

Homelessness

The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God:

He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none and he who has food must do likewise. But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you. If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? CCC 2447.



"... within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life." -- Pope Benedict XVI

Church/Ecclesial Documents:

"Poverty USA: The State of Poverty in the United States," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Available at http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/edcenter/612_activity.shtml.

"What Have You Done to Your Homeless Brother? The Church And The Housing Problem," Document of the Pontifical Commission "Justitia et Pax" on the Occasion of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (December 1987). Available at <http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/resources/homeless.htm>.

Articles:

"Reflections on Poverty in America." Available at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/poverty/reflections-on-poverty-in-america.cfm>.

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