



# Catholic Charities of Idaho

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ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF BOISE

## Hunger

Given our Christian mission, Catholic Charities of Idaho and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise represent the voice of the most vulnerable in Idaho. Our legislative priorities are in the areas of affordable housing, food/nutritional security, equitable and affordable healthcare, economic security, and immigration reform.

### About Hunger

Our society has the resources to provide food to every citizen, yet one in six people in Idaho is food insecure or hungry. Faced with low wages and rising housing, utility, and healthcare costs, low-income families are being forced to cut meals or buy food that does not meet the recommended daily intake of nutrition in order to get by; the recent economic downturn is only aggravating this trend. Children suffer the effects of hunger in Idaho in larger proportions than adults, rendering them susceptible to a host of health, psychological, and social risks. Programs such as the National School Lunch Program and the Picnic in the Park Program are helping to provide nutritious meals to kids, but one out of every eight children still goes to bed hungry each night.

### Hunger Statistics

- 16% of all Idahoans (about 198,000 people) live in a household that at some time during the previous year had difficulty providing enough food for all household members, and 5% of Idahoans (about 60,000 people) live in a household in which at least one household member is not getting enough food.
- Between June 2008 and June 2009, food stamp participation in Idaho increased by 41%; nationally, participation increased by 22%.
- One out of every four families (23%) in Idaho receives food stamps, and over half (53%) of the participants are children.
- Two out of three Idahoans who rely on food banks are either children too young to work or seniors unable to work.
- Nearly half (45%) of all children in Idaho schools qualify for the free or reduced school lunch program. Throughout Idaho, 68,000 children receive free lunches at school daily and 25,000 receive reduced price lunches.

### Catholic Social Teaching

The Church's teaching on the dignity of the human person and the value of the family directly relates to the commitment to ensure that every individual experiences nutritional and food security. We have a responsibility to make certain that the rights of every individual are preserved and defended, and one of the most basic human rights is the right to adequate food and water. Children and seniors are particularly at risk of being hungry, and we are called to protect their basic needs.

### About Catholic Charities of Idaho

The mission of Catholic Charities of Idaho is to advance the dignity of individuals, families, and communities by strengthening families, advocating justice, and engaging the community to serve the common good. These three principles guide the work of Catholic Charities of Idaho throughout the state of Idaho. Catholic Charities of Idaho offers services to all people regardless of religion, age, gender, disability, race/ethnicity, income, or background.

### About the Catholic Diocese of Boise

United with our Bishop and in communion with the Universal Church, we the People of God in Idaho are called to build up the Kingdom of God by: proclaiming the presence of God in word and sacrament; calling each other to conversion and to joyful sharing of the Good News by word and deed; nurturing and supporting vital faith communities; being a prophetic voice which affirms the good values of society and challenges what is destructive; discovering, celebrating and integrating the gifts of each individual, community and culture; recognizing and responding to those in need.

For a list of resources used in this publication, please contact:

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