



# FRUITS OF THE VINE

## The Economic Impact of the Catholic Church in Minnesota

FEBRUARY 2025

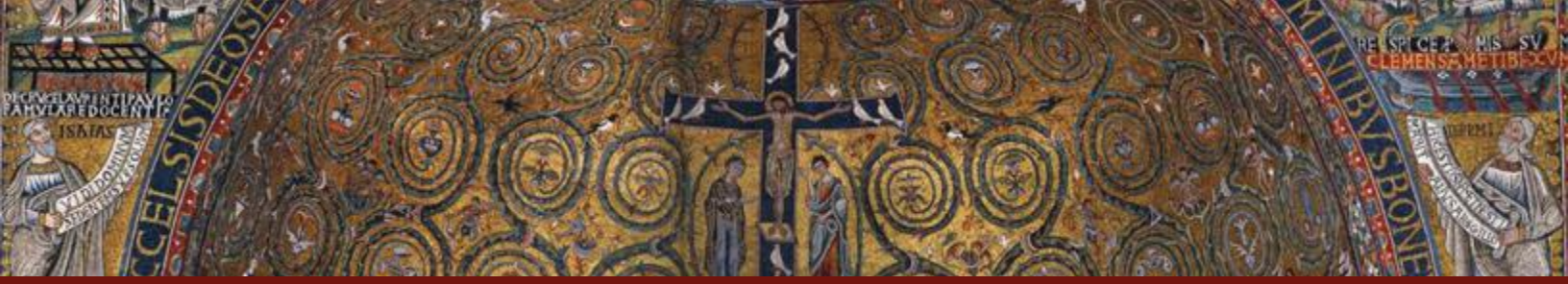
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COMMISSIONED BY: MINNESOTA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Catholic Church in Minnesota has long been a vital contributor to the state's communities, offering resources and services that uplift lives, foster stability, and serve the good of society. This report, *Fruits of the Vine: The Economic Impact of the Catholic Church in Minnesota (Fruits of the Vine)*, takes a different approach to measuring the Church's contribution to the common good; it quantifies the economic contributions of Catholic institutions throughout Minnesota, demonstrating how these efforts strengthen the state's financial and social foundations.

Our faith compels us to serve—not only fellow Catholics but all our neighbors—because we are motivated by the belief that we are called to bring Christ's love to the world in practical, impactful ways. The programs, services, and institutions associated with the Catholic Church in Minnesota—ranging from hospitals and schools to social service organizations—respond to some of our communities' most pressing needs. This report sheds light on these contributions, revealing how the Church helps to fill essential gaps in support, addressing areas where government resources may be limited.

The data and insights provided here affirm that the Church's commitment to Minnesota extends well beyond spiritual and moral leadership. Its network of ministries contributes meaningfully to local economies, creating jobs, supporting small businesses, and reducing social costs for taxpayers. These benefits ripple outward, promoting economic resilience, increasing parts of the tax base, and enhancing quality of life for all Minnesotans.

As you read this report, we invite you to consider the holistic impact of the Church's work in Minnesota, where its efforts represent an economic engine worth more than \$5 billion. By committing its resources to education, healthcare, social services, and more, the Catholic Church plays a key role in fostering a state where all people have opportunities to thrive. Communities and elected officials often chase after such industries with tax benefits and subsidies. Our ministries mainly seek the freedom to serve the community consistent with our values.

Commissioned by the Minnesota Catholic Conference and brought to life through the dedicated work of researchers Anna Faria and Grant Clayton from the University of Colorado and associated with the Institute for Policy Research at The Catholic University of America, this study provides a clear picture of the Church's presence in Minnesota. I extend my gratitude to the Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota for generously supporting this endeavor. I am grateful to MCC Data Specialist Katherine Dickey for her diligent coordination and organization of the data collection process for the research team. Special thanks also go to Christopher Mulcahey, MCC Communications Manager, for his efforts in collaborating with our design team on production and publication. I also thank all six dioceses, their diocesan newspapers, and Saint Agnes School for generously sharing their photos and local stories, which bring this report to life and highlight the profound impact of the Catholic Church across Minnesota.

We are grateful for the support of our partners and for the chance to share this data with the public, reinforcing the Church's continued mission to serve Minnesota. In illuminating the economic fruits of our labor, we hope to inspire further collaboration that strengthens Minnesota's foundation of faith, generosity, and the common good.



Jason Adkins,  
Executive Director and General Counsel



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Fruits of the Vine* addresses the lack of comprehensive knowledge about the many types of benefits the Catholic Church contributes and their sizable—and often overlooked—economic impact across the state. This report provides a concise and comprehensive overview of the various benefits and the estimated economic value—expressed in monetary value—of each.

We start by highlighting the overall annual economic impact of the Catholic Church in Minnesota. It is then divided into six key areas:



### PARISH SERVICES & OPERATING BUDGETS

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### CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

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### CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

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### MAGNET EFFECTS OF CATHOLIC EVENTS & SPACES

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### CATHOLIC SCHOOLING

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### CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE



We explore the contributions of local parishes and the “magnet effects” of activities that draw visitors to the state and boost spending. The analysis then broadens to include capital campaigns and Catholic organizations, before concluding with the significant impact of Catholic education and healthcare.

**The total economic value of Catholic programs in Minnesota is estimated at \$5.4 billion. Since the Church offers a wide range of services, direct comparisons can be challenging. To provide context, this report includes examples of well-known organizations in Minnesota for scale.**

Local parishes and Catholic organizations provide direct assistance to Minnesotans in areas such as food, clothing, and financial assistance to families in economic crisis and those experiencing homelessness. This assistance goes out to over 100,000 people monthly.

Additionally, local parishes and charitable organizations, such as the Catholic Community Foundation, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Knights of Columbus, donate over 500,000 volunteer hours annually. Capital construction campaigns contribute nearly \$57 million in direct economic benefits across the state every year.

The Catholic Church also supports the social fabric through events such as weddings, funerals, and festivals, which attract a combined attendance of more than 900,000 people and generate a “magnet effect” of more than \$56 million annually. The Cathedral of Saint Paul alone welcomes an additional 100,000 visitors each year.

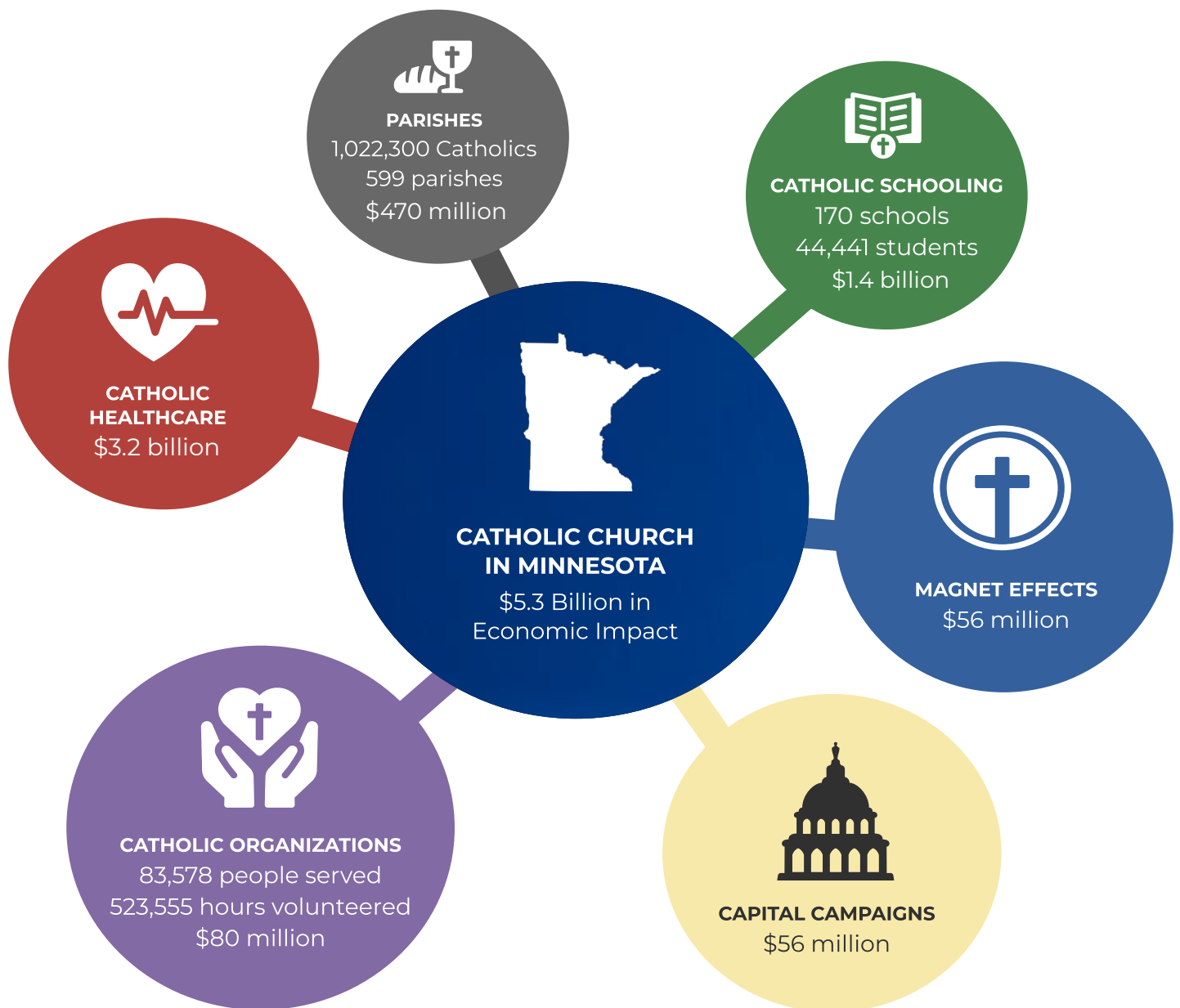


The largest economic contributions to the state are in the healthcare and education sectors. The direct expenditures of Catholic healthcare organizations, such as St. Cloud Hospital, is \$3.27 billion. For comparison, the direct expenditures of the University of Minnesota system are approximately \$4.7 billion (Philips, 2023). Catholic education serves over 40,000 preK-12 students annually to provide an estimated yearly benefit of more than \$700 million to Minnesotans. Combined with higher education, the total economic impact of Catholic education in the state is more than \$1.45 billion.

Our estimates suggest over 1.2 million people receive direct services through the Catholic Church and its many local organizations in Minnesota, not including those served by Catholic schools and healthcare providers. This number, coupled with the \$5.4 billion in economic benefits, highlights the importance of the Catholic Church and its members to the state and its communities.



## KEY FINDINGS





# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MINNESOTA

## 1.2 MILLION PEOPLE SERVED

The origins of the Catholic Church in Minnesota date back to the 18th century, spurred by French missionaries who accompanied explorers and fur traders. The first chapel in what is now the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, dedicated to Saint Paul, was constructed in 1841 in “Pig’s Eye Landing,” which is known today as the metropolitan city and state capital of Saint Paul. The Diocese of Saint Paul, established in 1850, was granted archdiocesan status in 1888. In 1966, Minneapolis was added to the name due to the rapid growth of both metropolitan cities, officially becoming the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

**About 22% of the Minnesota population identifies as Catholic.**

**Today, there are six dioceses in Minnesota, including Crookston, Duluth, Saint Cloud, New Ulm, Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and Winona-Rochester. Combined, there are nearly 600 Catholic parishes and 170 schools in Minnesota.**







## ESTIMATING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

Businesses, sports franchises, and entertainment venues are often praised for their contributions and even publicly subsidized by the community where they reside. Governments frequently justify attracting and subsidizing new businesses based on their economic contributions.

**Like for-profit entities, the Catholic Church contributes to the economy through wages, purchases, and capital expenditures. Additionally, the Church enhances the social vitality of communities through outreach and charitable programs.**

Unlike businesses, however, much less is known about the impact of groups with a charitable mission, such as the Catholic Church. Tierney (2016) conducted an analysis of the economic impact of the Catholic Church in Philadelphia, while Cnaan et al. (2013) presented a framework for valuing the economic activity of congregations.

Building upon these studies and their subsequent follow-ups, we developed *Fruits of the Vine* as a comprehensive overview of the Church's impact in Minnesota. The analysis spans Catholic organizations, capital campaigns, operating budgets, magnet effects, parish services, education, and healthcare.

With its charitable mission as a core foundation, the Catholic Church employs economic tools similar to those used by businesses, allowing us to quantify its contributions to the state's economy. This approach provides dollar-based estimates and comparisons to the scope of government and business, helping to convey the magnitude of the figures.





## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF INDIVIDUAL CATHOLIC PROGRAMS

In this section, we present estimates of the economic impacts of various categories of Catholic programs and services that produce both direct and indirect economic benefits for Minnesota residents. We begin with the lifeblood of the Catholic Church: parishes across Minnesota. We then branch out to the programs and services provided by independent Catholic organizations statewide. Next, we examine the economic impact of diocesan-level capital campaigns. We then consider the “magnet effects,” assessing how Catholic landmarks and events—such as weddings and festivals—draw visitors and support the local economy. Finally, we conclude by presenting estimates of the two consistent staples of Catholic services and programs across the history of the Catholic Church, namely, education and healthcare.

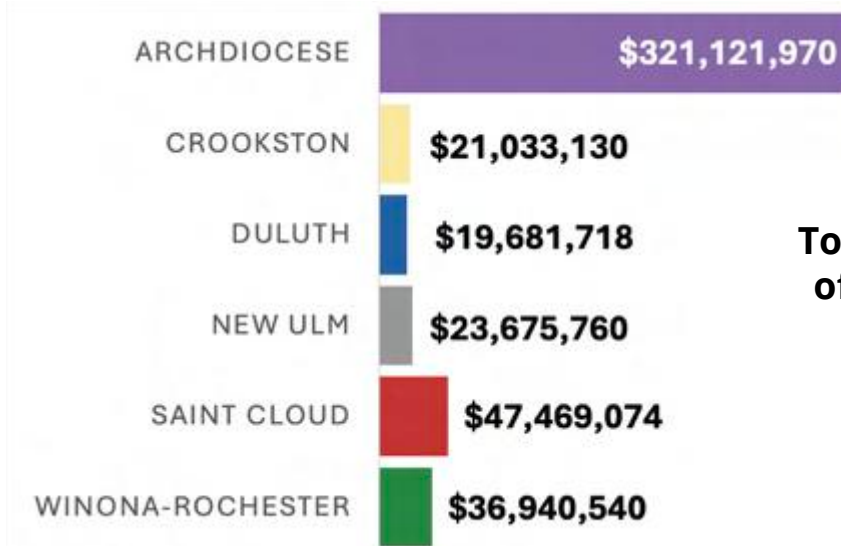
### PARISHES SERVICES AND OPERATING BUDGETS

The daily activities of parishes produce a multitude of direct benefits, some of which are immediately visible, while others are less obvious. The most apparent benefits include the many forms of outreach to the community, such as social, nutrition, and clothing ministries. These benefits are measured in the number of people served, the dollar value of goods and services provided, and the volunteer hours of parishioners’ time—expressed in dollars. The less obvious but equally significant economic benefit of the daily work of parishes is their operating budgets. These dollars are spent and recirculated through the community, supporting jobs throughout Minnesota.

Collectively, the six dioceses of Minnesota include approximately 600 parishes, with the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis having the most at 185 parishes and the Diocese of New Ulm having the fewest at 55. The average parish membership in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis is 1,043 families, while the other dioceses in Minnesota average 314 families per parish.

Parish operating budgets account for \$470 million in direct economic impact annually across the state. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis represents 68% of this contribution, with the Diocese of Saint Cloud contributing the second-largest share at \$48 million or 10% of the total.

## OPERATING BUDGETS OF PARISHES AND PARISH SERVICES



**Total Economic Benefit  
of Operating Budgets  
\$469,922,193**

To put this in perspective, the National Football League estimates the economic impact of a Super Bowl at approximately \$515 million, expressed in 2024 dollars (Matheson & Baade, 2004), making it, at best, slightly larger than the impact of parish budgets. Unlike a one-time, marquee event, parish budgets represent a recurring and reliable economic engine for Minnesota's local communities.

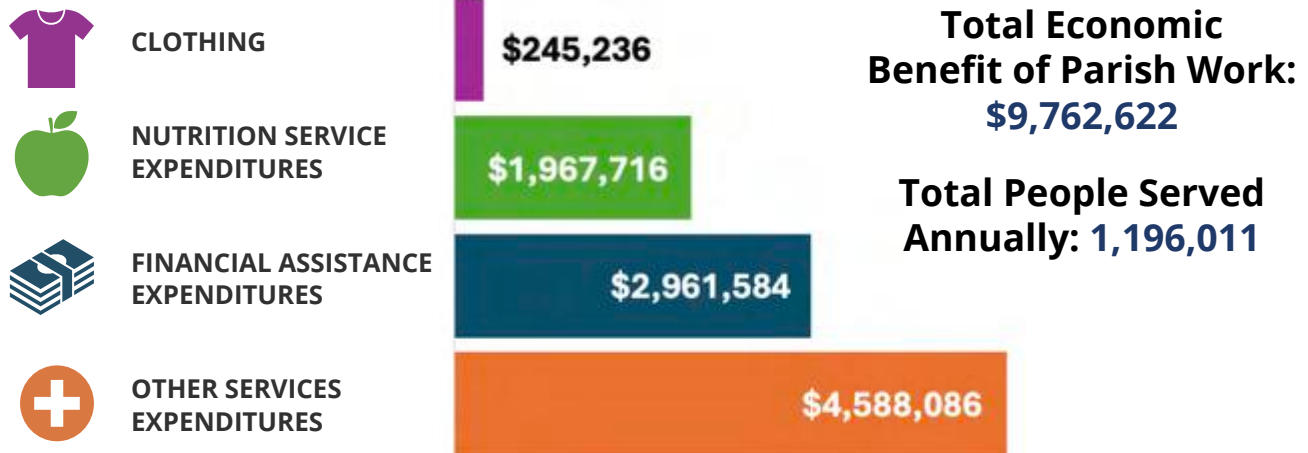
**\$470 million generated  
annually by parish operating  
budgets benefits Minnesotans  
365 days a year.**



Parishes also provide a range of social services, including food, clothing, and direct financial aid such as rent assistance. Food services include such ministries as food pantries and meals served. Other services include burial services, support for newly arrived immigrants, ministry to the sick, and counseling.

These services inject nearly \$10 million into the Minnesota economy, with \$3 million coming from direct financial assistance that is immediately spent in the local economy. The total number of people annually served is nearly 1.2 million across the state.

## PARISH SOCIAL SERVICES



Beyond the measurable economic benefits, parish ministries contribute to the social and economic stability of marginalized communities, reducing reliance on government services and fostering long-term resilience.

## FAITH IN ACTION

**The Co-Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Rochester is making a meaningful impact on the lives of single-parent families.**

Over the past year, the Co-Cathedral has provided essential support to more than 50 single-parent households, helping them secure housing, transportation, and utilities while also assisting with unexpected expenses that can arise suddenly. This support, rooted in faith and compassion, strengthens the bonds of community, and offers hope during difficult times. As one mother shared, the Church's steadfast encouragement has been a "guiding light" during her toughest challenges, inspiring her to keep faith and trust in God's grace. The Co-Cathedral's outreach has built relationships that extend beyond immediate needs, fostering a network of support and prayer that uplifts families and reinforces the power of community.



*- Authored by Minnesota Catholic Conference staff*



## CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond the regular contributions of parishes and their associated organizations and groups, numerous independent Catholic organizations also provide benefits and direct outreach.

**Combined, independent Catholic organizations contribute more than half a million volunteer hours, serve more than 80,000 people, and generate a combined benefit of approximately \$80 million.**

To compute the value of volunteer hours, this report conservatively uses the state's minimum wage. One of the most prominent of these independent groups is Catholic Charities of Minnesota. Catholic Charities maintains outreach missions in St. Cloud, the Twin Cities metro area, Winona-Rochester, and New Ulm. Each provides services to the surrounding community, producing statewide coverage. Examples of the outreach performed by Catholic Charities include homeless assistance, emergency and fire assistance, outreach to immigrants, and senior services. Catholic Charities alone serves nearly 80,000 people annually and contributes approximately 350,000 volunteer hours to the community for a combined economic benefit of more than \$86 million.

Similarly well-known are the Knights of Columbus who contribute more than 173,000 volunteer hours and another \$1.5 million in annual expenditures. Other notable groups include the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the Catholic Community Foundation, which contribute nearly \$4.8 million in annual expenditures benefiting local communities.

### FAITH IN ACTION

**The Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Steele County is a vital resource for individuals and families facing hardship.**

Since 2011, this volunteer-led organization has been providing essential assistance, such as help with rent, utilities, transportation, and food. Last year alone, their weekly dinner program served more than 8,000 meals, and often this was the only meal some community members had that day. The society also operates a furniture bank, which supplies families with essential household items at no cost. Overall, in the past five years, the society has helped more than 4,000 people, distributed more than \$360,000 in aid through local donations, served more than 26,000 meals, and donated 23,000 volunteer hours. Through compassionate service and community collaboration, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a lifeline for Steele County's most vulnerable.



*- Authored by Minnesota Catholic Conference staff*

### COMBINED SERVICES OF INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

**Expenditures**  
**\$93,222,693**

**Volunteer Hours**  
**523,555**

**People Served Annually:**  
**83,578**

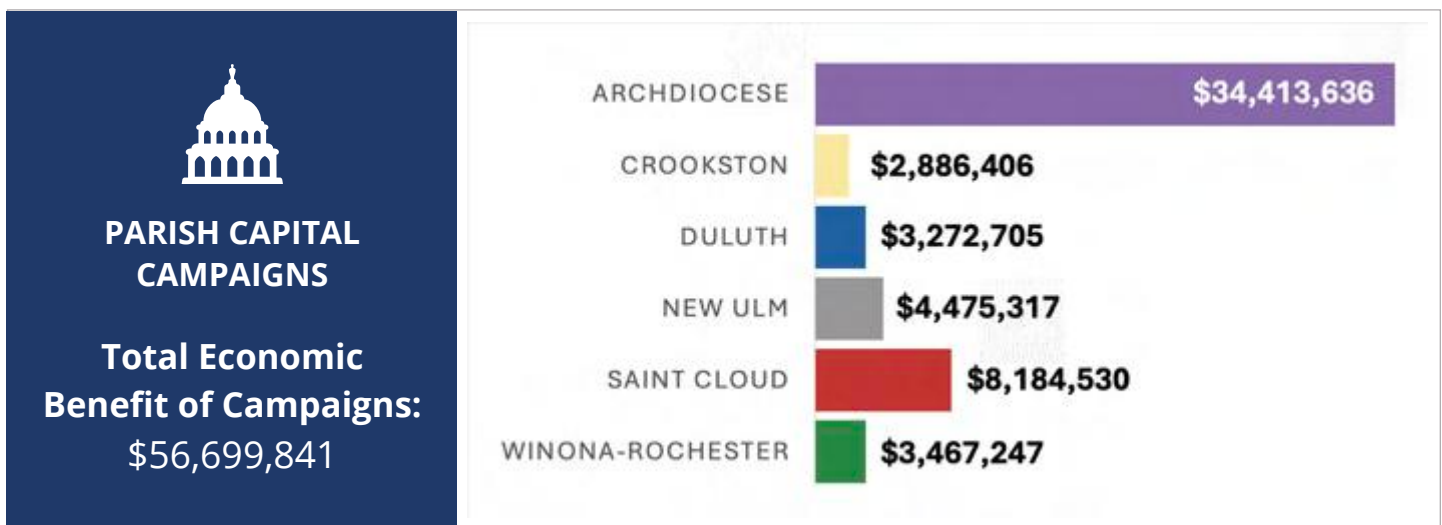
**Estimated Benefits:**  
**\$80,405,322**

*The estimate is based on the Cnaan et al. 2013 where the benefit is assessed at 80% of the total expenditures.*

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

Like for-profit and other non-profit entities, the Catholic Church regularly undertakes capital construction campaigns. These campaigns create economic benefits as goods and services are purchased. Together, the Catholic Church's capital campaigns contribute nearly \$57 million in economic benefits. Not surprisingly, the larger urban Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis accounts for the largest contribution at \$34 million. Together, the smaller and rural dioceses contributed more than \$22 million.

The standard methodology to estimate the economic impact of capital campaign and construction expenditures is to assume that 50% of the spending benefits the local economy. Using this approach, the Catholic Church's capital campaigns in Minnesota generate more than \$28 million in direct local economic impact. However, since our study encompasses the entire state economy, we assess the economic benefit of capital campaigns at 100%, since those resources are most likely in-state. The table below shows gross spending, which we believe best estimates the true economic contribution of these projects to the Minnesota economy.



## MAGNET EFFECTS OF CATHOLIC EVENTS AND SPACES

Church events, including but not limited to weddings, funerals, and festivals, attract visitors who spend money locally on goods and services such as hotels and meals. These economic benefits are typically referred to as "magnet effects." We utilize the accepted methodology from the 2016 report conducted by the Program for Research on Urban and Civil Society at the University of Pennsylvania to estimate the economic "magnet effects" of activities associated with the Catholic Church. This produces a conservative estimate that 50% of the event attendees come from out-of-town. The Cathedral of Saint Paul attracts more than 100,000 visitors combined annually for an estimated economic benefit of more than \$4 million.

**The combined "magnet effects" of church events in Minnesota are more than \$56 million annually.**





## CATHOLIC EVENTS "MAGNET EFFECTS"



**WEDDINGS**  
\$11,052,401

+



**FUNERALS**  
\$41,125,155

+



**LANDMARKS**  
\$4,450,000

=

**TOTAL ECONOMIC  
"MAGNET EFFECTS"**  
\$56,627,555

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLING

PreK-12 schooling is one of the largest forms of outreach for the Catholic Church worldwide, and Minnesota is no exception. The Church serves more than 40,000 students from pre-K through high school with approximately 29,000 of them enrolled in grades K-8. In addition, there are six Catholic colleges and universities serving the state.

**Combined, from pre-K through higher education, Catholic education organizations provide \$1.45 billion in economic benefits to Minnesota.**

The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis is home to more than 90 schools alone. This includes 16 high schools, such as Benilde-St. Margaret's in St. Louis Park and Saint Agnes in Saint Paul.

**Schools within the archdiocese would constitute the fourth-largest school district in the state.**

Current state law does not allow families to utilize their own property taxes to send their children to Catholic schools. Thus, families pay out of pocket to send students to Catholic schools, in addition to paying taxes to the public schools. To estimate the economic benefit that Catholic schools provide to the state of Minnesota for these more than 40,000 students, we use the state's published mean operating expenditures per pupil value of \$16,251 (Strom, 2023). It is worth noting, however, that some of the state's public schools exceed \$20,000 in per pupil funding. The straightforward computation we employ is simply a multiplication of the number of students in Catholic schools by this per pupil operating expenditure figure for students in K-12 schools and \$9,550 for pre-K for approximately \$715 million in annual economic benefit for preK-12 students. For comparison, the Saint Paul Public Schools' operating budget for FY2025 is slightly more than \$1 billion which, although providing jobs, constitutes a cost to taxpayers.



## FAITH IN ACTION

**Risen Christ Catholic School in Minneapolis is a shining example of how the Catholic Church positively impacts local communities by offering an inclusive, empowering education to underserved families.** As Minnesota’s only Catholic dual-language immersion school, Risen Christ serves primarily Latino and low-income students, providing them with a transformative education that integrates both English and Spanish. The school’s 50/50 dual immersion model enables students to grow academically, while preserving cultural roots and preparing them for a world that increasingly values bilingualism. With its commitment to Catholic values and a nurturing, culturally affirming environment, Risen Christ fosters both academic achievement and strong community bonds, making it an invaluable resource for families and a testament to the Church’s dedication to uplifting communities.



*- Authored by Minnesota Catholic Conference staff*

Dioceses across the state offer pre-K services, with the densest concentration in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, where approximately 2,600 children are enrolled. Based on prior research in this area (Cnaan & An, 2018; Cnaan et al., 2013) and survey results, we estimate that each child receiving childcare from Catholic parishes results in a net economic benefit of \$9,550.

**There are approximately 5,500 children enrolled in Catholic pre-K programs throughout the state for a total of \$53 million to the state in direct educational benefits.**

Beyond direct financial contributions, pre-K services provide critical unmeasured benefits, such as enabling parents to participate in the labor force and preparing children to be school-ready for both public and Catholic elementary education.

The Catholic Church also serves Minnesota’s higher education needs through six schools:

- University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul with an additional campus in downtown Minneapolis
- The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth
- Saint John’s University in Collegeville
- Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota in Winona with satellite campuses in Minneapolis and Rochester
- College of Saint Benedict in Saint Joseph
- St. Catherine’s University in Saint Paul

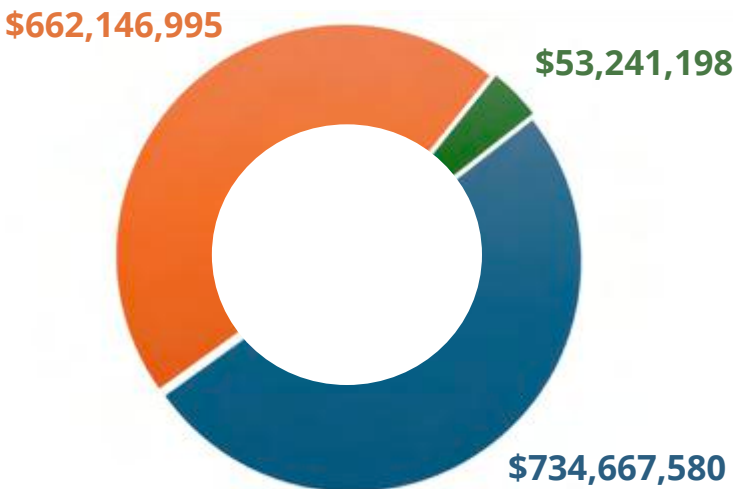
These colleges and universities educate both Catholics and non-Catholics, providing a variety of programs from strong liberal arts foundations at the undergraduate level to doctoral and professional studies. Graduates include teachers, nurses, social workers, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders, all who contribute to local communities throughout the state.

**The direct economic benefit of Catholic higher education institutions is nearly \$735 million.**



Indirect benefits, such as wages through a more educated workforce, are substantial but fall outside the scope of this report.

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION BENEFITS



**Total Economic Benefit of Catholic Education: \$1,450,055,773**

- HIGHER EDUCATION
- K-12 CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
- PRE-K CATHOLIC PROGRAMS

## CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE

**Outside of government, the Catholic Church is the largest provider of healthcare in the world and its impact is widespread across Minnesota.**

*How Catholic Places Serve Civic Purposes: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Economic "Halo Effects"* calls attention to the central role of healthcare and hospitals in Catholic ministry. According to the report, many Catholic hospitals and nursing homes originated in the mid-1800s, when religious sisters and nuns began to care for the sick and the poor, as a response to the needs of those in urban areas.

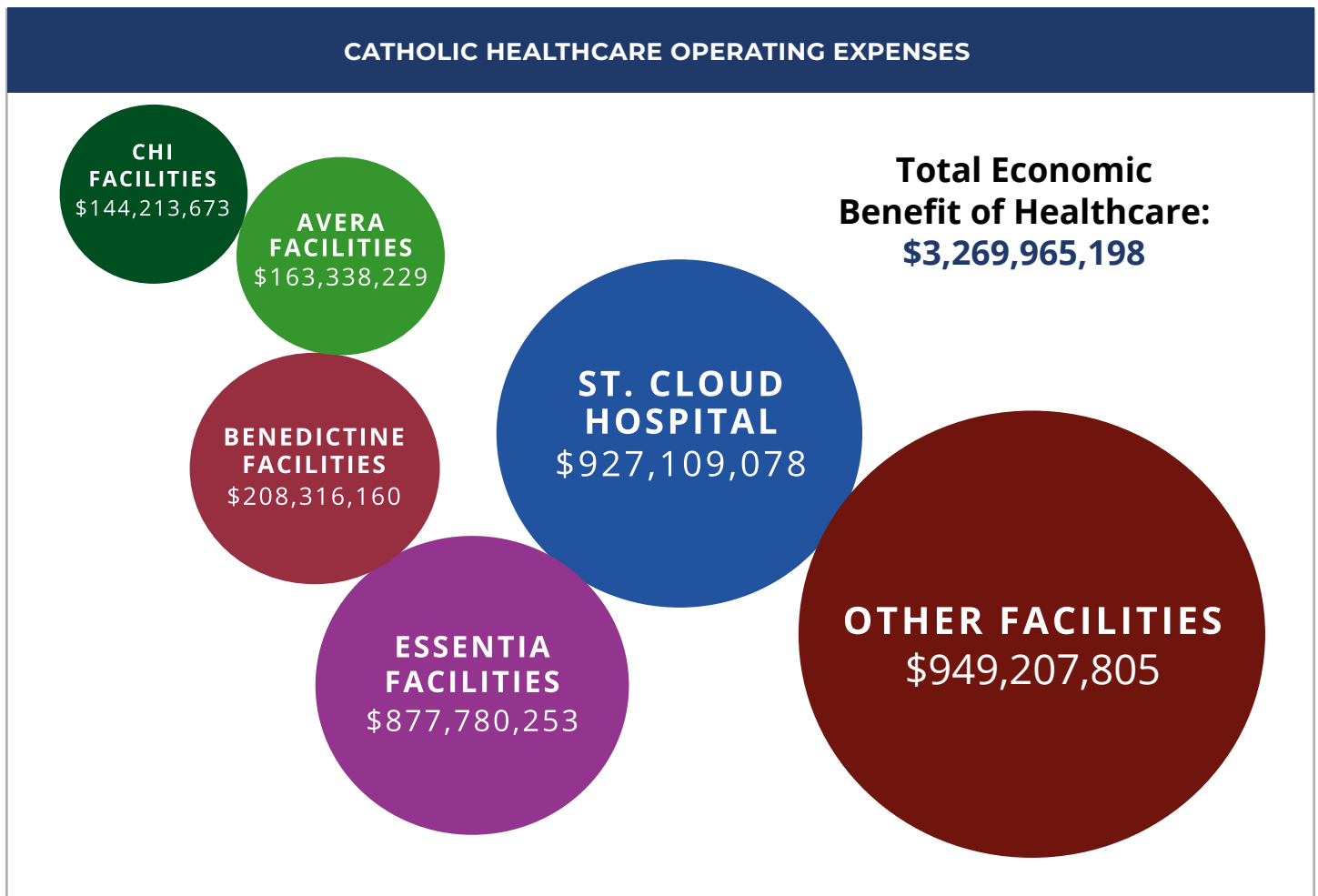
Minnesota followed a similar trajectory. As just one example, Bishop James McGolrick directed the Benedictine sisters to establish a hospital in 1898 in the Central Hillside area of Duluth. Now, Catholic healthcare reaches all areas of the state—from hospitals like Avera Marshall Hospital and St. Cloud Hospital to skilled nursing facilities.

The single largest Catholic healthcare facility in Minnesota is St. Cloud Hospital, with operating expenses nearing \$1 billion. St. Cloud Hospital employs over 6,500 people and a medical staff of more than 550 physicians. In 2023, more than 360,000 outpatient encounters took place at the hospital, combined with over 110,000 inpatient care days.

Other large Catholic healthcare providers include facilities within the Essentia, Benedictine, Avera, and CHI systems, which combined total \$1.4 billion in operating expenses. These providers deliver a wide range of services across the state, including hospitals, assisted living, hospice, and home care. Smaller Catholic providers in Minnesota are just as important as the larger organizations, with estimated services contributing nearly \$1 billion to the economy.

**We measure the direct economic impact of Catholic healthcare organizations through their operating expenses, which exceed \$3.2 billion annually.**

**Altogether, the impact of Catholic healthcare is profound. For comparison, the Minnesota Mayo Clinic reported \$5.7 billion in expenses in 2022.**





## SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL “HALO” EFFECT IN MINNESOTA

This report continues the work started with the 2016 report, *How Catholic Places Serve Civic Purposes: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Economic “Halo Effects,”* by quantifying the economic footprint of the Catholic Church in Minnesota. While the Catholic Church’s outreach is generally understood by the public, we can quantify these economic benefits and provide far greater detail than past reports.

To quantify the impacts, we provide the contributions of the Catholic Church in dollars.

**The contributions go far beyond simple direct economic effects, however. Catholic organizations routinely feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and provide direct financial assistance to those most in need in our communities.**



**Service organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Charities, and the Society of St. Vincent De Paul contribute more than half a million volunteer hours and serve more than 80,000 people annually.** Combined, these service missions support the social and physical well-being of Minnesotans across the state, in addition to providing a substantial economic benefit.



**Like education, the Church’s healthcare mission extends back to the 19th century, when hospitals and clinics were frequently unavailable to the poor and elderly.** Today, the Church continues this outreach, with about one in five patients admitted to Catholic hospitals being Medicaid eligible and 5% being uninsured. The Church is especially proud of its outreach to rural communities, with **nearly 75% of Catholic hospitals designated as rural serving.**



**Government frequently works to bring corporations to communities for their economic stimulus.** The Church provides a similar effect through parish budgets and capital campaigns. Both support secular jobs in local communities throughout Minnesota. Together, capital campaigns and parish budgets contributed more than half a billion dollars in 2023 alone.



**Church activities such as weddings and festivals bring visitors from out of town, creating a “magnet effect.”** These activities contribute to local economies when visitors purchase goods and services such as meals and hotel stays, contributing another \$56 million in economic activity.



**Catholic preK-12 education meets the needs of more than 40,000 students annually with high-quality schools and teachers at no additional cost to taxpayers.** Higher education institutions provide both undergraduate and graduate education, preparing graduates to contribute to the social, civic, and economic well-being of Minnesota for years to come.



**Overall, conservative estimates show that the Catholic Church contributes more than \$5 billion in economic benefits to the state of Minnesota.**

To put this number in context, the Church’s economic footprint is nearly \$700 million larger than the \$4.7 billion reported for the direct expenditures of the Minnesota State University system.

Finally, this report highlights that the impact of the Catholic Church in the state is not only large in magnitude (scale) but also spread to different sectors of the economy and Minnesotan society (scope).

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Parish-level data comes from a survey distributed in 2024 to the parishes of the dioceses of Crookston, Duluth, Saint Cloud, New Ulm, Winona-Rochester, and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The completion rate for the survey is 85%. We drop observations that contain non-numeric or inconsistent information. When a range of values is given, we use the average of the numbers provided. For the missing parishes, we estimate the size of unreported parishes based on diocesan supplied data on parish membership. We find that non-reporting parishes are smaller than reporting ones. Non-reporting parishes are, on average, 0.76 equivalents of reporting parishes. We adjust our estimates to account for this size difference. When estimating the impact of the non-reporting parishes, we also consider the share of parishes from each diocese that provides a particular service. For example, 15% of Crookston parishes report offering pre-K education, compared with 8% of Duluth parishes. When estimating pre-K enrollment, we consider these differences in the prevalence of service provision by multiplying the number of non-reporting parishes by each diocese's share.

This report employs in part the previously published methodology of Cnaan et al. (2013) in their *If you don't count it, it doesn't count: a pilot study in valuing urban congregations*, the follow-up study Cnaan and An's (2018) *Even priceless has to have a number: congregational halo effect*, and Tierney's (2016), and *How Catholic Places Serve Civic Purposes: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Economic "Halo Effects."* Doing so allows us to produce comparable estimates across geographic locations and provides transparency for others to reproduce the results. In reporting direct spending benefits, the usual estimates are that 80% of operating budgets support the local economies.

Since our analysis is statewide, we estimate the contribution of the parishes at 100%. If we take the methodology of Cnaan et al. (2013) and Cnaan and An's (2018), we conservatively estimate 80% of the total operating budgets that support the economy of Minnesota are \$376 million for 2024. Similarly, previous research points to a 50% contribution of capital campaigns to the local economy, but we account for those benefits fully since the analysis encompasses the entire state, rather than a single isolated city. The 50% estimate of parish capital campaign contributions is \$28 million annually.

A key feature of the estimates published here is a consistent conservative estimate of economic benefits. For example, we use \$16,251 for per pupil spending, a state average. If we used the total per-pupil formula funding for the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area of \$20,128, where many Catholic schools are located, the benefit would be closer to \$820 million. Similarly, we use a conservative value of \$10.85/hour to calculate the economic benefit of volunteer hours instead of the \$11.13 state minimum wage starting in January 2025. For "magnet effects," we assume 50% of people attending events and activities affiliated with the Catholic Church are from out of town for an estimated benefit of \$56,627,555, while a more generous estimate of 80% out-of-town attendance would produce \$75,333,736.



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*Photo: Mosaic from the Basilica of Saint Clement, Rome, Italy.*

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