

# Sun Editorial on Archbishop Lori, Archdiocese Wildly Misleading

On the day Archbishop Lori was installed as archbishop of Baltimore, The Baltimore Sun editorial board welcomed him with a lazy piece of journalism.

A May 16 editorial cited the archbishop's religious liberty fight and said the Sun "would not presume to instruct the new archbishop" on his focus, while doing exactly that during the next few paragraphs.

The editorial said, "we hope these issues will not be the defining ones of his tenure here," and said he would find great poverty outside the walls of the Baltimore Basilica. The editorial went on to say that the church, under Archbishop Lori's predecessors, made substantial effort to address poverty, but that the needs "outstrip those efforts."

The editorial then went on to say that the House of Representatives was going to make cuts detrimental to the poor and elderly and the archdiocese hadn't released a statement about it.

The editorial asked, "Has the church lost interest in helping the least powerful in our community?"

No, and all it took was a simple Google search and some interest by the Sun's reporters in the Maryland Catholic Conference to find out the opposite.

The MCC, the lobbying arm of Maryland's bishops, spent considerable energy during the last few months fighting for the Maryland General Assembly to pass a budget that protected the most vulnerable. It's as if the Sun ignored what the church was doing in its own backyard to fight for governmental protection of safety net programs.

To the House of Representatives point: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, of which the archdiocese's bishops are part, has been extremely vocal about Congress passing a budget that protects the poor, children and immigrants and was critical of several proposals last week that didn't do that.

If the Sun ever questioned whether the Archdiocese of Baltimore cared about those in need, all it needed to do was have a reporter walk a few blocks to Our Daily Bread, Christopher's Place Employment Academy, My Sister's Place Women's Center and Beans & Bread Center and see the extraordinary things happening thanks to the Catholic Church.

If that's not good enough, maybe one of the editorial board members could walk outside the Sun building and across the street to see the community of St. Ignatius on Calvert Street. Parishioners there make meals for the poor, help people



recovering from surgeries and offer retreats for homeless men among many ministries.

What other religion is doing one-third of what the Catholic Church is doing in Baltimore? What other religion has taken upon itself to educate millions of inner-city youths in schools, while making huge financial sacrifices in the process? The church doesn't have to operate schools. It does so because it believes it should.

Rather than criticizing the archdiocese for its efforts and occasional closures, maybe it should be thankful that there is a religion making the effort in the city in the first place. The church's efforts are saving the state and Baltimore millions of dollars every year by educating poor children.

If the Sun is worried about Archbishop Lori's priorities, they should have sent a reporter to Our Daily Bread May 17, as the new shepherd of Baltimore's Catholics was serving Baltimore's poor a hot meal on his first day.

But, they didn't. Here's what they missed.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is doing more than anyone else in Baltimore City every day to help the vulnerable.

Here's the reality: the Sun views the Catholic Church's everyday outreach as "dog bites man." It happens every day. It's not a story to them and it's taken for granted. But, take away the Catholic schools, hospitals, parishes and outreaches and it's arguable that Baltimore would crumble.

The church won't do that, however, because the church doesn't look at its efforts as burdensome. Instead, social teaching, outreach and education are part of the archdiocese's DNA.

It's something we do.

When hardships come, we adjust and re-organize because this is our calling and our mission.

Speaking on the evening of his installation, Archbishop Lori, praised the organizations and projects of the archdiocese, "all of which exist so we can be true to the Gospel of Christ, all of which exist so we can serve our brothers and sisters just as the Lord would have us do."

Imagine how great it would be if other faiths organized on the level of the Catholic Church. Clearly the Sun hasn't.