



National Catholic Health Care Week 2020

September 1, 2020

Dear Bishops, Archbishops, and Cardinals:

We will soon be celebrating our second annual National Catholic Health Care Week from Sunday, October 4 to Saturday, October 10, 2020.

We ask that you participate in the Week by sharing the message of Catholic health care in your parishes and communities through prayers of support, beginning Sunday, October 4.

Awaken: Revealing the Courageous Gift of Catholic Health Care

National Catholic Health Care Week is part of a broader Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC) initiative called [Awaken: Revealing the Courageous Gift of Catholic Health Care](#), an invitation to unite our voices and create a movement to boldly, confidently express the role, value, and impact of Catholic health care in Canada. Awaken cultivates ambassadors and advocates to be vocal, informed supporters of Catholic health care and the healing ministry of Jesus in Canada. Each of us contributes to this campaign through conversations we have with influencers and decision-makers in our communities, provincially, and nationally.

A Challenging Landscape, An Enduring Mission

Health care around the world has been challenged in unimaginable ways since our inaugural National Catholic Health Care Week last year with the pandemic spreading quickly and relentlessly around the globe over the past eight months.

COVID-19 has transformed our health care landscape and society. In Canada, the pandemic has shone a public light on many important issues, perhaps most significantly the vulnerability and marginalization of our seniors. It has initiated public discussion about concepts at the heart of our Catholic ministry—community, solidarity, common good, and our social responsibility to those most vulnerable. And, individually, it has called us all to reflect on quality of life, the importance of human connection, and the meaning of wellbeing—body, mind and spirit.

The pandemic has also highlighted the timeless relevance of Catholic social teaching and our collective role in building a Canadian society that reaches out to every person who is suffering from illness, stigma, poverty, or loneliness.

Our Catholic identity is grounded in a core belief that it is a privilege to attend to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those we serve, offering them comfort, healing, and love.

Catholic health care providers have carried this enduring mission into an uncertain world where those we serve—and those who serve them—struggle under the burden of isolation, fear, depression, separation, fatigue, and uncertainty each day.

Throughout this challenging time, we have witnessed the tremendous depth and strength of our people and stories of courage, hope, and resilience. We follow the example of our Founding Sisters—visionary and resourceful women who advocated for those most at risk and faced insurmountable challenges with compassion, courage and innovation.

Their ministry has become our mission in a modern and challenging world.



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National Catholic Health Care Week 2020: Focus and Resources

This year, National Health Care Week seeks to build understanding, connection and trust about our mission and contribution as a Catholic health community in Canada's pandemic response. We are proud of our collective response to the pandemic and grateful for the privilege of living the Gospel as a source of hope and healing in today's world.

Please pray for our Catholic health care ministry during National Catholic Health Care Week, and use the following resources to raise awareness in your dioceses and local parishes.

Prayers of the Faithful and Sunday Bulletin Announcement

Attached are suggested Prayers of the Faithful and a bulletin announcement, that can adapted as necessary by local parishes.

Daily Reflections

Attached is a set of five daily reflections that can be used during National Catholic Health Care Week to engage the faithful and the community. They celebrate the mission-inspired efforts of our teams, encourage personal reflection, and promote understanding of how our Catholic identity and tradition has guided and strengthened our response to the pandemic. The themes were drawn from the Awaken Message which was crafted through cross-country consultation and articulates four pillars that define our unique role and impact in Canada.

Awaken Resources

The Awaken Message, along with a fact sheet outlining the footprint of Catholic health care in Canada, is also attached. More Awaken resources including [key messages](#), a short [video](#), and [templates](#), are available on the [CHAC website](http://chac.ca) (chac.ca).

Social Media Guide

We ask that you also use your communication and engagement platforms to reveal the courageous gift of Catholic health care through stories, facts, and resources. An updated social media guide with ready-to-use posts and captions for Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook will be available for your use by mid-September through CHAC website. We encourage you to share the posts from Catholic health ministries in your diocese during this week as well.

Thank you for your continued prayers and blessing on our work and your faithful support of the health care ministry in Canada. Please call or email if you would like further information.

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