishment of performance expectations for the next performance period
  - 4. Identification of any areas needing improved performance
  - 5. Identification of training needs and/or professional growth opportunities
  - 6. Opportunity for staff to have input into the supervision and evaluation processes and a means by which to address unresolved concerns
  - 7. Receipt of a written copy of the evaluation by staff.
- c) There should be policies and procedures in place to ensure that the agency is in compliance with credentialing requirements (licensing, certification and accreditation) of the various professional staff employed in providing the agency's services.
- d) The agency is expected to provide orientation and professional development opportunities for staff and volunteers of all levels, to ensure their ongoing growth and development and their ability to provide quality service to the agency's clients.

- e) The agency is expected to comply with all staff requirements mandated by applicable state and municipal regulatory bodies for the various services it provides; the agency may further elect to be accredited to meet those additional staff competency requirements that promote “best practice.”

### 3.04 Technology

- a) The CEO/Management Team are expected to promote that technology is used appropriately to provide supervision to staff and volunteers and as a means of communication within the organization.
- b) The CEO/Management Team are expected to promote that policies and practices are in place in the agency to protect client and staff privacy rights in the agency’s use of technology/computers/internet.

### 3.05 Board Communications/Relationships

- a) The CEO is expected at all times to provide pertinent information and to be fully transparent in communications involved in the work of the agency’s governing board. Full disclosure of all pertinent information is essential to the appropriate and effective governing role of the Board.
- b) The CEO/Management Team are also expected to communicate openly and honestly with any advisory boards, within their designated function, thus enabling such boards to be of maximum effectiveness for the agency and its clients.

### 3.06 Alternative Sources of Revenue

- a) In seeking alternative sources of revenue to further the agency’s work, the CEO/Management Team are expected at all times to ensure the integrity of the agency’s Catholic identity and mission.
- b) The core values and principles of Catholic moral and social teaching shall provide guidance in the choice of sources of revenue and choice of organizations with which the agency will partner.
- c) In the establishment of any partnerships or other contractual relationships, the agency is expected to ensure that it will be able to maintain its ethical standards in the performance of the partnership or contract.

## **4. Staff/Volunteer/Agency Relationships**

### **4.01 Organization's Responsibility to Staff – Supervision**

- a) The supervisor is expected to be dedicated to the mission of the agency and to have the necessary technical and ethical competencies to fulfill the supervisory functions effectively.
- b) The supervisor is expected to keep abreast of new developments in both service provision and supervisory practice.
- c) The supervisor is expected to meet with the supervisee on a regular basis and to clearly specify how consultation should be handled in emergency situations.
- d) Confidentiality, within the context of the relationship, shall be respected and its limits clearly articulated.
- e) The supervisor is expected to clarify the boundaries of the relationship with the supervisee, and dual relationships shall be avoided. The supervisor will not combine the supervisory role with other roles, such as a counselor, and the supervisor will not provide personal counseling to the supervisee.
- f) The supervisor is expected to conduct supervisee evaluation processes on the basis of fair, objective criteria, shared in reciprocal dialogue with the supervisee.
- g) The annual performance evaluation should include, but not be limited to, the following areas:
  - Adherence to the mission, values and ethics of the agency
  - Review of position objectives established in previous evaluation and performance feedback
  - Setting of performance objectives for the coming year
  - Identification of training needs/professional development needs and opportunities.
- h) The supervisor is expected to include mission integration into supervisee evaluations to assure that service provision and inter-professional and community relationships are consistent with the mission and ethical values of the agency.<sup>5</sup>
- i) The supervisor is expected not to use the supervisory relationship for personal gain. A process should be in place for staff to bring concerns regarding conflicts of interest or boundary violations to other levels of management within the agency to address such issues.

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<sup>5</sup> Mission evaluation should utilize the elements of the Mission Statement in assessing the impact of the mission on the supervisee's work performance and relationships within the community.

#### 4.02 Responsibility of the Supervisor to the Organization/Administration

The supervisor is expected to share with organizational leadership/administration information that could place agency staff, clients or other persons at risk or that could seriously impede the mission of the agency.

#### 4.03 Mutual Responsibility of Organization and Staff

Employment with the Catholic Charities agency involves the development of a mutual relationship between the organization and the individual staff member that is guided by the values of respect, openness and transparency.

#### 4.04 Staff Responsibility to Organization

- a. Staff are expected to agree to support the mission, values and ethics of the organization and to agree to incorporate them into their work on behalf of clients.
- b. Staff are expected to agree to participate in staff training and development opportunities provided by the agency regarding the mission, values and ethics of the organization.
- c. Staff are expected to uphold the agency's mission, values and ethics in their delivery of services to clients and in all program related activities.<sup>6</sup>
- d. Staff are expected to seek to enhance the quality of service through their participation in continuing education and professional development opportunities, using appropriate lines of communication within and outside of the agency, following through on commitments made to agency, coworkers, clients and community and being good stewards of the agency's resources.
- e. Staff are expected to refrain from any participation in or association with any dishonesty or fraud within the agency.

#### 4.05 Colleague Relationships<sup>7</sup>

- a) Staff are expected to respect the rights and views of their colleagues and to treat them with respect, fairness and courtesy.
- b) Staff are expected to collaborate with colleagues and to use alternate or complementary services as needed to best serve the client.

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<sup>6</sup> These include ensuring that program objectives and activities are consistent with the mission of the agency, participating in periodic review of the consistency between mission and activities, being respectful of agency leadership and fellow staff and maintaining appropriate boundaries with staff and clients.

<sup>7</sup> The term "colleague" is used to refer to both internal and external professionals.



- c) Staff are expected to extend to colleagues of other community agencies the same respect and cooperation that is extended to colleagues in their own organization.
- d) Staff are expected to respect confidences shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships.
- e) Staff are expected to not involve a client in a dispute with a colleague or engage the client in any discussion of a conflict with a colleague.
- f) The staff person who refers a client to a colleague is expected to take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of the relationship.
- g) When terminating with a client, staff are expected to provide for an appropriate termination process and take steps for a responsible transfer; pertinent information should be disclosed only with the proper consent of the client or the person authorized to provide the consent on behalf of the client, unless such a disclosure is not permitted by law.
- h) When consulting with a colleague of another organization about a client, staff are expected not to share confidential information or information that could reveal the identity of the client without proper client consent. Only information that is necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation should be disclosed.
- i) Staff are expected not to assume professional responsibility for a client of another agency or a colleague without appropriate communication with that agency or colleague.
- j) Staff are expected not to solicit clients from alternative providers for the purpose of increasing their client base. If staff members engage in a practice outside of their work for the Catholic Charities agency, they are also expected not to solicit clients away from Catholic Charities to their own alternative practice.
- k) A staff person who has direct knowledge of a colleague's impairment (due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse or mental health issues) or who believes that a colleague has acted unethically is expected first to consult with the colleague or seek resolution by informal resolution of the issue(s). If such resolution is not achieved, or if the nature of the impairment or unethical behavior is not appropriate for informal resolution, and further action seems necessary, the staff person is expected to follow a formal process, using the appropriate channels for resolution of the issue(s). Documentation should support all interventions.

#### 4.06 Organization's Relationship to Volunteers<sup>8</sup>

- a) Volunteers are expected to support the mission, values and ethics of the organization as the foundation for their work with and for the agency and its clients.
- b) The agency is expected to provide the resources needed for volunteers to be effective within the organization.
- c) The agency is expected to develop and utilize a recruitment plan to create a diverse group of volunteers to assist with promotion of the mission and work of the organization.
- d) Volunteers should be screened, interviewed and placed in roles within the organization which match their skills and abilities with the needs of the agency and its clients. Background and reference checks should be completed on volunteers as appropriate to their type and level of responsibility.
- e) A position description should be provided to volunteers, which outlines performance expectations upon commencing their volunteer role within the organization.
- f) Volunteers are expected to agree to participate in training and development opportunities provided by the agency regarding the mission, values and ethics of the organization.
- g) Volunteers are expected to uphold the agency's mission, values and ethics in their delivery of services to clients and in all program related activities.
- h) Volunteers are expected not to use their role within the organization to receive preferential treatment when seeking services for themselves, family members or friends.

### 5. Social Responsibility

#### 5.01 Mission Engagement

In fulfillment of its mission, the agency will work to effect social change and to promote social justice in the broader civic community.

- a) The board and management of the agency are expected to adhere to the values of social justice and equality in the development and implementation of the agency's policies and procedures.

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<sup>8</sup> The term "volunteer" includes both governance volunteers (board members) and direct service volunteers.

- b) The agency will encourage staff and volunteers to engage in advocacy for social justice and will provide them with materials and tools based on Catholic social teaching to assist them in these advocacy efforts.
- c) Regardless of their individual programs and services, agencies are expected to work to engage local church communities, at both the parish and diocesan level, through such efforts as providing educational forums on poverty and justice related topics, providing volunteer opportunities for members of the Church community to be engaged in direct service and providing tools and opportunities for them to engage in the work of advocacy.

#### 5.02 Staff Participation

The agency is expected to encourage its staff to be involved proactively in the broader community in efforts to promote social justice that are consistent with the values and principles of Catholic social teaching.<sup>9</sup>

#### 5.03 Coalition-Building

The agency will participate in coalitions designed to improve overall conditions and services for clients and for other vulnerable members of the community, recognizing that such coalitions are necessary in a pluralistic society if social problems are to be effectively addressed.

#### 5.04 Disaster Response

- a) The agency will have a disaster response plan in place, enabling it to respond effectively to local or national disasters.

### **6. Resource Development/Funders/Investments**

#### 6.01 Public and Private Contractors

In entering into contract arrangements for the provision of services:

- a) The agency is expected to provide reasonable services for realistic costs.
- b) The agency is expected to assure that all contracts are consistent with agency mission.
- c) The agency is expected to undertake contracts that are focused on meeting the needs of clients.

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<sup>9</sup> This involvement may include, but is not limited to, serving on boards in local communities, participating in local coalitions dedicated to promoting social justice in the community, attending community events.

## 6.02 Foundations/Corporations/Grant Making Bodies

- a) The agency will seek resources in the context of funding strategies that involve solicitation of funds from a wide variety of sources.
- b) The agency is expected to research such funding sources to assure that they do not support activities that are in opposition to Catholic moral or social teaching. Further, in seeking funding, the agency is expected to review funding sources and their requirements to ensure acceptance of such funds does not force the agency to act against its moral values.
- c) The agency is expected to disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest; such disclosure neither precludes nor implies the existence of ethical impropriety.
- d) The agency is expected to comply with all appropriate reporting mechanisms required by these funding sources.
- e) The agency board and management staff are expected to establish written agreements with any outside contracting entity and to oversee the performance of those contracts.

## 6.03 Fundraising and Marketing Activities

- a) The agency is expected to ensure that all marketing and solicitation materials truthfully represent the agency, its mission and the use of solicited funds.
- b) The agency is expected to take all appropriate steps to assure that no clients are exploited in the fundraising or marketing process.
- c) The agency is expected to maintain all appropriate accounting segregation processes for restricted donated funds, to ensure that these funds are used for the purposes for which they were given.
- d) The agency is expected to obtain explicit consent by the donor(s) before altering the use of restricted funds.
- e) The agency is expected to give respect and gratitude to any and all contributors, regardless of the amount of their gifts.
- f) The agency is expected to never disclose confidential information about donors to any unauthorized party.
- g) The agency is expected to analyze the reasonableness of marketing costs in relation to dollars raised.

- h) The agency is expected to ensure that development/fundraising staff does not accept compensation that is based on a percentage of the funds raised or accept finders' fees.
- i) The agency is expected to raise funds in accordance with applicable local, state and federal requirements and to register all fundraising activities with appropriate administrative authorities.

## **7. Research**

- 7.01 Consistent with the "specific duty to move always toward the truth (Compendium, 431)," in the improvement of the lives of our clients, agencies are expected to engage in and/or collaborate with other knowledgeable groups or organizations in the responsible conduct of research geared toward continuous quality performance and improvement of services, as well as the delivery of evidence-based practice interventions.
- 7.02 Responsible conduct of research requires resolution of ethical considerations arising from the research design: the study processes, such as data collection, recruitment and the valid informed consent of the people and communities who are studied; the outcome and impact of the findings, such as the impact on best practices within the agency, the impact on clients and communities, and full and honest disclosure of the findings and authorship.<sup>10</sup>
- 7.03 To this end, agencies are expected to develop human subjects review committees, either within the agency or in collaboration with established human subjects review committees in institutions such as colleges and universities, hospitals or research organizations, to ensure that the human dignity of the study participants is respected, that they are protected from avoidable harm and that any research benefits and burdens on vulnerable populations served by the agency are justly distributed.
- 7.04 Metrics
  - a) The agency is expected to compile statistical data for all of its financial, care-giving and client activities and to establish benchmarks of expectations for interactions and outcomes that are geared to the improvement of the lives of clients.

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<sup>10</sup> All research should be conducted in accordance with the principles articulated in the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979), the codes of ethics of relevant professional disciplines, accreditation standards of relevant accrediting bodies, the National Statement on Research Integrity in Social Work (CSWE, 2006) and other applicable organizational and governmental rules and regulations.

- b) Statistics and benchmarks will remain classified within the agency, but may be discussed in public without reference to any specific individual or agency relationship with clients.

## **Appendix A**

### **Sources of the Principles and Values:**

### ***Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church***

*“Faced with new situations and issues, Catholic social teaching...gradually developed and has now found a comprehensive presentation in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church published in 2004 by the Pontifical Council Iustitia et Pax,” ... In today’s complex situation, not least because of the growth of a globalized economy, the Church’s social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid even beyond the confines of the Church: in the face of ongoing development these guidelines need to be addressed in the context of dialogue with all those seriously concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live.” — Benedict XVI, God is Love, 27*

#### **Why Do We List These Principles And Values?**

The Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. Code of Ethics is based on the principles and values articulated and organized in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, published by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 2004 in order to provide consistency and uniformity of presentation and references.

An electronic version can be found at:

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)

A printed copy of the *Compendium* can be purchased through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Product Code: 5-692, ISBN: 1-57455-692-4, Pages: 480). It can be ordered online at:

<http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=505>

In this appendix, specific quotes from the *Compendium* will be presented that form the basis of our Catholic Charities Statements of Principles and Values. The number in parenthesis indicates the paragraph in the *Compendium* wherein it is located for further review and reflection.

#### **Principles**

##### **Human Dignity**

“Therefore, being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and

of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. Further, he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead” [204]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 108)

“In fact, the roots of human rights are to be found in the dignity that belongs to each human being [305]. This dignity, inherent in human life and equal in every person, is perceived and understood first of all by reason.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 153)

“Inextricably connected to the topic of rights is the issue of the duties falling to men and women, which is given appropriate emphasis in the interventions of the Magisterium. The mutual complementarities between rights and duties – they are indissolubly linked – are recalled several times, above all in the human person who possesses them” [322]. This bond also has a social dimension: ‘In human society to one man’s right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question’ ” [323]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 156)

### Common Good

“The relationship between God and man (sic.) is reflected in the relational and social dimension of human nature.” Man, in fact, is not a solitary being, but “a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential” [208]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 110)

“The principle of the common good, to which every aspect of social life must be related if it is to attain its fullest meaning, stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people.” According to its primary and broadly accepted sense, the common good indicates “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily” [346]. “The common good does not consist in the simple sum of the particular goods of each subject of a social entity. Belonging to everyone and to each person, it is and remains ‘common,’ because it is indivisible and because only together is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness, with regard also to the future.” Just as the moral actions of an individual are accomplished in doing what is good, so too the actions of a society attain their full stature when they bring about the common good. The common good, in fact, can be understood as the social and community dimension of the moral good. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 164)

### Subsidiarity

“Subsidiarity is among the most constant and characteristic directives of the Church’s social doctrine.” It has been present since the first great social encyclical [395]. It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without showing concern for the family, groups, associations, local territorial realities; in short, for that aggregate of economic, social, cultural, sports-oriented, recreational, professional and political expressions to



which people spontaneously give life and which make it possible for them to achieve effective social growth [396]. This is the realm of civil society, understood as the sum of the relationships between individuals and intermediate social groupings, which are the first relationships to arise and which come about thanks to “the creative subjectivity of the citizen” [397]. This network of relationships strengthens the social fabric and constitutes the basis of a true community of persons, making possible the recognition of higher forms of social activity [398]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 185)

“Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them” [399]. On the basis of this principle, all societies of a superior order must adopt attitudes of help (“subsidium”) – therefore of support, promotion, development – with respect to lower-order societies. In this way, intermediate social entities can properly perform the functions that fall to them without being required to hand them over unjustly to other social entities of a higher level, by which they would end up being absorbed and substituted, in the end seeing themselves denied their dignity and essential place.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 186)

“The characteristic implication of subsidiarity is participation [402], which is expressed essentially in a series of activities by means of which the citizen, either as an individual or in association with others, whether directly or through representation, contributes to the cultural, economic, political and social life of the civil community to which he belongs [403]. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good” [404]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 189)

### Solidarity with the Poor

“The principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern.” To this end, the preferential option for the poor should be reaffirmed in all its force [384]. “This is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian, inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods. Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future” [385]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 182)

“The Church’s love for the poor is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, by the poverty of Jesus and by his attention to the poor. This love concerns material poverty and also the numerous forms of cultural and religious poverty” [389]. The Church, “since her origin and in spite of the failing of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defence and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere [390]. Prompted by the Gospel injunction, “ You have received without paying, give without pay” (Mt 10:8), the Church teaches that one should assist one’s brothers and sisters in their various needs and fills the human community with countless works of corporal and spiritual mercy. “Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God” [391], even if the practice of charity is not limited to alms-giving but implies addressing the social and political dimensions of the problem of poverty. In her teaching the Church constantly returns to this relationship between charity and justice: “When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice” [392]. The Council Fathers strongly recommended that this duty be fulfilled correctly, remembering that “what is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity” [393]. Love for the poor is certainly “incompatible with immoderate love of riches or their selfish use” [394] (cf. Jas 5:1-6). (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 184)

## **Values**

### **Truth**

“Men and women have the specific duty to move always towards the truth, to respect it and bear responsible witness to it [431]. Living in the truth has special significance in social relationships. In fact, when the coexistence of human beings within a community is founded on truth, it is ordered and fruitful, and it corresponds to their dignity as persons [432]. The more people and social groups strive to resolve social problems according to the truth, the more they distance themselves from abuses and act in accordance with the objective demands of morality.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 198)

### **Freedom**

“Freedom is the highest sign in man of his being made in the divine image and, consequently, is a sign of the sublime dignity of every human person” [435]. Freedom is exercised in relationships between human beings. Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognized as a free and responsible being. All owe to each other this duty of respect. The right to the exercise of freedom, especially in moral and religious matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of the human person [436]. The meaning of freedom must not be restricted, considering it from a purely individualistic perspective and reducing it to the arbitrary and uncontrolled exercise of one’s own personal autonomy: “Far from being achieved in total self-sufficiency and the absence of relationships, freedom only truly exists where reciprocal bonds, governed by truth and justice, link people to one another” [437]. The

understanding of freedom becomes deeper and broader when it is defended, even at the social level, in all of its various dimensions. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 199)

“The value of freedom, as an expression of the singularity of each human person, is respected when every member of society is permitted to fulfill his personal vocation; to seek the truth and profess his religious, cultural and political ideas; to express his opinions; to choose his state of life and, as far as possible, his line of work; to pursue initiatives of an economic, social or political nature. This must take place within a ‘strong juridical framework’ [438], within the limits imposed by the common good and public order, and, in every case, in a manner characterized by responsibility.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 199)

## Justice

“Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God”[391], even if the practice of charity is not limited to alms-giving but implies addressing the social and political dimensions of the problem of poverty. In her teaching the Church constantly returns to this relationship between charity and justice: “When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice”[392]. The Council Fathers strongly recommended that this duty be fulfilled correctly, remembering that “what is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity”[393]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 184)

“Justice is a value that accompanies the exercise of the corresponding cardinal moral virtue” [441]. According to its most classic formulation, it “consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour” [442]. From a subjective point of view, justice is translated into behavior that is based on the will to recognize the other as a person, while, from an objective point of view, it constitutes the decisive criteria of morality in the intersubjective and social sphere” [443]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 201)

“The Church’s social Magisterium constantly calls for the most classical forms of justice to be respected: commutative, distributive and legal justice [444]. Ever greater importance has been given to social justice [445], which represents a real development in general justice, the justice that regulates social relationships according to the criterion of observance of the law. Social justice, a requirement related to the social question which today is worldwide in scope, concerns the social, political and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions” [446]. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 202)

## Love

“Among the virtues in their entirety, and in particular between virtues, social values and love, there exists a deep bond that must be ever more fully recognized. Love, often

restricted to relationships of physical closeness or limited to merely subjective action on behalf of others, must be reconsidered in its authentic value as the highest and universal criterion of the whole of social ethics. Among all paths, even those sought and taken in order to respond to the ever new forms of current social questions, the “more excellent way” (cf. 1 Cor 12:31) is that marked out by love.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 204)

“It is from the inner wellspring of love that the values of truth, freedom and justice are born and grow. Human life in society is ordered, bears fruits of goodness and responds to human dignity when it is founded on truth; when it is lived in justice, that is, in the effective respect of rights and in the faithful carrying out of corresponding duties; when it is animated by selflessness, which makes the needs and requirements of others seem as one’s own and intensifies the communion of spiritual values and the concern for material necessities; when it is brought about in the freedom that befits the dignity of men and women, prompted by their rational nature to accept responsibility for their actions [451]. These values constitute the pillars which give strength and consistency to the edifice of life and deeds: they are values that determine the quality of every social action and institution.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 205)