



Good News

January/February 2017

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri

2017 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

Protect Human Life

Welcome Immigrants and Refugees

Advance Social and Economic Justice for All

Uphold Marriage and Family

Defend Religious Liberty

Promote Educational Opportunities

Reform Criminal Justice

Restore Faith in Civility and the Democratic Process

1967
2017



CELEBRATING
FIFTY YEARS

OF THE
MISSOURI
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

October 7, 2017
St. Joseph Cathedral,
Jefferson City

Visit mocatholic.org
to learn more!



2017 Public Policy Priorities

The Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC), in faithfulness to the Good News of Jesus Christ, seeks to create a culture that respects the dignity of all human life, especially the most vulnerable among us. In the light of the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, the MCC and the Missouri bishops call government officials, legislators and all citizens to a respectful discourse about the challenges facing our state and nation. In 2017 the MCC will support and give special emphasis to the following priorities.

Protect Human Life

The MCC will work for a culture that protects the sanctity and dignity of every human life, from the child in the womb, to the prisoner on death row, to the elderly patient in the nursing home, to victims of human trafficking. The MCC will seek to build consensus to end the death penalty, while at the same time addressing its deficiencies, including its cost and the racial disparity of its application. In addition, the MCC will oppose assisted suicide legislation and support retaining the current prohibition on state-sponsored torture, as well as support all efforts to end abortion. The MCC will support funding for Alternatives to Abortion while opposing the commercialization of fetal tissue and the funding of destructive stem cell experiments on human embryos.

Welcome Immigrants and Refugees

The MCC will bear witness to the God-given human dignity of all immigrants and refugees, including those displaced by war and persecution, reminding lawmakers of the right of people to migrate to other countries. The MCC will urge Congress to enact immigration reform and to permit refugees fleeing persecution or war to find a home in the U.S. after undergoing security clearances. The MCC will urge the General Assembly to preserve funding for resettlement programs that assist refugees in America.

Advance Social and Economic Justice for All

Pope Francis calls for all people to hear the cry of the poor and to reform “unjust social structures” that deny the poor basic necessities and opportunities for social and economic advancement. The MCC will support: adequate funding and reform of Medicaid and mental health services; the creation of a state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for the working poor; laws that promote a living wage; adequate funding of programs that assist the needy; and stronger consumer protections in the lending industry, including payday lending reform. The MCC will support all efforts to heal racial and cultural divisions while working to build vibrant and just communities that serve the common good.

Uphold Marriage and Family

Family is the basic cell of human society and the foundation of civilized life. Presently, the institutions of marriage and family are threatened by a culture that no longer values authentic marriage and stable

families. The MCC will support funding for programs that encourage two-parent families, but also provide assistance to single parents and their children. The MCC will support programs that promote responsible fatherhood and parenting, assist victims of domestic violence, and that assist families who are poor or have children with serious health problems or disabilities.

Defend Religious Liberty

The Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council affirmed the dignity of every human person, including the God-given right to peaceably and lawfully exercise his or her faith, be it Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or other religious tradition. No person should be forced to act in a manner “contrary to his conscience,” (*Dignitas Humanae*, par. 3). The MCC will oppose unjust discrimination against people of faith, including the targeting or registering of any particular faith, and will support religious liberty protections in all human rights laws.

Promote Educational Opportunities

All parents should have the right and financial ability to choose the schooling most beneficial for their children and which stands in accord with their moral and religious convictions. The MCC will support educational opportunities for all children in all school settings, be it public, private, or religious. The MCC will support early intervention services for infants and toddlers, financial assistance so families can meet their children’s educational needs, and repeal of Constitutional provisions (Blaine Amendments) that discriminate against children who attend private and religious schools.

Reform Criminal Justice

The Catholic Church supports a criminal justice system in which the offender is held accountable, the victim receives compensation and support, and the community assists the offender in successfully re-entering society. The MCC will support meaningful reforms, such as raising the age for juvenile jurisdiction to the age of 18, setting realistic parole policies that take into account the inmate’s rehabilitation efforts, and implementing policies to control prison overcrowding.

Restore Faith in Civility and the Democratic Process

St. John Paul II said that Democracy needs wisdom and virtue if it is to flourish. Pope Francis told Congress that the chief aim of politics is the common good. Without charitable cooperation, government cannot function and the public suffers. The MCC will encourage civility and bipartisan cooperation among elected officials, strong ethical standards for those in public office, respect for the rule of law, and measures that allow citizens to more fully participate in their government.

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To view bills the MCC has a position on, visit our website at www.mocatholic.org and click "legislative issues".

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Missouri Catholic
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MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



CELEBRATE
50 YEARS
OF THE MCC



Saturday, Oct. 7, 2017
St. Joseph Cathedral,
Jefferson City

The Missouri Catholic Conference, the public policy agency for the Catholic Church in Missouri, is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017. The MCC invites you to participate in a special anniversary celebration at St. Joseph Cathedral in Jefferson City on Saturday, Oct. 7. The event includes an address by Papal Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre. Since 1967, the MCC has been the voice of Missouri's Catholic Bishops and Catholic citizens in the halls of the State Capitol. 2017 will focus on celebrating the past accomplishments of the MCC and working toward future achievements together with Bishops, legislators and the citizens of Missouri. We invite you to get to know the MCC by joining MOCAN, the Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network. Visit mocatholic.org to learn more about the Missouri Catholic Conference and MOCAN!