

Goal 2: Advocate for the consistent life ethic (CLE)



Rationale:

Many current efforts within the diocese, especially those of Catholic Charities, address issues which are included within the Consistent Life Ethic. For the diocese and parish communities to respond fully to this Synod priority, however, we must provide means to achieve a deeper understanding of individual issues and of the interconnectedness of all life issues (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, etc.).

The Objectives and Action Steps presented below reflect three basic ingredients that the diocesan community identified for this goal:

- ❖ education and formation
- ❖ service
- ❖ advocacy

Education and formation efforts in relation to this goal will be closely coordinated with the life-long religious education goal, as specified in Action Step 1.1.2, and wherever else appropriate.

Full implementation of this goal will challenge each individual personally, and demand conversion, creativity and commitment.

Objective 2.1: Promote awareness of the consistent life ethic through development of learning materials and resources

Pastoral Center Action Steps 1995-96:

- 2.1.1. Provide a minimum of 5 regional information sessions for pastors and other parish leaders about the meaning/definition of CLE
- 2.1.2. Organize a CLE Speakers Bureau, available for parish, regional and diocesan events
- 2.1.3. Promote CLE through various media
- 2.1.4. Create and fund the position of diocesan CLE Coordinator

Parish Action Steps 1995-96: (currently under consideration by each parish)

Objective 2.2: Encourage each parish to become involved annually with a CLE service project

Pastoral Center Action Steps 1995-96:

- 2.2.1. Provide models for service involvement
- 2.2.2. Promote regional, inter-parish and/or ecumenical cooperation in developing service projects

Parish Action Steps 1995-96: (currently under consideration by each parish)

Objective 2.3: Educate Catholics on the need to advocate for public policies supporting CLE

Pastoral Center Action Steps 1995-96:

- 2.3.1. Provide resources and training for parishes on CLE issues – e.g. death penalty, abortion, euthanasia, etc. – and the legislative process
- 2.3.2. Through the Diocesan Public Policy Committee, provide information on CLE advocacy possibilities
- 2.3.3. Encourage parishes to participate in one or two CLE education/advocacy efforts each year

Parish Action Steps 1995-96: (currently under consideration by each parish)

Goal 3: Recognize and value the dignity of women in church and society

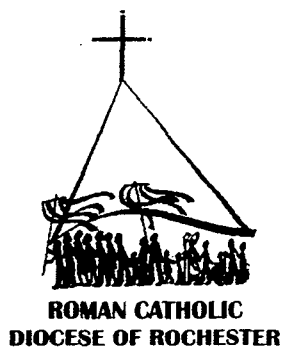


Rationale:

More than any other Goal, the spectrum and strength of opinions on the role of women reflect the diversity of views existing within the church.

The following principles underlie these objectives and actions:

- ❖ Examining the role of women in Church cannot be accomplished without exploring the role of women in society. The Church does not exist in a vacuum
- ❖ Recognizing and valuing the dignity of women is essential to effective implementation of Goals 1 and 2
- ❖ A re-constituted Women's Commission will play a role in implementation of Action Steps
- ❖ The Church welcomes and values the participation of all people
- ❖ Action Steps are respectful of Church teachings on ordination
- ❖ Action Steps are inclusive of the diversity of our church, racially, ethnically and culturally
- ❖ Action Steps are respectful of ecumenical and interreligious relationships
- ❖ Action Steps affirm women in ministry and women in general.



NOTES (explanatory comments, definitions, examples, etc.):

GOAL 2

The consistent life ethic is rooted in the teaching of Jesus Christ that all people should be treated with dignity and respect and that all life is sacred

Our belief in the divine origin of life invites us to a consistent and comprehensive effort to protect, defend, nurture and enhance the gift of life in all circumstances

The term consistent life ethic expresses the inter-relationships and linkages among all life issues

An understanding of and commitment to this Gospel message requires each of us to change our hearts and work for the transformation of human structures to guarantee justice and eliminate the evils of violence in all of its forms

2.1.4. Implementing these Objectives and Action Steps will involve working with several ministry areas at the Pastoral Center as well as with all parishes and regions. This will require a full time coordinator to successfully accomplish

2.2. Service projects could include such activities as Adopt a Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, Birthright, neighborhood food/clothing banks, projects involving housing, violence, prisoners, elder care, hospice work, etc.

2.3.2. The Diocesan Public Policy Committee (DPPC) is a 22-person body appointed by Bishop Clark to make recommendations to the diocese about public policy priorities at the federal, state and local levels. This group is representative of the diocese geographically and includes individuals with expertise in education, human life, human service, health care, and criminal justice. The diocese establishes and advocates for positions consistent with those of the United States Catholic Conference at the federal level and the New York State Catholic Conference at the state level. Many DPPC priorities relate directly to the Consistent Life Ethic

GOAL 3

In 1983, Bishop Clark's pastoral letter, *Fire in the Thornbush*, led to the establishment of a diocesan Women's Commission "to provide an ongoing body to bring to the attention of the Diocese of Rochester matters related to issues of women in the Church."