

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Serving the Most Vulnerable with Compassion and Dignity

What is Catholic Charities?

There are 168 independent Catholic Charities agencies operating more than 4,000 facilities and sites across the United States and its territories. These agencies serve individuals living in poverty and a wide range of vulnerable people of all ages, backgrounds and faiths. Catholic Charities is the social service arm of the Catholic Church in the United States.

What services does Catholic Charities provide?

In the Diocese of St. Augustine, Catholic Charities Bureau Inc. provides services across the diocese's 17 counties. Programs include food assistance, pro-life support (pregnancy and adoption), homelessness prevention, self-sufficiency initiatives, citizenship programs, camps for individuals with special needs, refugee services and food outreach. Last year, the agency served 118,713 individuals.

Does Catholic Charities serve migrants?

Yes. Catholic Charities Bureau Inc. assists refugees through various programs. Refugees are migrants who flee their countries due to persecution or threats to their lives, often escaping war and political unrest. They enter the United States only after undergoing a rigorous vetting process conducted by the U.S. government. In recent years, the agency has served large numbers of refugees displaced by conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Additionally, Catholic Charities supports migrants through its Immigration and Legalization program. Individuals seeking to establish legal residency come to Catholic Charities for assistance with green cards, visas and other services designed to help them achieve their goal of U.S. citizenship.

Are the services Catholic Charities provides to migrants lawful?

Yes. All services provided to migrants comply with federal, state and local laws and are conducted in coordination with government authorities.

How does the Catholic Charities network operate?

There are 168 independent diocesan Catholic Charities agencies across the United States. Each operates under the leadership of its local bishop or archbishop and tailors its programs to meet the needs of the local community. In the Diocese of St. Augustine, Catholic Charities Bureau Inc. serves all 17 diocesan counties under the leadership of Bishop Erik Pohlmeier.

Why is Catholic Charities' service to migrants misunderstood?

As immigration has become one of the most divisive political issues in the United States, misinformation has spread about Catholic Charities' work. As a result, Catholic Charities

staff and volunteers have faced harassment and threats. These dedicated, compassionate professionals are committed to serving those in need, despite the risks posed by misinformation and disinformation.

What is the Catholic Church’s teaching on migration?

The Catholic Church teaches that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God and must be treated with dignity, respect and mercy. The church affirms a person’s fundamental right to migrate to preserve their life and family, especially when fleeing violence or other dangers. At the same time, the church recognizes that governments have a right to regulate borders in a humane and orderly manner while upholding their duty to protect citizens and prevent crime.

What is the Catholic Church’s position on the U.S. Immigration System?

Catholic Charities USA, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and other Catholic organizations have long urged the federal government to reform the country’s broken immigration system. The church continues to advocate for bipartisan solutions that strengthen border security while upholding the human dignity of all involved. Until meaningful reform is enacted, the Catholic Charities network remains committed to fulfilling the Gospel mandate to provide humanitarian aid to those in need.

For more information about the operations of Catholic Charities, Inc. in the Diocese of St. Augustine, visit <https://ccbdosa.org> or call (904) 899-5500 or email ahassell@ccbdosa.org.

To view the 2023-2024 Annual Report for Catholic Charities, Inc., visit https://www.ccbdosa.org/_files/ugd/053730_c37dda1128dc4270bad788e87e46eee1.pdf