

AN ENDORSEMENT FROM ARCHBISHOP DINOIA



Over the past 50 years, we have witnessed the emerging role of the laity in the Catholic Church. Some of the ministries of the Church, such as health care, education and social services, which were once overseen by priests and vowed religious, are now being led by the laity. “Catholic identity” was assumed to be present in these organizations that were run by priests, sisters and brothers by virtue of the theological formation and spirituality these men and women received.

As the leadership of these ministries has shifted to the laity, the question of how to ensure the Catholic identity of these organizations has emerged. I am aware of the extensive formation programs that many Catholic health systems in the United States have developed over the last 20 years. These programs help lay leaders develop the competencies and virtues necessary for leading the Church’s healing ministry.

Since one of the goals of ministry formation is the preparation of leaders and individuals who will serve in the name of the Church, it is important we verify organizations that claim to be a ministry of the Church are in fact acting in consonance. When I learned that CHA was creating a tool that would measure the presence and strength of an organization’s ministerial identity, I was interested to learn more.

I have reviewed the *CHA Ministry Identity Assessment* and the results gathered from the four pilot sites. I am impressed by the level of honesty and transparency the key performance indicators require. Looking at the daily operations and decisions of the health ministry from the lens of CHA’s core commitments will make the mission and values of Catholic health more relevant for all involved in the process. Finally, seeing ministry identity as part of an organization’s continuous quality improvement is an excellent way to assure accountability and fidelity to the mission of the Church.

I heartily endorse the *CHA Ministry Identity Assessment*. I have suggested to Sr. Carol Keehan, DC, CHA’s President and Chief Executive Officer, that this assessment process, along with the formation programs developed by Catholic health systems, be shared with the other ministries of the Church. This will allow the lay leaders of Catholic higher education and social services to also have the tools they need to successfully carry their ministries into the future.

I wish the Catholic Health Association and its members continued blessings as you pioneer innovative ways for the ministries of the Church to flourish into the future!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ J. AUGUSTINE DINOIA

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