

***Teaching About Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty:
Suggested Activities and Sources of Information for Elementary through
College Students and Adults***

Introduction

As a long-time provider of human services in the greater Baltimore area, Associated Catholic Charities experiences first-hand on a daily basis the breadth of the issues of hunger, homelessness and poverty, and the importance of the effort of others to help those in need. Thus, an important part of the mission of our agency is to educate people to social awareness and to motivate them to act. In keeping with this part of our mission, we now undertake to compile information and activities that may be used by our employees and others to educate children and adults on the subjects of hunger, homelessness and poverty. Our hope is to provide suggestions for making an impression on the students, for allowing them to become familiar with these issues in a meaningful way, rather than by simply presenting facts and statistics.

The outline that follows contains many suggestions of such information to use. The outline is broken down into the **three topics—hunger, homelessness and poverty/social justice**. Each topic is then broken down further into **three teaching levels—elementary school, middle/high school, college/adults**. Within each teaching level, the outline contains a list of **sources of information** on the topic, a list of **suggested activities** that may be conducted with the participants, suggested **reflection questions** for follow-up purposes, ideas to share with the participants on how they may be able to **become involved** and finally, a list of **other resources** (consisting mainly of related websites).

The information given under each topic is intended as a guide. In preparation for an educational session, you, as the teacher/session leader, would peruse the portion of the outline that fits the topic and teaching level of the session for which you are preparing. Within that portion of the outline, you will find a variety of activities, which will help the class to experience the topic at hand in a personal way. You will also find many possible information sources and websites from which you may gather background information to present. This background information will place the selected activity in context. You may make the educational connection by ending your session with some or all of the suggested reflection questions. A class energized by the experience you present will ask how they can help. Therefore, we have included suggestions for students of each age group of ways to become involved.

Please note that the suggested activities have been gathered from a variety of sources, many of which are noted on the outline. Some of the information and activities contained in the outline derive from the general pool of shared knowledge of parents and teachers used again and again in connection with teaching these subjects. Wherever we have identified an author, we have obtained his or her permission to use his or her work. If credit is due an author for any of the information or activities contained in this outline

and no credit is given, please let us know. We would be happy to honor all sources of information.

We hope this information is helpful. We will be continually updating it as need be and would love to have your input. Please share with us your experience from having used the information in this outline by email at: povedu@cc-md.org. We would also love to have you share with us other information and activities you have successfully used with students on these topics.

Outline

HUNGER

Hunger Lesson Plan Options for Elementary Students

I. Information to present

- Hunger and poverty data and definitions
Most suitable for upper elementary grades.
References: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

II. Activities to do

- Make lunch bags for the hungry
Decorate brown lunch bags with markers, crayons, stickers and fill with lunch to give to the hungry.
- Make placemats for a soup kitchen
Decorate construction paper using glitter, markers, stickers, etc. Laminate. Donate to soup kitchen.
- Read a book about hunger
List of elementary-age books on hunger.
Reference: 1.
- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org)

_____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- Unequal Distribution of Snacks
Distribute bags of snacks—one to each child. The bags have been filled unevenly so that some children get a large portion, some a medium amount and some a very small amount. Discuss how each child feels upon comparing his portion to the others. Leads to a discussion of what is just.

III. Reflection

- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Short Stories About Kids in Action
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- Hunger 101
Short and long-term strategies for helping alleviate hunger; sample letters to elected officials.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Empowering, Games and Voices Sections—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.

V. Other References

- Hunger 101
Reading list and list of related websites.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Additional Resources Section—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.

Hunger Lesson Plan Options for Middle - High School Students

I. Information to present

- Factual Information, Quotes and Definitions Relating to Hunger
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.
- Hunger and poverty data and definitions
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

II. Activities to do

- Unequal Distribution of Snacks
Distribute bags of snacks—one to each child. The bags have been filled unevenly so that some children get a large portion, some a medium amount and some a very small amount. Discuss how each child feels upon comparing his portion to the others. Leads to a discussion of what is just.
- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- Feeding a family game
Break into 4 groups. Each group gets a card showing the number of people in their family, the amount of money available for food that day and a list of food choices and costs. The group must plan the daily menu. Each group will discuss their choices with the other groups.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- Chinese saying
“A person who has food has many problems.”

A person who has no food has only one problem.”

Discuss. Alternate activity: Make a collage to illustrate the saying.

Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities

Community Services Division (for information, email

_____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- **Hunger 101—Food Game**

At least eight players are required—six consumers, a cashier and a social services agent. Each consumer is given a role description, which states the person’s monthly income and expenses. First, consumers will use a budget worksheet to figure out the amount of money they have for food for one day. Then, they will each try to “purchase” a day’s worth of healthy meals for themselves from a menu of food choices, which include prices. There are complex rules for navigating the system to try to get “food stamps” or “emergency assistance” to help buy the food. This is intended to simulate the real obstacles faced by poor people attempting to obtain assistance in buying food. Reflection questions are included for discussion after the game. Complete detailed instructions and all necessary materials are included. Allow 50 minutes to one hour to play. Most suitable for high school classes.

Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email

_____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.

- **Hunger Banquet**

At a meal time, set up a large room as follows: one or two tables with tablecloths and a three course filling meal including dessert; a few more tables without tablecloths with soup, bread and juice; a large open space with one table (no chairs) with just water and bread. As people enter the room, hand each one a ticket randomly—one color will allow them to eat at the first world meal, a different color will send them to the second world meal and a third color will send them to the third world meal. About 15% of the tickets should be for the first world meal, about 25% for the second world meal and about 60% for the third world meal. Discuss participants’ feelings following the meal. Most suitable for high school students.

Reference: Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

III. Reflection

- Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements

Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty

Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Short Stories About Kids in Action
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- Hunger 101
Short and long-term strategies for helping alleviate hunger; sample letters to elected officials.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Empowering, Games and Voices Sections—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.

V. Other References

- Hunger 101
Reading list and list of related websites.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Additional Resources Section—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.
- Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts
Fact sheet including information on calorie consumption and worldwide hunger conditions.
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

- Maryland Food Bank website
Facts and information on hunger in Maryland (2001 data).
Reference: www.mdfoodbank.org/docs/hunger.htm.
- USDA website
Information on food stamp program
Reference: www.fns.usda.gov/fns.
- America's Second Harvest website
Facts and information about hunger (nationwide).
Reference: www.secondharvest.org.
- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to hunger
Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.
- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to hunger
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on hunger
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.

Hunger Lesson Plan Options for College Students - Adults

- I. Information to present
 - Factual Information, Quotes and Definitions Relating to Hunger
Reference: *Hunger 101 Curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.*
 - Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts
Fact sheet including information on calorie consumption and worldwide hunger conditions.
Reference: *on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).*
 - Press release: hunger and homelessness rose sharply in American cities in 2001
Reference: www.usmayors.org/uscm/news/press_release/documents/hunger_121101.asp.

II. Activities to do

- Chinese saying
“A person who has food has many problems.
A person who has no food has only one problem.”
Discuss. Alternate activity: Make a collage to illustrate the saying.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- Hunger 101—Food Game
At least eight players are required—six consumers, a cashier and a social services agent. Each consumer is given a role description, which states the person’s monthly income and expenses. First, consumers will use a budget worksheet to figure out the amount of money they have for food for one day. Then, they will each try to “purchase” a day’s worth of healthy meals for themselves from a menu of food choices, which include prices. There are complex rules for navigating the system to try to get “food stamps” or “emergency assistance” to help buy the food. This is intended to simulate the real obstacles faced by poor people attempting to obtain assistance in buying food. Reflection questions are included for discussion after the game. Complete detailed instructions and all necessary materials are included. Allow 50 minutes to one hour to play.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.
- Hunger Banquet
At a meal time, set up a large room as follows: one or two tables with tablecloths and a three course filling meal including dessert; a few more tables without tablecloths with soup, bread and juice; a large open space with one table (no chairs) with just water and bread. As people enter the room, hand each one a ticket randomly—one color will allow them to eat at the first world meal, a different color will send them to the second world meal and a third color will send them to the third world meal. About 15% of the tickets should be for the first world meal, about 25% for the second world meal and about 60% for the third world meal. Discuss participants’ feelings following the meal.
Reference: Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

III. Reflection

- Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements
Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Hunger 101
Short and long-term strategies for helping alleviate hunger; sample letters to elected officials.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Empowering, Games and Voices Sections—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.

V. Other References

- Hunger 101
Reading list and list of related websites.
Reference: Hunger 101 Curriculum—Additional Resources Section—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.acfb.org.
- USDA website
Information on food stamp program
Reference: www.fns.usda.gov/fns.
- America's Second Harvest website
Facts and information about hunger (nationwide).
Reference: www.secondharvest.org.
- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to hunger

Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.

- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to hunger
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on hunger
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness Lesson Plan Options for Elementary Students

- I. Information to present
 - America's Homeless (Educational Reader)
4 page booklet written at elementary student's level. Topics include: what it's like to be homeless, how children become homeless, how homelessness is harmful to children and what is being done to help.
Reference: www.nationalhomeless.org/fmn2001/Elementary.pdf.
- II. Activities to do
 - Make lunch bags for the homeless
Decorate brown lunch bags with markers, crayons, stickers and fill with lunch to give to the hungry.
 - Make placemats for a soup kitchen
Decorate construction paper using glitter, markers, stickers, etc.
Laminate. Donate to soup kitchen.
 - Make a shoebox/lunch bag of toiletries for homeless shelters
Decorate a shoebox/lunch bag with markers, glue, magazines, stickers. Place sample-size toiletries in it. Donate to homeless shelter.
 - Candy bags for children's shelter
Children bring in extra wrapped candy from Halloween or Easter and decorate bags and fill them with the candy. Donate them as goody bags to a shelter.
 - Read a book about homelessness
List of elementary-age books on homelessness.

Reference: 3.

- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- Fairness exercise—make a picture of a house
Each child is to make a picture of a house. Materials are distributed unevenly. The fanciest house wins. Discuss unfairness of exercise.
Reference: 2.

III. Reflection

- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- *List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty*
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Short Stories About Kids in Action
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

V. Other References

Homelessness Lesson Plan Options for Middle - High School Students

I. Information to present

- America's Homeless Children (Educational Reader)
4 page booklet written at middle school student's level. Topics include: what it's like to be homeless, how children become homeless, how

many children are homeless, how homelessness is harmful to children and helping families who are homeless.

Reference: www.nationalhomeless.org/fmn2001/Middle.pdf.

- America's Homeless Children & Youth (Educational Reader)
4 page booklet written at high school student's level. Topics include: what it's like to be homeless, how children and youth become homeless, how many young people are homeless, how homelessness is harmful to children and youth and helping families who are homeless.

Reference: www.nationalhomeless.org/fmn2001/High.pdf.

- Maryland Poverty Profile
Comprehensive data on various poverty factors in Maryland and each of its 24 jurisdictions with information up-to-date as of January 2002.

Reference: www.catholiccharities-md.org.

- Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts
Fact sheet including information on shelter use, causes of homelessness, demographics housing issues.

Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

- Poems by Robert Chase
Two poems written by a formerly homeless man about the life of a homeless person.

Reference: 4.

- Homelessness Cartoon
Depicts the myth (a man drinking alcohol) versus the reality (a mother with two children).

Reference: paper copy on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

II. Activities to do

- Read a book about homelessness.
List of suggested readings.

Reference: 13.

- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.

Reference: *Hunger No More curriculum:* on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

_____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- Write the story of a homeless person
After presenting information about homelessness, have each member of the audience write a short story taking the perspective of being a homeless person.

- Shelter Boy video
Television documentary about a 12-year-old boy whose family moves to a new city after their home is destroyed by a tornado. When they arrive, the job his father thought he could get is no longer available. They have spent all their money on travel and must live in a homeless shelter. The documentary discusses stereotypes of homeless people and focuses on the feelings of the 12-year-old boy through this experience. Additional activity: Have the audience write down commonly heard phrases and nicknames from the video and analyze perceptions about each. 15 minutes.
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); copies available from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (612) 870-7073 (\$23.00).

- Other videos
 - Home Less Home
Analysis of the causes and conditions of homelessness and historical images of poverty. 70 minutes.
Reference: Bill Brand Productions (413) 549-1156 (\$29.95).
 - It Was a Wonderful Life—Hidden Homeless Women
Story of six former upper-middle class women who became homeless and survive with strength, humor and pride. 52 minutes.
Reference: Filmmakers Library, Inc. (212) 808-4980 (\$55.00).
 - I Want to Go Home
Video contains photographs of homeless families and is narrated by the photographer who tell how this project changed their perceptions of the poor. 20 minutes.
Reference: Video Verite (603) 436-3360 (\$25.00).

- Breaking down stereotypes of homeless people
Ask the audience to describe homeless people. Write responses on a board. Then, pass out pictures of people who have stayed at a local homeless shelter or eaten at a local soup kitchen (without saying who those people are) and ask the audience to describe those people. Write responses on the board. Compare the adjectives on both lists and then reveal who the people in the pictures are.

- Cycle of Homelessness demonstration
Walks audience through the reality that people in low-paying jobs with no savings who lose their jobs may end up homeless, which will in turn make it harder for them to get another job.
Reference: 5.
- Panhandling myth
Brings out the stereotype that people hold that all or most homeless people panhandle. In truth, a small minority of homeless people panhandle.
Reference: 6.
- Homeless Locker Day
Enter the students' classroom during the first class of the day and hand each one an "eviction notice." Explain that the owner of their apartment building has sold and they must vacate immediately. They are now homeless. They must gather everything they need for the entire school day from their desks and lockers. If they forget something they need for a class, they will not be able to retrieve it. If they forget their lunch, they will have to ask friends to share with them. They must act as if the possessions they are carrying are their only possessions so they must carry them with them at all times. If they put them down, a teacher may confiscate them (just for the day). On the following day, discuss how each student felt while being "homeless."
Reference: Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- Persons Seeking Shelter Role Play
One or two members of group play shelter staff; others play persons seeking shelter. Roles are given to each person seeking shelter. Shelter staff interview those seeking shelter (with a set list of questions). At the end, group is told there are only a certain number of beds (fewer than number of applicants). Each person votes on who should get beds. Discuss why choices were made. Discuss number of turnaways at shelters in the area.
Reference: 7.

III. Reflection

- Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements
Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- *List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty*
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Short Stories About Kids in Action
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

V. Other References

- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to homelessness
Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.
- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to homelessness
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on housing/homelessness
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.

Homelessness Lesson Plan Options for College Students - Adults

I. Information to present

- Maryland Poverty Profile
Comprehensive data on various poverty factors in Maryland and each of its 24 jurisdictions with information up-to-date as of January 2002.
Reference: www.catholiccharities-md.org.
- Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts
Fact sheet including information on shelter use, causes of homelessness, demographics housing issues.

Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

- **Poems by Robert Chase**
Two poems written by a formerly homeless man about the life of a homeless person.
Reference: 4.
- **Homelessness Cartoon**
Depicts the myth (a man drinking alcohol) versus the reality (a mother with two children).
Reference: paper copy on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Press release: hunger and homelessness rose sharply in American cities in 2001**
Reference:
www.usmayors.org/uscm/news/press_release/documents/hunger_121101.asp.
- **National Coalition for the Homeless website**
Contains narratives on homelessness including demographics, causes, consequences, policy issues, public assistance, housing and related factors.
Reference: www.nationalhomeless.org.

II. Activities to do

- **Shelter Boy video**
Television documentary about a 12-year-old boy whose family moves to a new city after their home is destroyed by a tornado. When they arrive, the job his father thought he could get is no longer available. They have spent all their money on travel and must live in a homeless shelter. The documentary discusses stereotypes of homeless people and focuses on the feelings of the 12-year-old boy through this experience. Additional activity: Have the audience write down commonly heard phrases and nicknames from the video and analyze perceptions about each. 15 minutes.
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); copies available from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (612) 870-7073 (\$23.00).
- **Other videos**
 - Home Less Home

Analysis of the causes and conditions of homelessness and historical images of poverty. 70 minutes.

Reference: Bill Brand Productions (413) 549-1156 (\$29.95).

- **It Was a Wonderful Life—Hidden Homeless Women**
Story of six former upper-middle class women who became homeless and survive with strength, humor and pride. 52 minutes.
Reference: Filmmakers Library, Inc. (212) 808-4980 (\$55.00).
- **I Want to Go Home**
Video contains photographs of homeless families and is narrated by the photographer who tell how this project changed their perceptions of the poor. 20 minutes.
Reference: Video Verite (603) 436-3360 (\$25.00).
- **Breaking down stereotypes of homeless people**
Ask the audience to describe homeless people. Write responses on a board. Then, pass out pictures of people who have stayed at a local homeless shelter or eaten at a local soup kitchen (without saying who those people are) and ask the audience to describe those people. Write responses on the board. Compare the adjectives on both lists and then reveal who the people in the pictures are.
- **Cycle of Homelessness demonstration**
Walks audience through the reality that people in low-paying jobs with no savings who lose their jobs may end up homeless, which will in turn make it harder for them to get another job.
Reference: 5.
- **Panhandling myth**
Brings out the stereotype that people hold that all or most homeless people panhandle. In truth, a small minority of homeless people panhandle.
Reference: 6.
- **Persons Seeking Shelter Role Play**
One or two members of group play shelter staff; others play persons seeking shelter. Roles are given to each person seeking shelter. Shelter staff interview those seeking shelter (with set list of questions). At the end, group is told there are only a certain number of beds (fewer than number of applicants). Each person votes on who should get beds. Discuss why choices were made. Discuss number of turnaways at shelters in the area.
Reference: 7.

III. Reflection

- Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements

Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty

Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.

V. Other References

- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to homelessness
Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.
- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to homelessness
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on housing/homelessness
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.

POVERTY/SOCIAL JUSTICE (GENERAL)

Poverty/Social Justice (General) Lesson Plan Options for Elementary Students

I. Information to present

- Hunger and poverty data and definitions
Most suitable for upper elementary grades.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email

_____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- Suggested Answers to Students' Difficult Questions
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

II. Activities to do

- Unequal Distribution of Snacks
Distribute bags of snacks—one to each child. The bags have been filled unevenly so that some children get a large portion, some a medium amount and some a very small amount. Discuss how each child feels upon comparing his portion to the others. Leads to a discussion of what is just.
- Fairness exercise—make a picture of a house
Each child is to make a picture of a house. Materials are distributed unevenly. The fanciest house wins. Discuss unfairness of exercise.
Reference: 2.
- Make/Draw a Good Neighbor
Draw the outline of a person (can trace the student's shadow for a life-size project). Draw or paste on cut out pictures of body parts naming ways in which people can use each body part to help others (e.g. mouth—speak to people with dignity; feet—go door to door to get a petition signed).
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—Day School Curriculum Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- Read a book about poverty
List of elementary-age books on and poverty.
Reference: 8.
- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- True/False Sheet on Poverty in the U.S.

Based on census facts. Most suitable for upper elementary grades.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- **Making It Through the Month Maze**
One sheet maze that illustrates the obstacles face by people living in poverty. Most suitable for upper elementary grades.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- **The “Game” of Life**
Students are given a “life card” which describes who they are, what their income is, what their job situation is, and what kind of expenses they have each month. Students are given tokens, symbolizing money, and they will travel to different stations set up in the room where they can purchase the monthly “goods” they need. Students will have to make choices at each station about how much to spend on the particular item at that station. Necessary materials included. Most suitable for upper elementary grades.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—Day School Curriculum—Lesson #5—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Making Choices**
Activity gives a family scenario and monthly budget with a list of expenses. Students rate the expenses “1” for necessary items, “2” for important items that could possibly wait and “3” for non-essential items. They then try to make a budget out of the items labeled “1” and “2”.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—Religious School Curriculum Lesson #2—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

III. Reflection

- **What?, So What?, Now What?** reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- *List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty*
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
[Reference: 16.](#)
- **Short Stories About Kids in Action**
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

V. Other References

Poverty/Social Justice (General) Lesson Plan Options for Middle - High School Students

I. Information to present

- **Hunger and poverty data and definitions**
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- **Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts**
Fact sheet including information on obstacles facing the poor and employment issues.
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Background Information on Poverty**
Good general information on poverty levels, causes of poverty, ways to fight poverty, etc.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Suggested Answers to Students' Difficult Questions**
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Maryland Poverty Profile**

Comprehensive data on various poverty factors in Maryland and each of its 24 jurisdictions with information up-to-date as of January 2002.

Reference: www.catholiccharities-md.org.

- **Social Justice Facts**
Fact sheet including various statements about working for social justice.
Reference: 9.
- **Social Justice and the Bible**
Quotations from the Bible forming the call to social justice
References: 10; Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program (references throughout both curricula)—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Biblical Quotations on Social Justice**
References: 10; Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching**
Including Dignity of the Human Person, Community and the Common Good, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor, Dignity of Work, Solidarity and Care for God's Creation
References: 17; <http://osjspm.org/cst/themes.htm>; also included in the Poverty Project with reflection questions—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Use both feet sheet**
One page handout giving examples of working for service and working for justice
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Definition of stereotype**
A stereotype is a prejudiced image. Prejudice = pre – judge (i.e. forming opinions before all the facts are known). Stereotypes often begin with the word “all”.
- **Talk With Me...About Welfare**
24 page booklet. Compilation of conversations with women living within the welfare system. Includes some facts on poverty. Probably only appropriate for upper high school grades.

Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

II. Activities to do

- Read a book about poverty
List of suggested readings.
Reference: 14.
- Read a real life story
Short stories based on real people's experiences with hunger, homelessness and poverty. Read and discuss.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- True/False Sheet on Poverty in the U.S.
Based on census facts.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- Worksheets on the difference between charity and social justice
Reference: Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- Making It Through the Month Maze
One sheet maze that illustrates the obstacles face by people living in poverty.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- The "Game" of Life
Students are given a "life card" which describes who they are, what their income is, what their job situation is, and what kind of expenses they have each month. Students are given tokens, symbolizing money, and they will travel to different stations set up in the room where they can purchase the monthly "goods" they need. Students will have to make choices at each station about how much to spend on the particular item at that station. Necessary materials included. Most suitable for upper elementary grades.

Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—Day School Curriculum—Lesson #5—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

- **Making Choices**
Activity gives a family scenario and monthly budget with a list of expenses. Students rate the expenses “1” for necessary items, “2” for important items that could possibly wait and “3” for non-essential items. They then try to make a budget out of the items labeled “1” and “2”.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—Religious School Curriculum Lesson #2—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Marble game—division of resources**
Assign roles to each student to represent the people of the city (poor, disabled, seniors, children, etc.). Divide a box of marbles according to how the group thinks the city’s resources are currently divided. Each student or group of students in a particular role must state the case as to why their resources should not be cut or should be increased (give time to craft their arguments). At the end, the group votes on a new allocation of resources based on the arguments of the students.
- **High School dropout scenario**
Ask students to imagine they dropped out of high school and ten years from now they tried to find a job to support a family with the skills they currently have. Each student will look through the classified ads to find a job with their current skill and education level and a home/apartment they can afford. They will also budget the rest of their expenses.
- **Egg Drop Game**
Divide children into teams. Each team is given an egg and supplies and told to wrap the egg so it will not break when dropped. Supplies are distributed unevenly so that only one team is likely to succeed. At the end, it is pointed out that teams could have worked together so that each team would have been successful.
Reference: 11.
- **Social Justice Obstacle Course**
Each child must throw a ball through a tire/hoop about five feet away. If they make it, they are middle class and go to the end of the course. If they miss, tell them “You just lost your job—you are now poor.” They must now go through the obstacle course to reach the end. Each obstacle represents an obstacle facing the poor: homeless shelter, unemployment office, social services office, food bank, etc. Talk about

differences in the experiences of the “middle class” children versus the “poor” children.

- **Feeding a family game**
Break into 4 groups. Each group gets a card showing the number of people in their family, the amount of money available for food that day and a list of food choices and costs. The group must plan the daily menu. Each group will discuss their choices with the other groups.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- **The Monthly Juggle! Game**
Each player or team starts with a budget sheet. He/she/they will pull a “Start” card, which will describe their marital status, number of kids, work status and monthly income. Monthly income is filled in on budget sheet. Then, taking turns, players will pull “Budget cards” which will give them an amount to add or subtract for other income, rent, utilities, transportation, etc. Financial situation turns on the luck of the draw. Players who have money left over at the end of the game win.
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- **Great Depression comparison**
Review information on the Great Depression and on today’s homelessness and poverty and make a chart noting the similarities and differences in the issues faced then and now.

III. Reflection

- **Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements**
Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- **What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions**
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.
- Short Stories About Kids in Action
Several short stories about kids who have helped the needy. Great for giving readers ideas of how to help.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice Tzedek Partnership Program Day School Curriculum—Appendix to Lesson #1—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

V. Other References

- Office of Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis website
Information, activities and links relating to poverty and social justice
Reference: www.osjspm.org.
- Teaching Tolerance website
Information and activities relating to poverty and social justice
Reference: www.tolerance.org.
- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to poverty and social justice issues.
Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.
- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to poverty issues.
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on poverty.
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.

Poverty/Social Justice (General) Lesson Plan Options for College Students - Adults

I. Information to present

- Homelessness, Poverty and Hunger Facts
Fact sheet including information on obstacles facing the poor and employment issues.
Reference: on file.

- **Background Information on Poverty**
 Good general information on poverty levels, causes of poverty, ways to fight poverty, etc.
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Suggested Answers to Students' Difficult Questions**
Reference: Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Maryland Poverty Profile**
 Comprehensive data on various poverty factors in Maryland and each of its 24 jurisdictions with information up-to-date as of January 2002.
Reference: www.catholiccharities-md.org.
- **Social Justice Facts**
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- **Social Justice and the Bible**
 Quotations from the Bible forming the call to social justice
References: 10; Jewish Fund for Justice—Tzedek Partnership Program (references throughout both curricula)—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Biblical Quotations on Social Justice**
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- **Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching**
 Including Dignity of the Human Person, Community and the Common Good, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor, Dignity of Work, Solidarity and Care for God's Creation.
References: 17; <http://osjspm.org/cst/themes.htm>; also included in the Poverty Project with reflection questions—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Definition of stereotype**

A stereotype is a prejudiced image. Prejudice = pre – judge (i.e. forming opinions before all the facts are known). Stereotypes often begin with the word “all”.

- **Talk With Me...About Welfare**
24 page booklet. Compilation of conversations with women living within the welfare system. Includes some facts on poverty.
Reference: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).

II. Activities to do

- **Worksheets on the difference between charity and social justice**
Reference: Poverty Project—on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org).
- **Marble game—division of resources**
Assign roles to each participant to represent the people of the city (poor, disabled, seniors, children, etc.). Divide a box of marbles according to how the group thinks the city’s resources are currently divided. Each participant or group of participants in a particular role must state the case as to why their resources should not be cut or should be increased (give time to craft their arguments). At the end, the group votes on a new allocation of resources based on the arguments of the participants.
- **Egg Drop Game**
Divide audience into teams. Each team is given an egg and supplies and told to wrap the egg so it will not break when dropped. Supplies are distributed unevenly so that only one team is likely to succeed. At the end, it is pointed out that teams could have worked together so that each team would have been successful.
Reference: 11.
- **Social Justice Obstacle Course**
Each participant must throw a ball through a tire/hoop about five feet away. If they make it, they are middle class and go to the end of the course. If they miss, tell them “You just lost your job—you are now poor.” They must now go through the obstacle course to reach the end. Each obstacle represents an obstacle facing the poor: homeless shelter, unemployment office, social services office, food bank, etc. Talk about differences in the experiences of the “middle class” participants versus the “poor” participants.
- **The Monthly Juggle! Game**

Each player or team starts with a budget sheet. He/she/they will pull a “Start” card which will describe their marital status, number of kids, work status and monthly income. Monthly income is filled in on budget sheet. Then, taking turns, players will pull “Budget cards” which will give them an amount to add or subtract for other income, rent, utilities, transportation, etc. Financial situation turns on the luck of the draw. Players who have money left over at the end of the game win.

Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.

- Project AWARE Budgeting Exercise
Audience is given a budget worksheet with categories of expenses. Fixed income and certain fixed expenses are filled in. Audience must allocate remaining income to expenses. “Reality cards” are given out half-way through the time allotted for budgeting that give each person a situation to deal with that lowers the amount of money they have for these expenses this month. Note: “Reality cards” may be used with other budgeting exercises as well.
Reference: 12.

III. Reflection

- Prayers, Quotes and Religious Statements
Relating to hunger, homelessness and poverty
Reference: Hunger No More curriculum: on file—Catholic Charities Community Services Division (for information, email _____@catholiccharities-md.org); to order curriculum on the web: www.bread.org.
- What?, So What?, Now What? reflection questions
A list of questions to ask participants as a follow up to an activity
Reference: 15.

IV. Call to Action

- List of Ideas for Helping Fight Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty
Includes ways to volunteer, contribute, educate and advocate.
Reference: 16.

V. Other References

- Office of Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis
website
Information, activities and links relating to poverty and social justice

Reference: www.osjspm.org.

- Teaching Tolerance website
Information and activities relating to poverty and social justice
Reference: www.tolerance.org.
- U.S. Catholic website
Links to various websites relating to poverty and social justice issues.
Reference: www.uscatholic.org/links/usclinks.html.
- Claretian Publications website
Articles relating to poverty issues.
Reference: www.salt.claretianpubs.org.
- National Priorities Project website
Information and data on poverty.
Reference: www.nationalpriorities.org.
- Center for Poverty Solutions website
Contains information and statistics on poverty and related issues.
Reference: www.povertysolutions.org.