

2023 Public Policy Priorities



Welcome and
Accompany
Immigrants and
Refugees

Advance Social
and Economic
Justice for All

Uphold and
Strengthen
Marriage
and Family

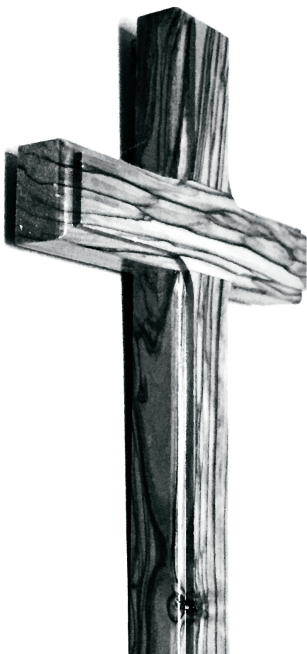
Defend
Religious
Liberty

Support
Educational
Opportunities

Reform
Criminal
Justice

Promote Civility
and Faith in the
Democratic Process

Protect Human Life



Good News

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri | January/February 2023

In faithfulness to the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) seeks through education and advocacy to create a culture that respects the sanctity and 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. This agenda does not reflect all of the MCC's concerns, but those calling for action at this time.



Protect Human Life

“It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop.” (Saint John Paul II, *Gospel of Life*, par. 101)

Welcome and Accompany Immigrants and Refugees

“Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age.” (Pope Francis, 2017 Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees)

Advance Social and Economic Justice for All

“Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.” (*Catechism*, par. 1908)

Uphold and Strengthen Marriage and Family

“The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family.” (*Catechism*, par. 2210)

Defend Religious Liberty

“[T]he right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.” (*Declaration on Religious Freedom*, par. 2)

Support Educational Opportunities

“As those first responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions.” (*Catechism*, par. 2229)

Reform Criminal Justice

“We believe that both victims and offender[s] are children of God. Despite their very different claims on society, their lives and dignity should be protected and respected. We seek justice, not vengeance.” (U.S. Bishops, *A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice*)

Promote Civility and Faith in the Democratic Process

“[R]esponsible authority also means authority exercised with those virtues that make it possible to put power into practice as service (patience, modesty, moderation, charity, efforts to share), an authority exercised by persons who are able to accept the common good, and not prestige or the gaining of personal advantages, as the true goal of their work.” (*Compendium*, par. 410)

GET INVOLVED

The Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy agency for the Catholic Church in Missouri. The Missouri bishops serve as the MCC's Board of Directors. The bishops appoint a 15 member Public Policy Committee to provide input to the MCC on an ongoing basis. The MCC is actively involved in all levels of government, especially state and federal issues, and advocates for legislation that upholds the sanctity and dignity of all human life.

As a current Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network member, you can stay involved by reading *Good News* and our weekly email updates. You can also help by responding to MCC action alerts and easily contact your legislators on key legislation.

You can stay informed on a regular basis by visiting mocatholic.org. At the MCC website, you can review progress on MCC tracked legislation, find the contact information for your legislators, check out the latest Catholic-related news, and even begin the process of registering to vote.

Become active in public policy and make a difference! Thanks for adding your voice to the thousands of others joined together in making Missouri a place that respects human life and the dignity of all persons.

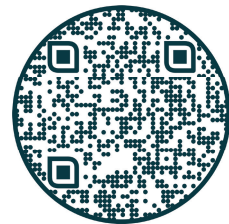
Inside the latest Messenger

A quarterly publication by the Missouri Catholic Conference



A Missouri Catholic Conference public policy priority is to uphold and strengthen marriage and family. There are currently more than 14,000 children in Missouri's foster care system, according to the Department of Social Services. The latest issue of *Messenger* details stories about foster children, adoptive parents, and how you can embrace the call to care for some of our most vulnerable. ***Read more at mocatholic.org or in your diocesan newspaper.***

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to listen now



New episodes of MCC from the Capitol:

- Dr. Michael Meehan is the CEO of Marygrove, a child welfare agency near St. Louis that helps children, teens and young adults learn how to transcend an abusive past or overcome other life challenges and move toward a brighter future. In this episode, he discusses how individuals and parishes can get involved in supporting youth and foster families.
- Have you ever wondered what the foster parent process looks like? Hear one mom's journey about feeling called to foster and eventually adopt a group of siblings. Shelly Sconce discusses the surprises and rewards of expanding her family in this episode of MCC from the Capitol.

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Network
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Join the 10,000 + Catholic Missourians who make up MOCAN.
If you're already a member, encourage your family, friends,
and fellow parishioners 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.

MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



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Dear *Good News* reader,

I hope you are enjoying the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) bi-monthly newsletter, *Good News*, and the other communications we issue, such as the *MCC Messenger*, which appears in the diocesan papers on a quarterly basis. We try our best to keep you informed about developing issues that pose great moral questions for our state and nation and alert you when action is needed. We encourage you to check out our podcast, MCC from the Capitol (available on our website, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts) in which we take a closer look at public policy issues and how they impact the Church.

With your help over the last several years, we have passed historic pro-life laws — including the trigger law that outlawed nearly all abortions in Missouri after the *Dobbs* decision — and made sure Catholic high school students can receive A+ scholarships. In 2023, the MCC will continue its work on a number of important public policy issues, including providing women facing crisis pregnancies with Alternatives to Abortion, repealing the death penalty, ensuring adequate social services and healthcare for the poor, and promoting educational opportunities for all school children, including those attending Catholic schools.

The MCC will not succeed in any of these efforts without the involvement of committed Catholics like you. Without your help, the needs of the most vulnerable among us are likely to be forgotten in the halls of Congress and in our State Capitol. That is why the MCC wants to stay in contact with you—so you know what is going on and can respond by contacting your elected officials when critical legislation is pending.

You currently receive our communications for free. At this time, I am asking you to consider a donation to help the MCC. If you can afford to give \$20, \$30, \$40, \$50 or more, your donation will help us to continue providing you with our MCC publications. To make a donation, please use the envelope provided, or visit our website (www.mocatholic.org) to donate by credit card. If you cannot give a donation at this time, you will still continue to receive *Good News* at no charge. If you would prefer to receive our information electronically, please contact us with your email address.

Thank you and God bless!

Sincerely,

Jamie Morris
Executive Director and General Counsel