



# 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 8, 2014

The staff members of the Maryland Catholic Conference welcome legislators and staff of the General Assembly back and look forward to a productive session in which we hope to see legislation pass exemplifying the breadth of Catholic Church teaching expressed in both the Dignity of Work and the Dignity of Life.

### **War Against Poverty**

Today not only is the first day of session, it also marks the 50th anniversary of the War Against Poverty. And the entire month of January is dedicated as Poverty Awareness Month by the US Bishops Conference.

Regrettably, while much progress has been made, we still have unacceptably high numbers of people living in poverty.

*Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry.* ~ Pope Francis, Meeting with Students of Jesuit Schools, June 7, 2013

### **Answering the Call**

Government has a responsibility to help those in need, and so does the Church.

At St. Camillus Food Pantry in Silver Spring, 160 volunteers from 10 countries, five parishes and several schools feed the poor. Their goal – food security for parishioners and residents in and around Langley Park.

Their efforts have grown over the years. In 2002, the food pantry served 300 families. In 2013, volunteers fed more than 8,500 families – touching 32,000 lives.

*The dignity of each human person and the pursuit of the common good are concerns which ought to shape all economic policies.* ~ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013