PENNSYLVANIA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

# CATHOLIC CONNECTION

The Catholic Church in Pennsylvania serves and advocates for the poor, vulnerable and those in need no matter ones faith, religion or ability to pay.

## The Catholic Profile in Pennsylvania

More than one in four Pennsylvanians are Catholic, making Catholicism the largest faith community in the Commonwealth. The daily influence of the Catholic church in Pennsylvania can be seen in the Catholic hospitals, soup kitchens, nursing homes and schools that serve thousands of Pennsylvanians regardless of their religious backgrounds. In addition, the Church nourishes the faith of Catholics at more than 1,200 parishes throughout Pennsylvania.

The Catholic Church is a major employer in the Commonwealth. Hospitals and nursing homes employ thousands of doctors, nurses and other health care providers. Catholic charities employ social workers and psychologists. The Catholic dioceses themselves employ over 50,000 Pennsylvanians, including Catholic charities social workers and psychologists, school teachers and support staff, and ministry leaders.

Catholics have been living and worshipping in Pennsylvania since William Penn launched his "Holy Experiment" in the 17th Century. Catholic settlers, along with Pennsylvanians of other faiths, benefitted from the Commonwealth's protection of religious freedom.

Today, the Catholic Church continues to welcome and assist newcomers to Pennsylvania. Catholic charities agencies help refugees and immigrants settle here in the Commonwealth. In addition to immigration services, Catholic charities agencies offer individuals and families – no matter what faith or background – behavior health, family counseling and addiction programs.

### A Snapshot of Catholics in Pennsylvania

- There are approximately 3.3 million Catholics in Pennsylvania
- Catholic health care facilities serve more than 3 million people of all faiths annually
- Catholic charities agencies serve more than 360,000 people of all faiths annually
- Pennsylvania has approximately 540 Catholic schools serving more than 150,000 students
- Catholic schools employ more than 10,000 teachers
- Approximately 440,000 Catholic students, who do not attend Catholic schools, are instructed in their rich faith at parishes across Pennsylvania

*The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference is the public affairs agency of Pennsylvania's Catholic bishops and the Catholic dioceses of Pennsylvania.*

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