

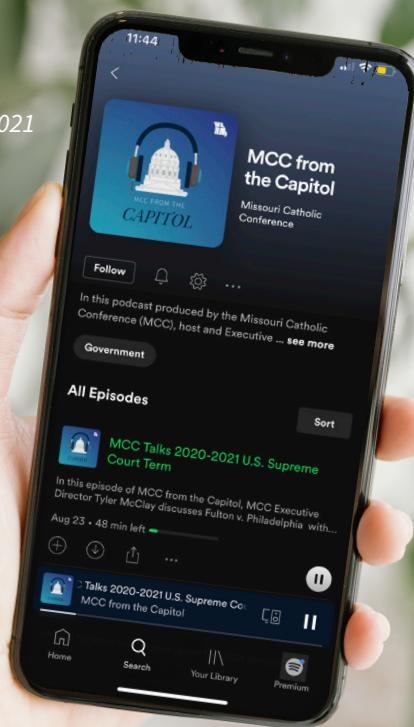
Good News

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri | September/October 2021

MISSOURI
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE



MCC FROM THE
CAPITOL



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Presenting The 2021 Virtual MCC Annual Assembly

This fall, the MCC will once again host its Annual Assembly in a virtual format. As we did in 2020, we have released a collection of episodes of MCC from the Capitol all at once for you to enjoy at your leisure. As Catholic teaching informs us, there is a broad spectrum of issues important to the Catholic faith. This spectrum is highlighted in the varying episodes of MCC from the Capitol; topics include pro-life concerns, refugee resettlement, race relations, housing crises, and more. We invite you to read the descriptions of each episode and listen to those that interest you, but we especially encourage you to listen to those that you may not be familiar with—we are confident you will come away with a deeper knowledge and understanding of each of these topics. We are pleased to begin with a video message from Archbishop Rozanski of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, who reflects on these ideas and the call for us to engage in them.

"As Catholics, we are called to engage in these challenges, drawing upon our faith and our great body of teachings to address them as best we can. We must not shrink from these challenges or fall victim to despair. We are, after all, a people of hope — hope in the endless love of God the Father and in the resurrection of his son Jesus Christ."

ARCHBISHOP MITCHELL T. ROZANSKI, ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

We hope you enjoy this year's virtual MCC Annual Assembly! Find episode descriptions inside this *Good News*.

2021 Virtual MCC Annual Assembly: The Lineup

A 300-Year-Old Church in a 200-Year-Old State

Catholics and the Catholic Church have been present in the Midwest since before Missouri was officially recognized as a state. History records that the Church in Europe sent priests and religious to the New World as missionaries to bring the faith to native peoples and to establish schools and parishes for Catholic settlers. Monsignor Robert Kurwicki of the Diocese of Jefferson City, who currently serves as Chaplain to the Missouri House of Representatives in Jefferson City, joins the podcast to discuss the rich and interesting history of the Catholic Church in Missouri.

A Closer Look at Refugee Resettlement in Mid-Missouri

Central Missouri has been a safe harbor for people seeking refuge from wars and natural disasters for several decades, and the Catholic Church has been active in their settlement. Though the number of refugees admitted to the U.S. varies from year to year, the ministry to those hoping to find a new home continues. Dan Lester, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri (CCCNMO), and Samantha Moog, CCCNMO Director of Refugee Services, offer their expertise and perspective on this important ministry of the Church.

The Future of Abortion Law After *Dobbs v. Jackson*

In May of this year, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, a case that challenges the constitutionality of a 2018 Mississippi law banning abortions after the 15th week of pregnancy with few exceptions. A ruling by the Supreme Court that the law is constitutional could upend its own landmark decisions in *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. Tom Buckley, in-house General Counsel for the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and Bill Francis, Director of the Respect Life and Human Rights Office for the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, join the podcast to discuss what the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs* could mean for Missouri.

Catholic Healthcare in the 21st Century

Catholic healthcare institutions work tirelessly to provide faith-based healthcare to the people of Missouri. They also offer employment opportunities for healthcare workers seeking to practice their profession in accord with their Catholic faith. MCC Public Policy members Jared Bryson, Vice President of Mission and Church Relations for Mercy Health, and Chris Baechle, Chief Executive Officer for Cardinal Ritter Senior Services in St. Louis, discuss how their employers carry on this work in the current legal and regulatory environment influenced by an increasingly secular culture and society.

Denouncing the Dred Scott Decision

During the 2021 legislative session, the Missouri General Assembly unanimously voted to denounce the 1852 Missouri Supreme Court decision which denied Dred and Harriett Scott freedom from slavery. Joyce Jones, MCC Public Policy Committee Chairwoman, and Monsignor Michael Witt, Professor of Church History at Kenrick Seminary, join the podcast to discuss this historic vote along with other historic examples of systemic racial injustice, which continue to impact people of color today.

The Affordable Housing Crisis in Missouri

Like many states, Missouri faces a shortage of affordable housing. Military veterans, low-wage earners, families, the physically and mentally disabled and the elderly all struggle to find an affordable place to live. How do federal and state low-income tax credit programs help to encourage developers to build housing for those in need? Meleah Spencer, Chief Executive Officer of The Kitchen, and Becky Selle, co-founder of Sustainable Housing Solutions, LLC, join the podcast to discuss how they utilize these tax credits in their efforts to provide low-income housing solutions in Springfield, MO.

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Or, listen at mocatholic.org or via your favorite streaming app (Spotify, Apple and Google Podcasts, & more!)

2021 Citizen Recognition Awards

As part of the Annual Assembly, the MCC presents the Citizen Recognition Award to one Catholic citizen from each diocese who has exemplified good citizenship in promoting Catholic values in the public policy arena and in their local communities and parishes. We are pleased to announce the 2021 Citizen Recognition Award recipients in this *Good News!* Congratulations to each of you!



Christine Dragonette, Archdiocese of St. Louis

Archdiocese of St. Louis *Christine Dragonette*

Christine Dragonette is the director of social ministry at St. Francis Xavier (College) Church, and has extensive experience helping vulnerable populations in the community.

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph *Kristan Chamberlain*

Kristan Chamberlain is an active volunteer with the KC Rescue Mission, the founder of the KC CAN Compost. Today, Kristan and her team provide job training and employment opportunities for the homeless while offering a vital recycling service for local commercial businesses and residential organizations that generate food waste.



Kristan Chamberlain, Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph

Diocese of Jefferson City *Sister Kathleen Wegman*

Sister Kathleen Wegman is the former chancellor to Bishop Emeritus John Gaydos and Bishop of the Diocese of Jefferson City, W. Shawn McKnight. During her tenure with the Diocese, she also served as Director of Pastoral and Charitable Services. She is a longtime champion defender of the poor and socially marginalized, exemplified through her decades of service stateside and abroad.



Sister Kathleen Wegman, Diocese of Jefferson City

Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau *Craig Henley*

Craig Henley has been involved in public ministry in the evangelization of our Catholic faith, namely as the face of the 2020 Men's Conference in Springfield. He has also been involved with Man Up and Go and their Springfield Man Up 100 team to support local families and fatherless children.



Craig Henley, Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau



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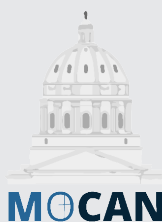
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Join Our Team! MCC Seeks A Communications Director

Do you like what you see in this *Good News*? Join our team to bring this and other MCC publications to life! **The Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) is currently seeking a communications director.** The MCC is the public policy agency of the Catholic Church in Missouri. The MCC communications director oversees the conference's various methods of communications, including social media, printed publications, and the podcast. This position is best suited for a creative thinker interested in promoting the mission of the MCC in an engaging, thoughtful manner. Experienced professionals, new college graduates, and December 2021 graduates are encouraged to apply. **If you are interested, please send your resume or further inquiries to mocatholic@mocatholic.org.** Know someone who would be a great fit? Please pass this listing along to them!

The Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network Text MOCAN to 50457 to receive text alerts!



Join the 10,000 + Catholic Missourians who make up MOCAN. If you're already a member, encourage your family, friends, and fellow parishoners to join! As MOCAN grows, so does the Catholic voice in Missouri's Capitol. Visit mocatholic.org or send us an email at mocatholic@mocatholic.org for details.