

celebrate

FIFTY YEARS

OF THE MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

For 50 years, the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) has acted as the “conscience of the Missouri legislature,” working to pass legislation that upholds Catholic values, and advocating for the common good of all Missourians. The MCC originated in 1967, acting as the voice of Missouri’s Catholic Bishops and Catholic citizens in the halls of the State Capitol. This October 2017, we’re celebrating a half century of this faithful work. The mission of the MCC is not focused on loyalty to any political party’s agenda, and does not always follow the path of popular opinion. Throughout its 50 years, the MCC has sought to listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and offer the moral teaching of the Church to an often divided and violent world. Even in the aftermath of mass terrorist attacks, the MCC has called for compassion and openness to refugees fleeing war-torn countries. When legislators have said there was no chance of abolishing the death penalty, or creating a more just criminal justice system,



the MCC has trudged on, following the maxim of Saint Teresa of Calcutta: “We are called not be successful, but faithful.” In spite of obstacles and disappointments, the Missouri Catholic Conference has found success by following the tenets of Catholic faith in legislative efforts. The MCC invites you, your friends and family to participate in a special anniversary celebration at St. Joseph Cathedral in Jefferson City on Saturday, October 7, 2017. The occasion will include an address by Papal Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, along with three workshops focusing on a few of the issues that have been central to the work of the MCC: catholic education, social justice, and pro-life. The event is free and includes a hot, sit-down lunch. Bus transportation is available from key locations for a nominal fee. The day will conclude with a Mass concelebrated by the Bishops of Missouri. Visit mocatholic.org in the upcoming weeks for more information about the 50th anniversary celebration.

A SPECIAL MCC *Messenger*

The Bishops of Missouri, speaking together on matters of public policy, form the Missouri Catholic Conference.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7 IN JEFFERSON CITY



REGISTER FOR **FREE** AT MOCATHOLIC.ORG!

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE



Christophe Louis Yves Georges Pierre was born Jan. 30, 1946, in Rennes in France's Brittany region, where his family has had roots for many generations. He first attended school at Antsirabe in Madagascar, pursued his secondary education at the College of Saint-Malo in France and also spent one year in Morocco at Lycee Francais of Marrakesh. He entered Saint-Yves seminary in Rennes in 1963, but he interrupted his studies for two years of military service in 1965 and 1966. He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Rennes at the Cathedral of Saint-Malo April 5, 1970. Then-Father Pierre earned his master's degree in theology at the Institut Catholique de Paris and his doctorate in canon law in Rome. He was parochial vicar of the parish of Saint-Pierre-Saint-Paul de Colombes in the Diocese of Nanterre, France, from 1970 to 1973.

He then earned a diploma at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome, which provides training to priests for eventual service in the Vatican's diplomatic corps. In 1977, he entered diplomatic service, with his first post in Wellington, New Zealand. He then served in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Cuba,

Brazil and at the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva. In July 1995, St. John Paul II named him an archbishop and appointed him as apostolic nuncio to Haiti. He served there until 1999, and then was named nuncio to Uganda, where he stayed until 2007, when he was named nuncio to Mexico. (Biography courtesy of Catholic News Service.)

Archbishop Christophe Louis Yves Georges Pierre was named Apostolic Nuncio to the United States by Pope Francis in 2016. As the Apostolic Nuncio, he serves as the Vatican's representative in the United States. In his address, Archbishop Pierre will discuss how the mission of evangelization can be carried out more effectively. "The Church needs to foster a greater sense of discipleship and mission, forming missionary disciples who have the task of giving prophetic witness through ongoing pastoral activity, calling others to deeper conversion, and to joyfully proclaim the Gospel. The Church cannot disengage from the rapidly secularizing and changing culture; rather, strengthened by the Spirit, she must be a missionary Church that goes forth, engaged in a permanent state of mission, building a world with more justice, reconciliation, and solidarity – a world which values and affirms the dignity of every person, and furthers a genuine culture of encounter in the promotion of life, love, and peace." Hear the address in full on Saturday, October 7 at the Missouri Catholic Conference 50th Anniversary celebration.

WORKSHOP PRESENTERS AND DESCRIPTIONS



CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Msgr. Michael Witt,
St. Louis Archdiocesan
priest, author and historian

Msgr. Witt will address the larger question of Catholic roots in Midwest educational efforts, formal and informal, which are a vital part of the Catholic evangelization of America's heartland. He'll cover educational Religious Orders, their schools and developments over time. It is a story worth telling, and worth remembering, Msgr. Witt says, for it is the woof and wave of who we are as Midwest Catholics today.



PRO-LIFE

Sue Thayer,
Former abortion center manager
turned pro-life advocate

Sue Thayer believed she was helping women when she assisted them in obtaining an abortion. Her heart was changed when Planned Parenthood informed her that she would be required to provide webcam abortions at her small center in rural Iowa, administering the lethal dose of medication. Hear Sue's story of conversion and redemption as she describes how she led the first 40 Days For Life campaign at the very clinic where she worked for 18 years.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Joan Rosenhauer,
Executive Vice President
of Catholic Relief Services

Each of us is called by the Gospel to bring God's love into the world, responding to the suffering of His children and protecting His creation. This workshop will explore how our Church brings Catholic social teaching, including Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, to life every day, and how each of us can be involved through prayer, through learning and sharing, and through advocacy.

Visit mocatholic.org or call (800) 456-1679 to register and to find more information about the celebration.

Event Schedule for Saturday, October 7

8:30 am – 9:30 am	Registration (Cathedral)
9:30 am – 10:15 am	Opening Session (Cathedral)
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Workshops (Cathedral, School, Chancery)
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch (Cathedral Undercroft)
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Keynote Address (Cathedral)
2:15 pm – 3:15 pm	Closing Mass (Cathedral)



TOGETHER, WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED GREAT WORK.

In spite of obstacles and disappointments, the Missouri Catholic Conference has found success by following the tenets of Catholic faith in legislative efforts. Throughout its history, the MCC has sought policies where government and private agencies can work together for the common good. As a result, the state of Missouri offers grants and tax credits to charitable organizations like pregnancy resource centers, maternity homes, and food pantries. For 50 years, Catholics from all corners of the state of Missouri have contributed to the work of the Missouri Catholic Conference. And that work has advanced the common good of Missouri citizens, especially the poor and most vulnerable. There are indeed many different gifts, but the same spirit, and the Missouri Catholic Conference will continue to welcome Catholics from all corners of the Show-Me State in this great endeavor to bring the light of Christ to the world.

Thank you for 50 faithful years, and here's to 50 more.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF MCC ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 1967-2017

1967

The Missouri Catholic Conference was formed in January 1967 and consisted of a Board of Directors composed of the Missouri bishops, an advisory board that included a priest and layperson from each diocese and two representatives from each of the newly created departments on education, social concerns, legal matters, information and ecumenism.

1970s

The first major MCC victory came in 1972. That year the MCC obtained passage of SB 638, sponsored by Catholic State Senator Lawrence Lee (D-St. Louis County), authorizing the lending of secular textbooks to private school students.

The Conference helped to organize a statewide pro-life movement, a response to the *Roe v. Wade* decision, including a new citizens group that later became Missouri Right to Life.

1980s

In 1980 the Conference issued a prophetic statement on corrections that called for compensation to crime victims and alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders.

When the farm crisis developed in the early 1980's the Conference was there, advocating for family farmers and publishing a pastoral guide to help parishes assist local farm families.

In 1986 the conference spearheaded passage of landmark pro-life legislation, HB 1596. The new law, which remains in place today, prohibits the use of taxpayer money for abortions. In 1989 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld many of the provisions of the new Missouri law.

The Webster decision in 1989 marked the first serious breach in the *Roe v. Wade* dam and the Conference could claim a large share of the credit. From this time forward states across the nation began to pass pro-life laws.

1990s

The 1990's saw the Conference working successfully to put school nurses in Catholic schools, expand Medicaid for the needy and ensure Missouri participated in the federal Children's Health Insurance Program.

In 1991 MCC's Lou Defeo played a key role in the passage of the Durable Power of Attorney law, which protects the right to life of the terminally ill and the dying.

In 1993, the Missouri Catholic Conference responded to the great flood by building a network of faith groups. The Flood Recovery Partnership developed some 50 committees around the state to address the unmet needs of flood victims.

The MCC sought to ban the horrific practice of partial birth abortions. In the fall of 1999, over 5,000 people rallied at the Capitol and with that encouragement, the Missouri General Assembly was able to override Governor Carnahan's veto on the ban.

2000s

In 2001, after a 10-year effort, the MCC secured passage of legislation that exempted those with mental retardation from capital punishment.

The Obama administration mandated contraceptive coverage in insurance plans. In 2012, the MCC responded by spearheading passage of SB 749, a law that reiterated in even stronger terms the conscience rights of churches and individuals in the insurance market.

In 2014 the MCC worked with Missouri Right to Life, Sam Lee of Campaign Life and others to pass a 72-hour reflection period before an abortion decision is made.

Then, in 2016, after years of effort, the MCC passed a law allowing graduates of Catholic and other private high schools to obtain A+ scholarships.

2017

During the summer special pro-life session in 2017, the MCC worked successfully with state legislators to pass the strongest pro-life bill in decades, SB 5, which places strict regulations on abortion clinics and more, making Missouri a leader in the modern pro-life movement.