

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FLORIDA

People and Places

- 2,012,302 Catholics
- 2 Archbishops, 11 Bishops
- 1,215 Priests, 659 Deacons
- 88 Brothers, 671 Sisters
- 7 Dioceses, 468 Parishes, 59 Missions

Health Care

- 16 Acute Care Hospitals
- 9 Skilled Nursing Facilities
- 7 Indigent Care Clinics
- 19 Additional Sponsored Services

Social Welfare Services

- 7 Catholic Charities Agencies
- 113 Service Sites
- 259,197 Clients Served

Education

- 3 Seminaries, 5 Universities
- 31,172 College Students
- 37 High Schools
- 24,811 High School Students
- 164 Elementary Schools
- 35 Stand-Alone Preschools
- 60,363 PreK to 8th Grade Students
- 6 Special Education Schools /
10 Special Education Programs
- 610 Special Education Students
- 7,408 Teachers / Administrators
- 96,854 Religious Education
Students

Information based on P.J. Kenedy & Sons, *The Official Catholic Directory*, 2019 and reports from diocesan offices and Catholic Charities USA.

The Florida Catholic Advocacy Network (FLCAN) is an online community that connects, educates and mobilizes Catholics across Florida's seven dioceses. Get connected at www.flaccb.org.

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FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES



2020 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

JANUARY 14 - MARCH 13

201 West Park Avenue, Tallahassee, FL 32301 | (850) 222-3803

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LIFE

The true moral test of society is how the weakest and most vulnerable members are treated. If the inalienable right to life of the unborn is not protected, the human family will make little progress dealing with other issues relating to life and dignity, including the death penalty, euthanasia, poverty, and immigration.

- Expanding the role of Florida Pregnancy Care Network centers that assist pregnant mothers and their families in preparation for parenting or adoption
- Ending the use of the death penalty in Florida while maintaining the alternative of life imprisonment without parole
- Clarifying Florida's privacy clause to ensure that Florida's constitution does not provide greater rights to an abortion than the U.S. Constitution
- Requiring parental consent before a minor child's abortion, as required for other comparable interventions

EDUCATION

The Church supports the rights of parents to select the schools they deem best suited for their children. There is a special emphasis on ensuring that poor and disabled students receive federal and state services necessary to achieve academically and socially.

- Reducing costs for low-income families participating in the Family Empowerment and Florida Tax Credit Scholarships
- Providing new resources to enhance the Voluntary PreKindergarten Education Program (VPK) and improve accountability
- Covering the cost of dual-enrolled nonpublic school students as is the case for public school and home education students
- Hardening the physical security of public and nonpublic schools
- Streamlining the background screening process for nonpublic school employees (such as administrators, teachers and after-school staff) to enhance effectiveness and reduce duplication

HEALTH CARE

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

- Ensuring access to health care for the most economically and socially vulnerable residents of Florida
- Preserving freedom of conscience for health care providers with respect to abortion, family planning, executions, and end-of-life decisions
- Promoting ethical and appropriate end-of-life health care policies, including palliative and hospice care, that respect the dignity of the human person
- Opposing strongly any efforts to overturn Florida's ban on physician assisted suicide and euthanasia
- Supporting efforts that improve the availability of community-based mental health and substance abuse services, especially as they relate to the opioid epidemic and youth violence
- Promoting policies that enhance the stewardship and care of Florida's natural environment

FAMILY & SOCIAL CONCERNS

As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world. Every person has a fundamental right to life and to that which is required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

- Ensuring the freedom of all people to serve the public in accord with deeply held moral or religious convictions concerning the sanctity of life, marriage, and integral human ecology
- Improving juvenile justice policies by treating minors according to cognitive abilities and making the most of their capacity to reform their lives
- Emphasizing rehabilitation over retribution in the criminal justice system by increasing incentive gain-time that persons who are incarcerated can earn towards reduction of their sentences through positive behaviors
- Protecting the poor and vulnerable from the traps of debt and offering alternatives to license suspension for those who demonstrate an inability to pay traffic citation fees
- Directing affordable housing trust fund dollars as intended for state and local housing programs
- Defeating human trafficking by combating sexual exploitation and the demand for forced labor
- Supporting comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level while opposing piecemeal proposals at the state level that harm immigrants such as mandated use of E-Verify



FLORIDA CONFERENCE
OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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