



Bishop George Lee Thomas, Bishop of Helena, 2004 - present



Catholic Diocese of Helena



The Diocese of Helena consists of:

- 572,174 people located in western Montana¹
- 45,308 registered Catholics in western Montana²
 - ♦ 8% of potential voting constituency of western Montana
- 6,004 students (future constituents) under Catholic instruction in western Montana
- 96 faith communities
- 51,922 square miles, about the size of Alabama

Catholic Social Teaching: What is It?

Common Themes	Description	What the Diocese of Helena funds:
Life and Dignity of the Human Person	Human life is sacred. The dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Human life is under direct attack from abortion and assisted suicide. The value of human life is being threatened by increasing use of the death penalty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Social Services of Montana • Adoptive Services • Rachel's Hope (post-abortive counseling) • Protecting God's Children Ministry
Call to Family, Community and Participation	The person is not only sacred, but social. The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montana Catholic Newspaper • Montana Catholic Conference • Carroll College • University Campus Ministry • Catholic School System • Ministry to Youth/Young Adults
Option for the Poor and Vulnerable	A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are fairing. Our tradition instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid to the Needy • Good Samaritan Ministries • Food Banks • Supportive Aid to Birth mothers
Solidarity	We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences. The virtue of solidarity means learning to "love our neighbor" as a global dimension in an interdependent world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Relief Services • Montana Catholic Conference • Guatemala Mission

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. It informs decisions Catholics make, including those made in the political sphere.

Bills we support:

SB 97, HB 167, LC 2038, HB 280, SB 176, SB 185, SB 116, SB 169

¹Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; report release date: March 2010

²Per annual reporting of census figures by the Diocese of Helena; figures reported as of December 2010