

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/migrants-refugees-and-travelers/quotes-rights-migrants-refugees.cfm>

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/poverty/reflections-on-poverty-in-america.cfm>

- Come, Holy Spirit, and open our hearts, minds, and souls to your presence. Grace us with the strength to follow the examples of Jesus. Like Jesus, may the Spirit provide us with a voice to cry out for justice for the poor. Remind us that what we do to the least of those among us, we do to you." *Answering the Voice of the Spirit*, The Catholic Campaign for Human Development
- "Consequently, the promotion of justice is at the heart of a true culture of solidarity. It is not just a question of giving one's surplus to those in need, but of helping entire peoples presently excluded or marginalized to enter into the sphere of economic and human development'." Pope John Paul II, *World Day of Peace Message* 2001
- "We are called in a special way to serve the poor and vulnerable; to build bridges of solidarity among peoples of differing races and nations, LANGUAGE and ability, gender and culture." US Catholic Bishops, *Communities of Salt and Light*
- "We are a very diverse community of faith racially, ethnically, economically, and ideologically. This diversity should be respected, reflected and celebrated in our social ministry." US Catholic Bishops, *Communities of Salt and Light*
- "Act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8
- "Catholicism does not call us to abandon the world but to help shape it. This does not mean leaving worldly tasks and responsibilities but transforming them...Social justice and the common good are built up or torn down day by day in the countless decisions and choices we make." US Bishops, *Everyday Christianity* \*
- "Our world is entering the new millennium burdened by the contradictions of an economic, cultural and technological progress which offers immense possibilities to a fortunate few, while leaving millions of others not only on the margins of progress but in living conditions far below the minimum demanded by human dignity...Christians must learn to make their act of faith in Christ by discerning his voice in the cry for help that rises from this world of poverty." Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Apostolic Letter at the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, January 6, 2001
- "For the Catholic faithful, the commitment to build peace and justice is not secondary but essential." Pope John Paul II, *World Day of Peace Message* 2000
- "Being a believer means that one lives a certain way walking with the Lord, doing justice, loving kindness, and living peaceably among all people. Christian discipleship means practicing what Jesus preached." US Bishops, *Everyday Christianity*
- "Remember the time of hunger in the time of plenty, poverty and want in the day of wealth." Sirach 18:25
- "It is a sign of hope that, despite many serious obstacles, initiatives for peace continue to spring up day by day, with the generous cooperation of many people. Peace is a building constantly under construction." Pope John Paul II, *World Day of Peace Message* 2000
- "...Radical changes in world politics leave America with a heightened responsibility to be for the world an example of a genuinely free, democratic, just and humane society. Pope John Paul II, St. Louis, Missouri, January 1999
- From salvation history we learn that power is responsibility: it is service, not privilege. Its exercise is morally justifiable when it is used for the good of all, when it is sensitive to the needs of the poor and defenseless. Pope John Paul II, St. Louis, Missouri, January 1999
- America first proclaimed its independence on the basis of self-evident moral truths. America will remain a beacon of freedom for the world as long as it stands by those moral truths which are the very heart of its historical experience. And so America: If you want peace, work for justice. If you want justice, defend life. If you want life, embrace the truth, the truth revealed by God." Pope John Paul II, St. Louis, Missouri, January 1999

## Real Words from Americans Living in Poverty

- No hope, people make you feel bad and not getting anywhere. Male, 41, Maryland, household of three, income less than \$8,860
- It means having to do without basic needs. It means being last, forgotten, judged wrongly by others. Male, 44, Delaware, household of three, income less than \$8,860
- Poor is a person that has a bad education and for that he or she cant create a successful business to give him or her their own incomes. When the people have the capacity to make their own money -- without stealing it or asking for it -- they are wealthy. Male, 28, New York, household of five, income between \$15,020 to \$18,099
- To me, it is not being poor in itself that holds any meaning; it is seeing all the wealth in others, and of our nation, that makes you feel poor -- like living within many states of hopelessness. Male, 40, California, household of nine, income less than \$8,860.
- Extremely difficult, with all the problems being poor may create for single, working parents trying to raise educated kids with values in today's society. Female, 24, Minnesota, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- It is worst to be a poor man in this great country, else you suffer most. Female, 28, no state, household of two, income less than \$8,860
- Hopeless. Male, 58, Delaware, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- The people who really are without money, in huge areas with no infrastructure of support systems, really cannot help themselves. Female, 53, Oregon, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- I have lived in poverty for several years and the worst part for me has been lack of respect, opportunities and resources. Female, 25, household of four, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- Being unseen and unheard. Female, 70, Washington, household of one, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- You are voiceless and somewhat powerless to change your situation, because you are too busy trying to survive to make the changes you need to improve your situation. Female, 40, Washington, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- I'm a senior, disabled, all alone, no money, sit in front of television all day why? Too poor to socialize. Poverty is like being in prison. Why even try to stay alive? For what? Female, 62, Oregon, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- Being disenfranchised and without power or protection under the law. Male, 46, Oregon, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- You are treated as a second class citizen. Male, 47, Oregon, household of one, income less than \$8,860
- You can be working and be poor, because all your money goes out for medical bills. Female, 46, Ohio, household of four, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- You become invisible to government. and business and get no representation. Hard to maintain a stable home life, no economic growth. Most people treat you less than human. Male, 54, Washington, household of three, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019
- People don't get that stereotypes aren't accurate and that being poor isn't easy and isn't desired. Also, hiring the poor shouldn't scare the middle and upper classes, and it does. Female, 49, Oregon, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- Heartbreaking. I worry about when I become elderly, sometimes I feel that my concerns, my voice isn't heard. Female, 44, no state, household of two, income less than \$8,860
- Disenfranchisement from a quality life, prejudice from more affluent culture. Life consumed by survival needs. Male, 58, Oregon, household of two, income less than \$8,860
- Working for a living and still not able to make ends meet. Male, 48, Missouri, household of one, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- Its unbearable. Its like you have no reason to exist. Everywhere you go you get turned away. Male, 45, Illinois, household of five, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019

- Being poor means not having money to repair a very old car. It means struggling every day to keep going. Female, 40, Ohio, household of one, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- Society tends to believe if people are poor it is their fault. I feel people are just prejudiced against the poor as they are people of color. Poor children are not treated as well in school because the teachers seem to feel they are a waste of time anyway. Female, 40, Missouri, household of three, income of \$15,020 to \$18,099
- Having to stand on line for everything only to face the rude workers. Doing without some of the latest medicine and doctors who would work to get you better. Female, 65, New York, household of two, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- It feels as if you are the lowest creature on earth and rich people look down at you over their noses. Male, 66, Pennsylvania, household of three, income of \$15,020 to \$18,099
- Struggling to pay bills, constant disconnection notices, not having money to wash and purchase clothing to work in because bills and household needs have to come first. Listening to your children say they are hungry, but not knowing what you are going to be able to give them before your foodstamps come. Female, 32, Missouri, household of five, income of less than \$8,860
- To be deprived of three meals a day, living from check to check, to be degraded. People don't like the poor. Female, 41, Missouri, household of two, income of less than \$8,860
- Not knowing where to turn for help. Female, 60, Oregon, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- I am poor so I know poverty. Its wearing tattered clothes and shoes and having to bow my head in the face of injustice and oppression. Male, 55, Florida, household of two, income of less than \$8,860
- Poor = helpless. Poor + Black = helpless, hopeless. Poor + Black + female + Catholic = encouraged fighter. Female, 62, Ohio, household of two, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019
- No joy, no peace, no love, and no money. Male, 62, Pennsylvania, household of four, income of less than \$8,860
- Its depressing and people do not want to give you one chance, one break so you can better yourself and be on the road to independence. Female, 45, New York, household of four, income of less than \$8,860
- You're beneath everyone else. Female, 26, Maryland, household of four, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019
- It is a very sad situation to be poor in the U.S. Female, 77, New Jersey, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- Miserable existence. Male, 70, New Jersey, household of three, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- You cant live a decent life where you can raise your children in today society without the pressure of wearing designer clothing. Female, 40, New Jersey, household of two, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- No one seems to really care whether you're eating or not. Male, 35, Florida, household of four, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- Rent takes most of your income, utilities the rest. Female, 65, Louisiana, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- Not being able to enjoy a quality of life that gives dignity, hope for the future and the education of our children. Male, 58, Texas, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- To be treated like a criminal and undesirable, to deal with hopelessness, despair, frustration. Male, 45, California, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- People look down on you, thinking that you're nothing, like not one poor person tried in their life. Female, Kansas, 16, household of three, income of less than \$8,860
- We are brainwashed to believe we have value in proportion to what we consume: more things = more value. Lacking funds to consume, we feel worthless and angry. So we steal or feel low self-esteem. Female, 62, New York, household of two, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- When you are poor, even some social workers will treat you badly. Male, 38, Oregon, household of three, income of less than \$8,860

- Not having the American Dream. Female, 49, New York, household of three, income of less than \$8,860
- When a loaf of bread is almost \$2.00, cant afford that loaf of bread. Female, 49, Minnesota, household of three, income of less than \$8,860
- The endless frustration of not being able to provide for family expenses, let alone own --such as false teeth, bed rails, regular Dr. visits, replacement clothes, shoes, feet hurt but cant afford to find out why, etc. Female, 60, Connecticut, household of four, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- When you have no home and no food and no one to love you. Female, 16, Kansas, household of five, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019
- Very lonely, degrading paperwork over and over, no training for better job, not being able to get your children clothes and shoes. Female, 47, Michigan, household of three, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- Not having enough money to have a nice Christmas. Not being able to have nice things for birthdays. Female, 23, Michigan, household of one, income of less than \$8,860
- Have only one meal a day sometimes. Female, 50, Michigan, household of two, income of less than \$8,860
- You're looked upon as being worthless. Female, 37, Michigan, household of two, income of \$18,100 to \$21,179
- Anyone who makes minimum wage or less. Female, 23, Kansas, household of four, income of less than \$8,860
- Feeling like you always owe everyone either an apology or an explanation or both. Female, 52, Kansas, household of four, income of less than \$8,860
- Being poor in the U.S. today is very rough and scary. Female, 36, Kansas, household of two, income of less than \$8,860
- Poor people in the U.S. are not treated with respect. Male, 36, Arizona, household of five, income of \$11,940 to \$15,019
- Looked over by most (due to fear), forgotten, seeing the richest people in the world while hungry and cold, feels alone and invalid. Male, 31, California, household of six, income of \$8,860 to \$11,939
- It means I lost life as I knew it. Male, 36, California, household of one, income of less than \$8,860