



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 March 13, 2013

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.

Welcome new Holy Father, Pope Francis!

Pope Francis, as archbishop of Buenos Aires, has been a great defender of the poor and vulnerable. He has served as a bridge across cultural and political divides, proving once again that the Church is neither liberal nor conservative, rather it embraces those in need and strives for justice and charity.

Here in Maryland, the Catholic Church not only speaks out in the public square, it demonstrates faith in action. The Catholic Church in Maryland is the largest social service provider operated by a single entity after the state itself. This is a valuable partnership among the state, the Church and so many nonprofits.

Our Daily Bread (ODB) in Baltimore City is a place where all are welcome, where people whose lives are burdened by the hardships of the human condition are served with dignity and reverence. ODB has served men and women in need a daily meal without a single interruption since 1981.

Out of work after 23 years of steady employment, James found himself unemployed when his company closed their Maryland facility. He attended the Our Daily Bread Employment Center (ODBEC) Work 4 Success job readiness program, obtained confidence in his interviewing and resume writing skills, and with help from the ODBEC job placement manager, found employment.

Our Daily Bread Employment Center is a safety net that helps to keep the thousands of people served each year from hunger, homelessness, and unemployment. It is the place people turn to for help and hope. The Our Daily Bread Employment Center is a lifeline for those in need.

Baltimore's poverty rate has increased 20%, reaching a staggering 25.6% (U.S. Census Bureau). With one in four Baltimoreans living in poverty, the demand for services such as those provided by Our Daily Bread is indispensable and stands as a testament of the impact of Catholic outreach programs in Maryland.