

Pax Christi USA

Policy on the use of inclusive language



This policy was approved by Pax Christi USA National Council on November 8, 2003.

1) General statements regarding inclusive language

In December 1987, Pax Christi USA adopted as one of its goals relative to the Just World Order priority: "To raise awareness of the unjust treatment of women in the church and society and to work toward their full and equal participation."

One means of achieving this goal and modeling an attitude of respect for the wholeness of God's people is the use of inclusive language within our Christian/Catholic context. We recognize that all of our ways of referring to God and all of our attempts at imaging God are partial and thus incomplete. We recognize that our scriptural and religious heritage is full of a multiplicity of images and words, analogies and metaphors for God. Inclusive language calls for the use of multiple images for God, especially the employment of feminine images as well as masculine images. Inclusive language also means employing both feminine and masculine pronouns in referring to God.

Inclusive language affirms the dignity of all people and thereby acknowledges women as full and equal participants in the worshipping community. Thus, the use of exclusively gender-specific pronouns and terms is avoided when referring to the people of God.

2) The use of inclusive language in liturgy

Therefore, it shall be the practice of Pax Christi USA to use inclusive language for the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy and all other forms of communal prayer. This includes songs, psalms, prayers, readings, etc. Pax Christi USA will use a multiplicity of images for God, refrain from the dominant use of masculine images for God, and avoid altogether gender-specific references to the people of God.

3) The use of inclusive language in Pax Christi USA-directed events and gatherings

Inclusive language shall also be used at all occasions of national gatherings, such as the annual assembly, and national actions, etc.

4) The use of inclusive language in publications written by Pax Christi USA national staff, national council and its representatives

Inclusive language shall also be used in all letters, publications and documents written directly by or under the auspices of Pax Christi USA national staff, council and its representatives.

5) The use of inclusive language by authors commissioned or contracted to produce publications for Pax Christi USA

Authors commissioned or contracted to write publications for Pax Christi USA shall be informed that Pax Christi USA publishes material that employs inclusive language—language that employs a

multiplicity of images for God, refrains from the dominant use of masculine images for God, and avoids altogether gender-specific references to the people of God.

6) The use of inclusive language in documents used by Pax Christi USA but produced outside of the auspices of Pax Christi USA

When possible, Pax Christi USA will request the right to edit outside-produced documents in order to bring them in line with our policy regarding inclusive language. It shall be at the discretion of the PCUSA executive director* or his/her assign to use documents which do not employ inclusive language and for which permission has not been granted for editing.

7) The use of inclusive language in citations/quotations used in Pax Christi-produced publications and communications

When possible, Pax Christi USA will request the right to edit citations/quotations used in Pax Christi-produced publications/communications in order to bring them in line with our policy regarding inclusive language. It shall be at the discretion of the Pax Christi USA executive director* or his/her assign to use citations/quotations which do not employ inclusive language and for which permission has not been granted or cannot be requested (for instance, in the event of the quote's source being dead).

NOTE: Pax Christi USA recognizes that its employment of inclusive language is meant for application with a Catholic/Christian context and does not necessarily apply to references or images of God within other religious traditions.

The National Council strongly encourages the Pax Christi USA membership to implement this policy on the local level.

**Edited to reflect change in title*