



# *With Glad and Generous Hearts*

**READING** Acts 2:43-47

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**REFLECTION**

In this description of the early church from the Acts of the Apostles, we see an image of true community. As they waited for Jesus' return, these Christians joined together, sharing what they had for the benefit of all, particularly those with most need. They worshiped together in the temple and shared meals together in their homes. Most of all, they were united in "glad and generous hearts."

The first of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* tells us that "a Catholic institutional health care service is a community that provides health care to those in need of it. This service must be animated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and guided by the moral tradition of the Church."

How does our community—the community of our health care organization—compare with the early Christian community described in the Acts of the Apostles?

Are we awed by the experience of caring for the sick, the infirm, the elderly, the vulnerable? As we join together in service of God's people in need, are our hearts "glad and generous"?  
*Spend a few moments in quiet reflection on these questions.*

**PRAYER**

Let us pray.  
God of gladness, God of generosity,  
You see the difficult work of caring for those who are sick and in need.  
You know the stress that comes from schedules and budgets and regulations.  
You understand the toll that caregivers pay as they struggle to heal the hurting.

And yet, you are the one who calls us to be caregivers.  
You inspire us to serve. You fire our hearts with compassion for those who suffer.  
You choose us to be carriers of your healing love.

Strengthen our bodies for the physical work of caring.  
Sharpen our minds and senses with greater perception of the needs of others.  
And give us glad and generous hearts that we may join with our colleagues in loving community,  
A community that supports us as we support others, heals us as we seek to bring healing to those in need.

Amen.



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