

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FLORIDA

### People and Places

- 2,007,672 Catholics
- 2 Archbishops, 11 Bishops
- 1,202 Priests, 657 Deacons
- 108 Brothers, 772 Sisters
- 7 Dioceses, 466 Parishes, 55 Missions

### Health Care

- 13 Acute Care Hospitals
- 4 Rehabilitation Hospitals
- 8 Nursing Homes
- 1 Hospice Organization

### Social Welfare Services

- 226,024 Unduplicated Clients Served
- 34,938 Family Economic Security Services
- 8,336 Housing Services
- 508,777 Food Security Services

### Education

- 3 Seminaries, 4 Universities
- 28,593 College Students
- 37 High Schools
- 24,539 High School Students
- 163 Elementary Schools
- 29 Stand-Alone Preschools
- 60,379 Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students
- 6 Special Education Schools / 8 Special Education Programs
- 621 Special Education Students
- 7,650 Teachers/Administrators
- 107,646 Religious Education Students

Information based on *The Official Catholic Directory*, 2015 and reports from diocesan offices

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### President

Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski  
Archdiocese of Miami

#### Vice-President

Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito  
Diocese of Palm Beach

#### Secretary

Bishop Robert N. Lynch  
Diocese of St. Petersburg

#### Treasurer

Bishop Gregory L. Parkes  
Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

Bishop Frank J. Dewane  
Diocese of Venice

Bishop John G. Noonan  
Diocese of Orlando

Bishop Felipe J. Estévez  
Diocese of St. Augustine

Bishop Peter Baldacchino  
Auxiliary of Archdiocese of Miami

# FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

201 W. Park Avenue, Tallahassee, FL 32301 \* 850.205.6820  
www.flaccb.org \* Facebook: flaccb \* Twitter: @flacathbps



*The Gospel of Jesus Christ  
and the teachings of his Church  
guide the work of the  
Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops,  
which, through relationships with representatives  
and agencies of Florida government,  
analyzes the moral dimension of public policies,  
proclaims the sanctity of life  
and dignity of the human person,  
leads decision makers in reaching just solutions,  
and provides opportunities for Catholics  
in Florida to carry out their responsibility  
to participate in political life.*

Through the *Florida Catholic Advocacy Network (FLCAN)*, Catholic faithful in Florida's seven dioceses engage issues that are of concern to the Church. To become a member of the network, visit [www.flaccb.org](http://www.flaccb.org).

**PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES**  
**2016 Regular Legislative Session**  
**January 12 - March 11, 2016**

## Life Priorities

- Maintaining funding for crisis pregnancy centers serving pregnant women and their children
- Requiring unanimous jury recommendation for a sentence of death
- Enhancing abortion clinic regulations and reporting practices for the safety of women

*The true moral test of society is how the weakest and most vulnerable members are treated. If we do not protect the inalienable right to life of the unborn, the human family will make little progress dealing with the death penalty, poverty, euthanasia and other attacks on human life and dignity.*

## Health Care Priorities

- Providing health coverage for the uninsured especially those who are most economically and socially vulnerable
- Promoting ethical and appropriate palliative and end-of-life health care policies
- Opposing euthanasia and all forms of self-directed death (suicide, physician-assisted death, physician-assisted suicide)
- Promoting expansion of community-based mental health and substance abuse services
- Supporting increased transparency and accountability for public and professional guardians

*As a basic human right necessary for a healthy and just society, we support ensuring accessible, quality health care for all. Our health delivery system must be rooted in values that respect life, acknowledge human dignity and respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable.*

**Michael B. Sheedy, Executive Director**  
(850) 205-6824, msheedy@flaccb.org

**Michele M. Taylor, Associate Director for Communications**  
(850) 205-6817, mtaylor@flaccb.org

**James B. Herzog, Associate Director for Education**  
(850) 205-6823, jherzog@flaccb.org

**Michael J. McQuone, Associate Director for Health**  
(850) 205-7207, mmcquone@flaccb.org

**Ingrid M. Delgado, Associate for Social Concerns/Respect Life**  
(850) 205-6826, idelgado@flaccb.org

## Education Priorities

- Expanding eligibility for Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts by allowing students to participate until age 26 and including dyslexia and dysgraphia
- Restoring per-student scholarships in the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program to 2007-2008 school year levels
- Establishing a higher per-child scholarship amount for high school students served under the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program
- Upholding reasonable accountability by recognition of established state, regional and national accrediting agencies

*The Church supports the rights of parents to select the schools they deem best suited for their children, especially the poor and disabled, to receive federal and state services necessary to achieve academically and socially.*

## Social Concerns Priorities

- Ensuring individuals and organizations are free to serve the public in accord with moral or religious beliefs concerning the sanctity of life and marriage
- Improving juvenile justice policies by treating minors according to their cognitive abilities and making the most of their capacity to reform their lives
- Increasing protections of poor and vulnerable working people by capping the APR for payday lenders, supporting a living wage, and creating local mechanisms to resolve wage theft disputes
- Directing affordable housing trust fund dollars as intended for state and local housing programs and partnerships
- Supporting policies that enhance stewardship of the environment
- Defeating human trafficking by protecting survivors of forced commercial sex or labor and punishing those who benefit from the exploitation of vulnerable human beings
- Supporting efforts for meaningful, positive immigration reforms
- Opposing expansion of casino gambling in Florida

*The Church supports the belief that all persons have certain basic economic rights and society has a moral obligation to ensure, so far as possible, no one among is hungry, homeless, unemployed or otherwise denied whatever is necessary to live with dignity.*