



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2015

CATHOLICS AT THE CAPITOL TO CELEBRATE A CHURCH UNITED IN HOPE AND LOVE

On Wednesday, April 8, 2015, Catholics from around the state will meet at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin, for *Catholics at the Capitol 2015*. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) and other Catholic organizations, this biennial event is a day of education, advocacy, and fellowship.

The theme for this year's event, "A Church United in Hope and Love," focuses on how Catholic teaching enhances public policy debates. The day features breakout sessions on the Church's social teaching, poverty, immigration, the "social capital" of parishes and schools, the link between pornography and human trafficking, reform of the criminal justice system, racial disparity in Wisconsin, the pain of abortion, the challenge of making work "family friendly," environmental stewardship, and more. Experts from around the state will be on hand to examine issues that advance the common good, and will offer suggestions on how to engage in effective advocacy.

Among those presenting will be Dr. Charles Franklin of Marquette University, who will discuss political polarization in Wisconsin, and Steve Walters of WisconsinEye, who will offer insights on major issues likely to be addressed by the 2015-16 Legislative Session.

Dr. Jonathan Reyes, Executive Director of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, will deliver the keynote address. Dr. Reyes will discuss how Catholics can combat poverty and society's "culture of exclusion" by encountering the poor and witnessing to the dignity of every person.

During the afternoon general session, a panel will discuss how the Church can speak to the question of poverty in Wisconsin.

"*Catholics at the Capitol* gives Catholics a unique opportunity to actively engage their elected officials and see firsthand the impact their advocacy has on policy makers," said WCC Executive Director John Huebscher. "The day also allows us to showcase the richness of our teachings on social justice, which is often our best kept secret."

Registration begins at 8:15am, and the day's events start with a prayer service at 9:15am. After the afternoon general session adjourns at 3:25pm, participants are encouraged to walk over to the State Capitol to meet with their legislators.

For more information, call the Wisconsin Catholic Conference at 608-257-0004, or visit the WCC's website at www.wisconsinatholic.org.

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For more information, contact Kim Wadas at 608/257-0004.