



BACKGROUND

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Lubbock

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The Catholic Diocese of Lubbock was created by Pope John Paul II on June 17, 1983, with 20 counties coming from the Diocese of Amarillo and five from the Diocese of San Angelo. The Rev. Michael Jarboe Sheehan was ordained as the church's first bishop.

The diocese includes 25 counties covering 23,382 square miles on the Llano Estacado and Low Rolling Plains of West Texas. The Catholic population is widely distributed; long distances make the term "mission diocese" apposite. The Catholic population in 2000 was 80,742; 80 percent were of Hispanic origin.

The cathedral church is Christ the King Parish in Lubbock.

In 2009, serving in the 62 parish churches were 40 priests, both diocesan and religious, and 40 deacons. Twenty religious sisters ministered in parishes and schools, at the Catholic Pastoral Center, and in retreat ministries.

Covenant Health System – a Catholic hospital ministry operated by Saint Joseph Health System under the sponsorship of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Orange, California -- is the largest health care institution in the region. The facilities admit more than 40,000 patients and treat more than 100,000 emergency room clients each year.

Catholic Family Services, which offers a broad range of social and economic services to the needy, helps almost 30,000 individuals annually, including almost 8,000 emergency assistance clients.

Approximately 400 children are instructed in two Catholic grade schools and one junior-senior high school. More than 10,000 elementary and high school students attend weekly religious-education classes at their parishes.

The Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Catholic youth organizations, and numerous other lay organizations share in the work of identifying and serving the needs of the people.

The *South Plains Catholic*, official publication for the Diocese of Lubbock, is published monthly (except July) and mailed to more than 13,000 households.

On June 1, 1994, the Most Rev. Plácido Rodríguez, CMF, became bishop of the diocese after Bishop Sheehan had been transferred to Santa Fe, New Mexico.