PASTORAL OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS WITH A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan 2020

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON

Spirituality of Communion
RESPECT
And Overcoming Sexual Abuse

Objective

Understand that all people are created in God’s image and likeness and, therefore, worthy of respect; act accordingly.

Actions

1.1 Raise awareness of God’s intention for humanity, respecting all life and creation, as found in Sacred Scripture, especially by involving the youth and young adults.

1.2 Foster the understanding, appreciation, and practice of temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude [CCC 1804-1811] as cornerstones for a more respectful and dignified way of life for everyone.

1.3 Engage Laity and clergy in holy, healthy, and nurturing relationships by multiplying the opportunities for non-ministry-related interactions with families and groups.

1.4 Assist the parish in preventing sexual abuse and support the victims.

1.5 Raise awareness, understanding, and commitment across all parish leaders to follow Pope Francis’ and USCCB’s directions to report abuse or concealment, to promote healing for individuals and communities.

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1 Capable of transcending a life centered on self-gratification and lack of consideration to others.
Objective

Recognize, accept, appreciate, and embrace others as valued members of our diverse Catholic community.

Actions

2.1 Intentionally build a Parish Pastoral Council that is representative of the diversity of the area, with special consideration to race and age.

2.2 Enhance training and formation of parish leaders (clergy and laity) in human dignity, intercultural competency, and inclusion.

2.3 Provide opportunities for parishioners and within families to discover their own unconscious bias and other challenges regarding diversity.

2.4 Eliminate obstacles and restrictions that exclude or discourage families and individuals from engaging in our communities, including mobility, cognitive development, culture and other forms of diversity.

2.5 Model Christ in our kindness, courtesy, gratitude, and forgiveness as the normal way of interaction, especially when it's hard.

2.6 Identify and implement opportunities to celebrate different forms of diversity through art, music, food, and devotions across the liturgical year.

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This section describes family and its purpose, its nature as a constantly developing system, its position at the center of social diversity and change, and its constant interaction with institutions\(^4\). It also provides implications (→) for policies, programs, ministries, and services offered by the Church.

### 3.1 A Family Perspective

A family is a community of persons bound together by blood, marriage, and adoption for their whole lives. Within a family marriage is a holy, intimate, exclusive, permanent, and faithful partnership of husband and wife.

The Church has an understanding of the mission of family life, rooted in Scripture and its tradition, which holds for its members. This is to enjoy, reveal, and protect their intimate community of life and love, and by doing so they serve to build up God’s kingdom in history. So the family’s project consists of forming true communities, transmitting the abundance of life and human development, participate in the progress of society, and become evangelizing communities of the covenant of love offered by God to all humankind.

→ We need to promote the vision for the family, their responses to this quadruple project, and revisit the connections between parish and ministries to the “church of the home.”

### 3.2 Families

Families are not a collection of individuals, but a living and developing system with roles, patterns, and responsibilities are required so that they can function. At the same time, changes in one of their members require the entire system to adjust.

→ We need to review our preconceived notions about what a healthy family is, become aware of the dynamic interconnection of family members, their strengths and coping resources to manage change.

→ We need to appreciate family origins, be sensitive to family cycle stages and conscientious that by helping an individual to change, we may be introducing more stress in a family.

Societal diversity and change reside and affect the roles and activities of families. Families are not all alike. They have diverse structures, needs, means of subsistence, and cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious heritages. They are affected and respond differently to social change, creating a vast range of perceptions, styles, customs, values, rituals, norms, share meanings, lifestyles, and ways of perceiving the world.

- We need to celebrate the uniqueness of each family and take this diversity into account by keeping up to date with family changes, being sensitive to families with special needs of any kind, and build programs on the strength of their traditions.
- We need help some families to realize that is socially acceptable and responsible for turning to others for help, to deal with issues raised by mobility, migration, natural events, economic change, and others.
- We need to help them to manage the influence of societal trends such as individualism, sexual permissiveness, consumerism, digital isolation, and divorce, for example.

Families need to form partnerships with institutions that participate or affect family life. All social institutions, including the Church, make a direct or indirect impact on the unity, wellbeing, health, and stability of families.

- We need to understand that all programs affect families, even those aimed at individuals.
- We need to be sensitive to family members facing great complexity negotiating services from institutions and specialists, sometimes at the expense of the collaborative nature of their relationship.
- We need to create programs and ministries that build on family presence and marriage, rather than take family members from home even more.