



# BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARYLAND SERVES AND ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR, VULNERABLE AND THOSE IN NEED NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE CATHOLIC, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MARYLAND CATHOLIC CONFERENCE JANUARY 30, 2014

### Celebrating Catholic Schools Week

This week we celebrate the annual Catholic Schools Week and remember the many long-standing contributions of our school communities to Maryland.

Catholic schools are communities of faith, knowledge and service. Students attending Catholic schools receive an excellent, faith-filled education that prepares them for the challenges of higher education and a competitive world.

There are 145 Catholic schools (K-12) across Maryland – rural, urban, suburban and inner-city – educating nearly 50,000 children, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. And across the board, 99% of Catholic school students graduate from high school.

Through the service provided by Maryland's Catholic schools, the Catholic Church works in partnership with the state and other school communities to ensure all families, especially lower- and middle-income families, have equitable access to a high-quality education for their children.

Our Catholic school families save Maryland's taxpayers \$700 million EVERY YEAR in per-pupil costs by choosing Catholic schools for their children and not burdening the public school systems.



*Students from St. Mary's Parish elementary school in Annapolis sing their school song for Baltimore's Archbishop Lori on Jan. 28 in honor of Catholic Schools Week.*

As far back as 1799, Catholic orders of nuns in DC and Maryland such as the Visitation and the Oblate Sisters flouted existing prohibitions by educating free and enslaved African Americans. That mission and service continues to this day.

For two centuries, Catholic schools have provided generations of lower- and middle-income students a high-quality, values-based education, yielding immeasurable social and economic benefits for our state.