



## *The Call to Sponsorship*

### LEADER

God of goodness and love, thank you for gifting us with water as one of your favored instruments in forming a community. From its inception, the church, the new people of God, the new community of believers, is born of water. Help us, as we look today at sponsorship of Catholic health care ministry, to see in water—from the powerful tides of the oceans to rapidly moving rivers and gently flowing streams—a connection to our ministry. Guide our belief that just as water always finds a way to flow, the ministry of sponsorship will always find a way to further your Son's healing mission and serve the communities you have formed. Teach us to be true to our calling as sponsors to encourage, inspire, and challenge the ministry into the future. Let us reflect on the ways that the work we do gives faithful witness to who we say we are.

### SIDE 1

Sponsorship is a formidable gift to the people and to the church. We, too, are gifts to the church, because we sponsor ministries that witness to the church's fidelity, to its call to build the kingdom of God.

### SIDE 2

Sponsorship lives in faith, hope, and prayer. It is a call that arises from an experience of God, a vocation, and it is a ministry that believes that those experiences and that presence are with us on an ongoing basis.

### SIDE 1

Sponsorship is open to risks and transformation. It does not now look like it did 100 years ago, and it will not look like this in another 10 years.

### SIDE 2

In the stories of our founders, there is an unrelenting passion for the mission, not for the institutions or the organizations, but for the mission.

### SIDE 1

Sponsorship is a ministry possessing a heritage, and it accepts responsibility for the integrity of

the organizations it sponsors. That is a heavy burden.

### SIDE 2

Sponsorship asks for accountability and is itself accountable. It asks its leaders how they can do more to care for those who are poor. It makes itself accountable to the church and it also renders an account to the community. We are accountable to the communities in which our organizations find themselves.

### SIDE 1

Sponsorship, as a ministry, is one of possibility—not certainty or even probability—but possibility concerning the future: a future that begins in the calling of names. Sponsorship understands that name calling begets name calling. Jesus calls disciples, the disciples call others. So the question for us as a ministry of possibility is whom shall we call? Whom will I call?

### SIDE 2

The ministry of possibility in the future will ultimately be one of relationships—relationships with the official church, the community, and the people who are served by the ministries; also relationships with the religious communities that carry the heritage, with the founders, and with the ancestors who have gone before us; and, ultimately, relationships with a God who calls.

*—Adapted from a presentation by Sr. Juliana M. Casey, IHM, at CHA's 2005 Canon Law Sponsorship Institute*

### ALL

Gracious God, we thank you for bringing us to another day and to new opportunities for serving you, one another, the Catholic health ministry, and the cause of your kingdom. Open our hearts and our minds to the guidance of your Spirit so that we will recognize and seize upon the possibilities that lie before us this day to celebrate and work on sponsorship of this ministry. May the work we do together be of benefit to all those we serve and may it enliven and refresh our spirits and our commitment to the cause of your kingdom. Amen.

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