

AIDS: Diocesan Task Force – A Report

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the story of God choosing the outcast and the oppressed, over and over again, to be messengers of God's love and reconciliation. The AIDS* [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome] (*In this context AIDS includes persons with ARC and HIV related disorders.) epidemic, in many ways, reminds us as a people and as a Church of just what Jesus' ministry was all about. The AIDS epidemic is serious because it is rapidly progressing and at present there is no cure. For each of us, AIDS can be both a serious challenge and an opportunity to examine our beliefs, attitudes and our own ministry. For us as a Church and Institution it is a challenge and opportunity to re-examine our services, programs, ethics and practices in the light of human need and our call to be a compassionate and just people.

In February, 1987 Bishop Anthony M. Pilla announced the formation of the three (3) diocesan Task Forces to study and provide recommendations addressing the crisis presented by AIDS. Task Force membership was developed from agency and community recommendations of people with professional and/or personal interest in serving persons with AIDS. All four regions of the Diocese were represented on the three Task Forces. This document is a summary of the work of these three groups.

This report will focus on issues and concerns of our ministry as a Catholic Community and Church in the context of AIDS. This document is an attempt to examine what our pastoral, educational, social service and health care ministries must consider and do in response to the AIDS crisis. The Church's teachings on human intimacy and sexuality were foundational and were referenced in the development of this report.

The report is divided into seven sections. Each section includes a short summary of the guiding principles or concepts that shaped the recommendations and policy statements. The policy statements contained in this report are proposed Diocesan policy. The recommendations are provided as suggested guidelines. As a community of faith who have been guided and shaped by the healing and nurturing ministry of Jesus, we see these recommendations and policies as not just options for consideration but as our challenge and responsibility.

EDUCATION

Jesus, the teacher, addressed his apostles for the last time and charged them with the responsibility to, "Go, teach all nations." Over the centuries, this teaching mission has always been important in the life of the Church. Our teachers continue to be seen as role models, mentors and communicators of values. We foster and promote education as a lifelong process. As Catholics, we value the nurturing of both the mind and heart. We know we are called to grow as both learners and believers.

As an educator, the Church recognizes its role in helping people to respond to the AIDS crisis in a rational and compassionate manner. We are called to dispel fear and, hopefully, promote involvement in meaningful action. For us this is not an option but our responsibility.

Because there is no vaccine against HIV and no cure for AIDS and ARC is available, the sole means of prevention at this time is the creation of a well-informed public. Presently, the only way to control the spread of the HIV virus is a massive educational effort.

We believe the best way to address the fear, prejudice, hysteria and indifference that has come to be associated with AIDS is through sharing the truth. In the search of this truth, we as Catholics have a long-standing heritage and tradition of Catholic teachings that situate our response within the ethical and moral guidelines on human sexuality. Education within this moral framework must be made available to all sectors of society.

As a Church, we must promote education within our parishes, schools, social service agencies, health care facilities and all diocesan organizations. Our educational efforts should include information sessions for our parishioners, clients, students, patients, employees, volunteers, and all involved in Church ministry. These educational programs cannot be limited to the medical/biological facts about AIDS and the special risk behaviors, but must address our Catholic teachings and moral values. We are a people blessed with the wisdom and teachings from generations of Christians reflecting on life. Therefore, we cannot abdicate our role in educating the public on AIDS. We must be sure that all we do is shaped by our values and beliefs. This is a teachable moment for us as a society and a Church. While irrational fears can be dispelled especially by the medical judgment that one cannot become infected with the AIDS virus by casual contact, we must turn to our ethic of love and compassion to shape our ministry and our response.

I. POLICY STATEMENT

All parishes, agencies, departments, offices, schools and institutions of the Cleveland Diocese are to provide educational programs and

information on AIDS to both their employees and the recipients of their services on AIDS.

(See Education Secretariat AIDS Policy Attachment 1)

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that each agency, parish office, department, school, and institution of the Cleveland Diocese give serious consideration and take action on the following:

1. The provision of educational programs on AIDS to all persons, especially those at risk;
2. The provision of ongoing seminars and support on the ethical, pastoral, medical and social aspects of AIDS;
3. The development of a network with other community groups in the provision of educational programs on AIDS;
4. The provision of written information on AIDS, bi-lingual when appropriate, addressing the concerns of the general public within the Catholic perspective;
5. The provision of active outreach to community groups who do not have resources to provide AIDS education;
6. The provision of a list of literature and speakers on AIDS;
7. The provision of educational programs which utilize the media in helping to reduce prejudice towards persons with AIDS; and
8. The targeting of adolescents for educational programs on AIDS.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy is the work of the Church. These words from the Second Vatican Council affirm the Church's call to be a social advocate.

The job and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish, of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community of people, people who united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, press onwards towards the kingdom of the Father and are bearers of a message of salvation intended for all people. That is why Christians cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history (Pastoral constitution on the Church in the Modern World, "Gaudium et Spec," par. 1).

The history and destiny of the followers of Jesus is not separate from that of the people of our time. Far from removing us from the cares and concerns of this world, our faith in Jesus charges us to see that God's salvific activity continues to take place in the world. Moreover, as God's people, we are called to see

ourselves—humbly, yet boldly—as instruments of God’s healing, liberating, loving, caring, and saving activity. And most particularly, as advocates or spokespersons for those “afflicted in any way” Christians make themselves available as servants for their human brothers and sisters in need.

Social advocacy begins with a call to help those in need. It often involves taking on unpopular positions and speaking the word that no one wants to hear. As an advocate for persons with AIDS, the Church recognizes its gospel roots in calling attention publicly to the injustices which often befall those in crisis. Jesus was a social and prophetic advocate for the poor and oppressed of his time. Today, the Church is called in a time of crisis to be an advocate for and with persons with AIDS.

The role of the Church as an advocate is fourfold:

1. It must speak to Institutions and the wider society on behalf of persons with AIDS.
2. It must be rooted in conversations with and among persons with AIDS. This involves listening to, caring for, interpreting and representing the needs of persons with AIDS.
3. It must offer opportunities for persons with AIDS to speak about themselves to the Church and the wider society.
4. It must provide opportunities for persons with AIDS to speak for other persons with AIDS.

The Church’s advocacy must be directed at eliminating stereotypes and correcting misinformation. At present, AIDS is an incurable human disease which cuts across all racial and ethnic lines; it affects men, women and children; and there is no evidence that AIDS can be contracted through ordinary, casual contact. Therefore, there is no medical justification for discrimination against persons with AIDS.

As an advocate, the Church is responsible to share information and data with persons with AIDS concerning their human, civil and legal rights. We must provide opportunities for persons with AIDS to be a part of the decision-making processes that affect their lives. Advocacy is much more than only being a listener for persons with AIDS or speaking on their behalf in the public forum. As Church we must engage persons with AIDS themselves in the ministry of advocacy.

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Consistent with the Catholic social teaching and gospel traditions, the Diocese of Cleveland will act as an advocate for persons with AIDS in the areas of justice and human rights.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that as applicable each parish, agency, office, department and institution of the Cleveland Diocese give serious consideration and take action on the following:

1. Advocacy with persons with AIDS for the provision of full continuum of services in all stages of the illness;
2. Inclusion of the issues related to the AIDS crisis on the agenda of the Social Action Agencies of the Diocese;
3. Inclusion of the issues of persons with AIDS on the agenda of all groups in the Diocese that provide a legislative and advocacy focus;
4. Sensitizing all Diocesan staff and personnel to the issues and needs of persons with AIDS and to speak on their behalf at the local and parish levels; and
5. Advocating for increased funding from third party payers including State and Federal Government for prevention and treatment programs, medical research and expanded services to people with AIDS.

EMPLOYMENT

Beginning with *Rerum Novarum* issued in 1891 by Leo XIII to the recent encyclical *LABOREM EXERCENS (ON HUMAN WORK)* published in 1980 by John Paul II, the Church's social teachings have consistently reaffirmed the dignity of the worker and placed work at the center of the social question. *ON HUMAN WORK* states that human beings are the proper subject of work. Work expresses and increases human dignity. The Pope stresses that suitable employment for all is needed because through work humans share in the activity of their God and are given dignity.

Rooted in these social teachings is the fundamental principle that the person is primary. The Church has increasingly emphasized the sacredness of all human life. Anything that threatens the welfare of persons, such as the AIDS crisis, is a profoundly religious issue. The person is "the clearest reflection of God among us" (*Economic Justice for All*, par. 13) and so to fail to respect the person or to fail to care for the person in need—such as persons with AIDS, their families or friends—is to involve oneself in nothing short of sacrilege!

The Bishops of the United States, in their document on economic life, called particular attention to the role of the church and its employment practices. Not only is the Church to provide the social teaching on work and employment, but the Church is challenged to provide a leadership of example in its employment practices. As a Diocese of nearly one million Catholics we not only represent a powerful voice but through our employment policies as a major employer in

Northeastern Ohio, we can model and significantly influence the employment practices toward persons with AIDS.

We believe that together we are co-creators with God. Work is a fundamental dimension of our life on earth and a primary way in which we contribute to the human community. The Church has a responsibility to see that its workplace and employment practices are characterized by a just treatment of persons with AIDS. Any employment discrimination is a violation of a person's basic human dignity and is inconsistent with our Christian work ethic.

I. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Persons seeking employment in the Diocese of Cleveland shall not be discriminated against on the basis of AIDS.
2. Employment shall not be terminated on the basis of AIDS or ARC unless a person is unable to continue her/his duties or is a hazard to self or others. This is in compliance with Ohio State Law which defines AIDS as a handicap and prohibits discrimination on that basis.
3. If a person with AIDS is unable to continue employment, the employment benefits will be in accord with agency policy pertaining to employees with any other handicap or illness.
4. Requests for job restructuring, modification and/or reassignment will be considered. As necessary, medical documentation may be requested to support such requests. This policy shall apply to an employee with AIDS or ARC; in the same way that it applies to other employees with particular medical needs, such as employees receiving chemotherapy and pregnant women.
5. A comprehensive educational program on AIDS shall be undertaken in the workplace. Such education shall be factual, shall be designed to prevent unreasonable reactions to the disease and persons affected, and shall include issues in social responsibility.
6. The identity of a person with AIDS is confidential and every precaution shall be taken to protect that confidentiality.
7. Our current insurance plan should cover treatment and care of AIDS or AIDS-related conditions in the same way care is provided for other illnesses.
8. Confidential counseling and supportive services shall be made available to the individual and his/her family during and after employment.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

All Catholic agencies, schools, parishes, departments and institutions review their Personnel Policies so as to be consistent with these Diocesan policies.

PASTORAL MINISTRY

The mission of the Church is to make the presence of God known to all people. We share in that mission when we allow others to experience God's presence through our care, unconditional love, and nonjudgmental support. The ministry of the Church has been entrusted to each baptized person. It has been entrusted to us. Through baptism, we not only become part of a faith community, but we are challenged to use our personal talents and gifts in responding to others. We are called to share in the ministry of Jesus. We are called to care for one another and reflect the unconditional love of Jesus.

The Gospel call to compassion is clear. In Matthew's description of the last judgment, we are told, the heirs to the kingdom will be identified as those who showed compassion to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill and the prisoner. Jesus reminds us what you do for others, the least of my people, you do for me (Matt 25: 31-46).

The pastoral response to the AIDS crisis calls us as a people to act not in judgment but with support, compassion and love. We must allow our Church and our parishes to be places where persons with AIDS their family and friends can bring their pain and grief and receive a comforting and caring acceptance. Before any specialized ministry to persons with AIDS is initiated, each of us must recognize our call to be the pastoral presence of the Church. Before we try to "do" something, we need to learn the value of just "being there." We need to develop the skills of listening and walking with persons with AIDS, their family and friends. We need to acknowledge that this is our opportunity to bring healing in the midst of pain and suffering.

Our Diocesan response to the AIDS crisis, if it is to be effective, must have local parish implementation. Persons with AIDS, their family and friends live in our parishes. They are part of our parish faith community. Currently, many persons with AIDS are apprehensive about sharing their pain with us. We must take the first step in reaching out and communicating our care and the healing presence of Jesus. With other local organizations and Churches, we must open our hearts and doors to all those affected by AIDS.

I. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The pastoral care resources of the Diocese of Cleveland will be provided to all persons with AIDS, their family members and friends.
2. Persons with AIDS shall be entitled to participate in all Diocesan and Parish program and pastoral care services. They have the right to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. Persons with AIDS are entitled to Christian burial in accordance with the Code of Canon Law.

3. All persons involved in pastoral care ministry in the Diocese should take responsibility for acquiring basic education and ongoing information regarding AIDS.
4. All pastoral care ministers are responsible to extend the compassionate, non-judgmental healing ministry of Jesus to all affected by AIDS.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that all Diocesan offices and departments involved with the training of pastoral ministers and the actual provision of pastoral care services include the following in all programs and services:

1. Initial basic education and regular updates regarding AIDS including practical issues, counseling and spiritual concerns;
2. Days of prayer and reflection for pastoral ministers serving persons with AIDS family members and friends;
3. Sacramental outreach programs at the parishes to persons with AIDS, family members and friends;
4. Participation in Ecumenical efforts reaching out to persons with AIDS at the local parish and diocesan levels;
5. Establishment of regional teams comprised of pastoral care ministers, health care professionals and social workers as a resource for the parishes and community at large in dealing with all pastoral aspects of the AIDS crisis;
6. Establishment of a central diocesan office that shall serve as a central resource, training vehicle, and coordinator of all Diocesan efforts to minister to and serve persons with AIDS; and
7. Provision of programs and services at the regional and parish level that reach out and welcome persons with AIDS into the parish community, providing opportunities for prayer, sacramental ministry and personal spiritual support.

HEALTH CARE

The AIDS crisis challenges us to be a healing community in deed and in truth. St. Paul reminds us that if one member suffers in the Body of Christ, which is the Church, all the members suffer with that member (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Throughout his ministry, Jesus showed great concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of the sick. Throughout history, Catholic health care institutions have followed the example of Jesus in providing compassionate, non-judgmental, quality care to the ill. The sources of our Catholic doctrine and tradition urge and support us in providing that same kind of treatment and care to persons with AIDS, ARC and HIV infections. Persons with AIDS deserve the same high standard of medical and nursing care as any other patient. Attitudes of fear or discrimination,

either subtle or overt, are contrary to the fundamental values of charity and justice that we owe one another as members of the Body of Christ.

Jesus taught us to show mercy to the sick and suffering. He made it clear, that our God is a loving God who does not punish through illness or disease. Rather, suffering, illness and pain are to be seen as part of the human condition. All those who are ill, including persons with AIDS, must be treated with dignity and compassion in all facets of care including hospitals, hospice nursing homes, paramedic services, home health care, funeral homes and cemeteries.

The health care community must do all that it can to provide not only state-of-the-art medical care, but must also provide emotional, social and spiritual support for persons with AIDS, their families and friends. Healthcare workers must treat all patients in a humane and compassionate manner. Because of the length and intensity of suffering experienced by persons with AIDS, the caregivers themselves may also need personal and emotional support. Health care institutions have the additional responsibility to provide such support to their staffs.

The AIDS crisis makes it clear that healthcare professionals have an obligation to respond in charity and justice. Because hospitals have the status, resources and credibility in the community, they are an important voice in the task of educating the public about AIDS, in the provision of compassionate quality treatment to persons with AIDS and in shaping the attitudes and emotional response of the general public to persons with AIDS. Charity requires that healthcare professionals not only deal with their own fears but assume a proactive stance toward all people in need. This is a tremendous responsibility and challenge.

I. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Catholic Health Care community has the responsibility to treat all individuals including those affected by HIV infection, and particularly AIDS and ARC, with the best available medical and supportive care in a non-judgmental compassionate manner.
2. Education within the acute care setting will be available on an ongoing basis to the professional, as well as, non-professional staff.
3. Wherever possible education and support services will be provided to the family members and/or significant others who will be involved in the person's care and support after discharge. Support services include emotional, spiritual, financial and psychological help to the patient with AIDS, their family and friends.
4. HIV antibody testing should not be done for purposes of discrimination or to deny services to those in need.
5. Testing, when done, must involve: written informed consent prior to testing, confidentiality throughout the process, in-depth

education and counseling, and the needed medical, emotional and spiritual services.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that all Catholic Health Care Facilities and programs give serious consideration and take action on the following:

1. Collaboration with other organizations in the community in providing financial assistance for the care of uninsured AIDS patients as would be provided for any other uninsured patients;
2. Development of specific emotional, social and pastoral care services for persons with AIDS and ARC and those who are HIV positive. This is vital in the terminal stages of the disease;
3. Development of ongoing educational programs for the entire staff of hospitals, hospice home health care agencies, paramedical services, nursing homes, funeral homes and cemeteries;
4. Provision of a "team approach" in the care of persons with AIDS and those infected with HIV. Care should be provided by an interdisciplinary professional group experienced and educated in the many different aspects of care of these patients;
5. Involvement of persons with AIDS (to the fullest extent possible) in all decisions and decision-making processes related to their personal health care;
6. Participation with other community organizations in developing a coordinated continuum of care for the treatment of AIDS patients involving home, respite, hospital, nursing home and hospice care;
7. Review of admission policies;
8. Provision of appropriate community referral services to persons with AIDS; and
9. Development of policies and procedures relating to the management of AIDS in Catholic Health Care Facilities consistent with the recommended guidelines.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Faithful to the gospel and the social teachings of the Church, the Diocese of Cleveland through its social service agencies strives to carry out the Church's mission to serve all people and to confront the root causes of injustice. The services and programs of these agencies are developed and continually modified to meet changing needs. It is clear that the AIDS crisis is one of these needs. It is clear that the agenda, programs, and institutional commitments of Diocesan social service agencies must be reviewed and revised to serve and accommodate the needs of persons with AIDS.

As a provider of social services, the Church continues its rich tradition of not only being an advocate for those in need but also of being an organizer of

programs which address those unmet needs. As Church, we cannot pick and choose only the issues that are convenient or comfortable.

Jesus identified himself as the one who had come to serve, not to be served. He cited his ministry of service as key to his identity and mission (Luke 4: 14-22) and clearly stated that anyone who wants to follow him must likewise serve the needs of all (Matthew 20: 24-28). Service and social responsibility in Christian life has been the work of Catholic social teaching. Service and social responsibility to persons with AIDS must be the focus of the Church through its social service agencies today.

Both historically and developmentally we recognize that the best means to use in teaching or sharing one's values is example. Words are not enough. We look for what one does to confirm what one says. As Catholic social service agencies respond to the AIDS crisis, this same principle must be evident if they are to remain credible. Our practices and services must re-affirm the dignity of all people. Not only our hearts and minds but our doors and programs must provide a welcome to persons with AIDS, their family and friends.

In cooperation with other Churches, community organizations and volunteer efforts, both advocacy for the expanded service to persons with AIDS must become part of the focus and agenda of Catholic social service agencies. All involved in working at these agencies are called to a ministry in which there is a common experience of the unconditional love and healing presence of Jesus. We are called and challenged to be servants.

I. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Persons with AIDS are to be accepted for any agency service on the same basis as any other client. Church sponsored agencies must act in a way that invites people with any affliction, including AIDS, to approach them for service.
2. Each Diocesan social service agency should study and adopt policies that reflect the Church's compassion to all people with regard to the appropriate provision of service to persons with AIDS, their family and friends.
3. All Catholic Social Service Agencies are to provide basic and ongoing education on AIDS for all employees. Special attention will be given in providing training to the significant number of volunteers who serve in our agencies.
4. The Catholic Charities Agencies are to collaborate with other community organizations and religious groups to establish group homes including opportunities for assisted living, independent living and skilled nursing care.
5. The Catholic Charities Agencies are to collaborate with other community organizations and religious groups to establish support services for families of infants and children with AIDS.

6. Social service agencies that provide counseling programs are to establish support groups for persons with AIDS their family and friends.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that each Catholic Social Service Agency of the Diocese of Cleveland give serious consideration and take action on the following:

1. Inclusion of admission criteria, screening, confidentiality, public information and counseling services in the review and formation of agency policy. Attention should be given to admission and screening policies to assure compliance with Ohio Law and the Church's teachings.
2. The encouragement of all staff and volunteers to participate in education programs on AIDS.
3. The evaluation of existing programs to see if they meet the needs of persons with AIDS, their family and friends.
4. The Provision of support groups or educational programs for multi-racial and multi-cultural groups when special needs arise.
5. The designation of a staff person at each family service agency to function as:
 - a resource for the agency and the community regarding what is available for persons with AIDS
 - as a member of the Regional Team which will consist of a social worker/counselor, priest/pastoral minister and a member of the medical profession. This team will serve as a consultant and a resource for each region of the Diocese.
 - a link with Diocesan resources
 - an available person for ongoing training.

CONFIDENTIALITY

During his most recent visit to the United States, Pope John Paul II reminded those gathered at the Catholic Health Association in Phoenix that "we have a moral obligation and social responsibility to help those who suffer." The Church has always provided moral leadership in times of crisis. In working with persons with AIDS, all service providers are bound to the strictest standards of confidentiality. The ethical issues posed by the AIDS situation are no different from the issue of confidentiality as it applies to the sharing of information in any situation.

Principles of confidentiality are contained in many laws and regulations throughout the country. Essentially, these principles focus on the right of the individual to have his or her health, counseling and employment matters treated

privately and without unauthorized disclosure to those who have no need to know such information. These laws and guidelines cannot be selectively violated depending on the disease in question.

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The identity of a client, patient or student with AIDS or HIV infection is confidential and every precaution must be taken to maintain that confidentiality. In addition, the statutes of the State of Ohio impose the burden of confidentiality upon doctors, registered nurses, psychologists, hospitals and licensed social workers and counselors. Therefore, knowledge which comes to any of those persons from their patient/client is protected by the requirement of confidentiality.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Each agency, parish, office, department, school and institution of the Diocese is encouraged to read this report and review its own policies, guidelines or practices in light of all of the policy statements and recommendations contained in this report. It should be understood that the policy statements are indications of Diocesan requirements. The recommendations are directions that are suggested for implementation.

REGIONAL TEAMS

In each of the four regions of the Cleveland Diocese, a Regional Team will be established to respond to the needs of persons with AIDS, their family and friends. The teams will be composed of clergy, pastoral ministers, social workers and health care professionals. The exact number on each team will be determined by the needs of that particular region of the Diocese. The purpose of these teams is twofold:

1. Clergy and pastoral ministers will be available to offer direct personal ministry to persons with AIDS, their family and friends.
2. Social workers and health care professionals will act as referral and resource persons.

The teams will not be directly involved in providing education on AIDS. The teams will collaborate with the Implementation Committee and serve as a resource for workshops and inservice programs. A resource library and a listing of books, articles, pamphlets and audio-visual materials on AIDS will be developed. A Speaker's Bureau will also be developed. The staff member from Parish Social Ministry will act as coordinator of the four Regional Teams. Regional training sessions on AIDS will be planned and announced in the near future.

CONCLUSION

The AIDS Task Force recognizes that the policy statement and recommendations included in this document will require ongoing reflection, review and revision. As our knowledge and understanding of AIDS develops, other responses will undoubtedly be needed. While this report is time-framed, it provides the guidelines and directions that can certainly impact on our ongoing response to persons with AIDS. This is a moment and opportunity for affirming what we have already begun and a time for some new beginnings. In the spirit of this season of resurrection and new life, we encourage all members of the Catholic community in the Diocese of Cleveland to be signs of HOPE. We encourage not only the reading of this document but the action and work that will give it life!

ATTACHMENT 1

AIDS POLICY

Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in grades K through 12 shall be permitted to attend school or parish religious education programs in regular classroom setting provided:

1. The health of a child, as documented by his/her physician, allows participation in regular academic school activities.
2. The child behaves acceptably, in a manner that would not cause spread of the disease or in any way put others at risk.
3. The child does not have open sores, skin eruptions, or any other condition which prevents his/her control of bodily secretions.
4. There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certification from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.

In Diocesan High Schools, the Principal and Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools will consult with the appropriate persons and make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools, who will make a decision on each case.

In Parish Elementary Schools and Parish Schools of Religion, the Pastor and Principal will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the Regional Superintendent before the Pastor makes the final decision on each case in the parish school.

Parents and guardians have the obligation to report to the school administration when any child has been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome); ARC (AIDS Related Complex) or other illness

caused by HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus that causes AIDS, also known as HTLVIII or LAV).

In order to protect confidentiality, when a child with AIDS is admitted to school, personnel who are made aware of the child's condition should be the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the child.

Based on the condition of the child and the expected type of interaction with others, the Principal, after consultation with the proper authorities may limit the child's participation in school activities.

A student with AIDS who is excluded from school or Parish School of Religion Program shall be provided with an alternative means of catechetical instruction.

Board of Catholic Education
Diocese of Cleveland
Cleveland, Ohio

October 1987