

**Catholic Campaign for  
Human Development**

**Poverty Pulse  
Low-Income Survey**

**Wave IV**

**January 2005**

**Presented By:**

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## Objectives and Methodology

This is a report of findings from the Low-Income segment of the Poverty Pulse, a research program designed to evaluate attitudes toward poverty in America. This is the fourth such study conducted since December of 2000. It is also similar to a series of studies among the general population conducted annually since 2000. The results of the Poverty Pulse are used by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) to promote understanding of poverty in America and greater awareness of the problem in our society.

This study was conducted using a mailed, self-administered methodology. Over 7,000 questionnaires were sent to approximately 350 organizations that work with low-income individuals across the country. Organizational contacts were instructed to distribute twenty questionnaires to their low-income constituents. Questionnaires were offered in either English or Spanish. The questionnaires were sent out in June 2004 with a deadline for return of September 1. A reminder postcard was mailed in August to maximize response rates. The study was identified on the questionnaire as being conducted by CCHD. Respondents were also provided a postage-paid envelope to facilitate the return of the questionnaire. A total of 595 questionnaires were returned. The returns were analyzed for a combination of income and household size and those that did not fall into the categories listed below were excluded from the analysis:

<i>Household size of . . .</i>	<i>1 and income less than . . .</i>	\$15,670
	2	\$18,850
	3	\$22,030
	4	\$28,390
	5	\$37,930
	6+	\$44,290

Some individuals did not answer the income question. These individuals are included only if they described themselves as “Low Income,” “Poor,” or “Living below the poverty level” in response to one of the questions (27 individuals fell into this category). The resulting sample for all “Low-income” respondents is 457.

The questionnaire for this study was designed by the Market Research Bureau. It is similar but not identical to the questionnaires used in the previous Low-Income studies conducted in 2000, 2002 and 2003 as well as the studies conducted among the general population. Please refer to the Appendix for the actual questionnaire.

For some questions, more than one response was accepted from each respondent. In these cases the table percentage totals exceed 100%. If the table total is 99% to 101%, this is likely due to rounding the individual percentages in the table. The sample tolerances for the total sample is +/- 5 percentage points.

## Findings

*Poverty and many of its causes and outcomes are foremost concerns for low-income Americans.* Respondents were asked on an unaided basis what their biggest concern was (top-of-mind) and what other concerns they had. The top concerns for low-income people have remained fairly constant over the last several years. Unemployment is of greatest concern, followed by health care, education, discrimination, poverty, crime, and housing. These are areas that are related to poverty. [Note: Only those concerns with at least 2% for Total Concerns for any year are presented in the table below.]

**What do you feel is the biggest problem facing society in the United States today?  
(Top of Mind)**

**What other issues or concerns do you have with regard to society in the United States?  
What other problems are you concerned about?  
(Both questions combined = Total Concerns)**

	Top of Mind			Total Concerns		
	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %
Unemployment/jobs/low wages	13	16	16	34	39	40
Health care	3	4	8	21	28	32
Education	4	4	4	25	27	28
Racism/bias/discrimination	12	4	6	31	24	25
Poverty	11	9	9	24	25	24
Crime	5	7	4	19	24	21
Housing/affordable housing	4	5	6	18	15	19
Drugs/alcohol/addiction	7	6	3	20	17	13
War/war on terrorism/US response	1	5	6	3	11	13
Terrorism	6	3	3	11	8	10
No papers/documents	4	1	4	10	2	10
Immigration	1	1	3	5	3	9
Cost of living/money/inflation	2	2	3	6	6	8
Immorality	1	1	1	4	6	8
Government/politics	2	2	3	9	5	8
Violence	1	2	1	6	6	7
Homelessness	3	2	1	9	8	6
Family issues/single parents/parental control	2	1	2	7	4	6
Economic disparity/gap between rich and poor	1	2	2	3	4	5
No English/language barriers	1	2	1	1	4	5
Economy	2	4	3	4	8	5
Hunger	1	1	1	4	4	4
Environment	1	-	*	4	3	4
Disease/illness/disabilities	*	-	1	2	2	4
Income/having enough income	-	1	1	-	2	4
Lack of love/brotherhood	2	1	1	5	1	4

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**What do you feel is the biggest problem facing society in the United States today?**

**What other issues or concerns do you have with regard to society in the United States?  
What other problems are you concerned about?**

	Top of Mind			Total Concerns		
	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %
Children/youth	2	1	*	9	4	3
Security	*	*	*	1	2	3
Domestic violence/child abuse	-	-	*	3	2	3
Gangs	*	1	*	2	3	2
Funding cuts/cuts in aid	1	1	*	4	4	2
Lack of respect/responsibility/ discipline	1	1	1	4	3	2
Materialism/consumerism	*	-	1	1	2	2
Transportation	-	-	*	2	2	2
Lack of religion/spirituality	1	1	1	3	2	2
Selfishness	*	*	1	*	*	2
Human/civil rights	-	-	-	-	-	2
Foreign emphasis/not in US		*	*	-	3	1
Seniors/older people	*	-	-	2	2	1
Corporations/businesses	-	*	-	2	2	1
Taxes	-	-	-	1	2	1
Greed	1	*	1	2	2	1
Apathy	1	*	*	1	2	1
Prisons/incarceration	-	-	-	2	1	1
Injustice	1	*	-	2	3	*
Media/press	-	*	*	2	1	*
Family farms/rural/farm issues	*	-	-	2	*	-
Dropping out of school/high school drop outs	1	-	-	2	-	-
Don't know	-	*	5	1	1	s 14
Miscellaneous	6	3	5	27	26	25
Base - Total low-income respondents	399	442	457	399	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

*There is a difference between low-income people and the general public in terms of their concerns.* The top responses for both surveys showed some of the same items, but there were several important differences. “Unemployment” was the biggest concern among the low-income respondents, but ranked 11<sup>th</sup> among the general public, while the biggest concern among the general public, “the economy,” ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the low-income survey. Although, some of the top concerns among the low-income respondents certainly can be viewed as part of the economy, they are expressed in more personal terms of how the economy is impacting them (loss of jobs, health care and crime) and not just a general concern about the economy. (To be included in any response category, a comment would have to include the actual word in the category. E.g. those included under “the economy” would have had to say “the economy.”) Affordable housing was the 7<sup>th</sup> most important concern for the low-income respondents, but received less than 0.2% response in the general public survey, putting its rank below 34<sup>th</sup>. The concerns for low-income people seem to be more personal in nature than those for the general public.

**What do you feel is the biggest problem facing society in the United States today?**

**What other issues or concerns do you have with regard to society in the United States?  
What other problems are you concerned about?**

**2004 RANK ORDER**

	<b>Low Income Rank</b>	<b>General Public Rank</b>
Unemployment/jobs/low wages	1	11
Health care	2	6
Education	3	7
Racism/bias/discrimination	4	13
Poverty	5	14
Crime	6	9
Housing/affordable housing	7	Below 34
War/war on terrorism/US response	8	2
Drugs/alcohol/addiction	9	10
Terrorism	10	5
No papers/documents/deportation	11	Below 34
Immigration/no help for immigrants	12	Below 34
Immorality	13	4
Government/politics	14	3
Cost of living/money/inflation	15	19
Violence	16	8
Homelessness	17	27
Economy	18	1
Family issues (parental control, etc.)	19	12
Economic disparity between rich and poor	20	Below 34
Media/television/radio	51	15

Note – Table shows top 20 for low- income survey and top 15 for general public survey.

*When asked on an aided basis, poverty was a concern to virtually all respondents.* Ninety eight percent (98%) of respondents were very (85%) or somewhat (13%) concerned about poverty. Although the majority of respondents in the general public survey of the Poverty Pulse were also concerned with poverty (90%), the breakout between very and somewhat was quite different. Only 56% of those in the general public survey were very concerned with poverty, while 85% of those in the low-income survey were very concerned. Poverty ranked the highest of seven concerns posed to the low-income respondents.

**How concerned are you about poverty?**

	2000	2002	2003	2004
	%	%	%	%
Very	86	81	80	85
Somewhat	10	16	17	13
<b>Total Concerned</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>98</b>
Not Very	3	3	2	1
Not at All	1	1	1	*
<b>Total Not Concerned</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
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Base – Total low-income respondents	380	399	442	457
* Less than 0.5%				

**How concerned are you about each of the following?  
% Total Concerned**

	2003	2004
	%	%
<b>Poverty</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>98</b>
Health care	97	95
Education	95	94
Crime	94	94
Prejudice	91	94
War/terrorism	92	93
Immorality	85	90
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Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

*Education, health care and unemployment were the top personal concerns as well.* When asked, “What concerns do you have specifically for yourself or your family? What do you worry about the most for yourself or your family?” many of the responses were similar to those for the more general questions on concerns, but many people also pointed out the

fears they had with regard to day-to-day survival, such as providing for their families or having enough income.

**What concerns do you have specifically for yourself or your family?  
What do you worry about the most for yourself or your family?**

	<b>2003</b>		<b>2004</b>
	%		%
Education	16	s	23
Health care	22		20
Unemployment/jobs/low wages	19		17
Housing/affordable housing	12		13
Crime	11		11
Income/having enough income	12		9
Poverty	8		8
Providing for family/meeting needs	7		7
Racism/bias/discrimination	6		5
Cost of living/money/inflation	5		5
War/on terrorism/US response	3		5
Disease/illness/disabilities	5		4
Drugs/alcohol/addiction	3		4
No papers/documents	2		4
Terrorism	2		4
The future/opportunities	2		3
Family issues/single parents/parental control	1		3
Hunger	3		2
Immigration	1		2
Economy	2		2
Security	2		2
Violence	1		2
Gangs	1		2
Social Security	2		1
Seniors/older people	1		1
Immorality	3		1
Government/politics	1		1
Lack of religion/spirituality	1		1
Transportation	1		1
No English/language barriers	*		1
Lack of love/brotherhood	1		1
Environment	-		1
Police brutality	*		1
Guns/gun control	-		1
Homelessness	1		*
Funding cuts/cuts in aid	1		*
Retirement	1		*
Surviving/staying alive	2		*
Miscellaneous	16		15
Don't know/no answer	10		9
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Base - Total low-income respondents	442		457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

Some of the verbatim comments in response to this question follow:

I worry my kids won't be able to attend college/afford health insurance (my son is a cancer survivor at 11 years old). But I also worry about money a lot, running out of food, our broken car, lack of health insurance for me and my son.

That they will not help me.

Affordable housing. My family works. My husband who is retired works full time and I work full time. We make good money and can't hardly afford rent let alone a house.

In case of a medical emergency, we don't have income.

I'm concerned about healthcare, lack of jobs, transportation. I worry most about the next time my medicines run out and no doctor will see me because I have no insurance.

Poverty, fair housing, fighting for my disability and trying to keep my home and utilities on.

Feeding my family, paying rent, utilities and insurance.

How to get by and where my next meal is coming from. Protection from idiots. Afraid of being hurt. Too many mobs and being treated unfairly. I need an advocate to give me support.

Lack of home to live in because no jobs. Lack of food, no income.

Getting shot just walking to the store.

Having enough financial income to have reasonably nutritious food and comfortable safe housing.

***Being poor in the United States is described by low-income people in terms of not having things (a home, job, food, money, health care), but also in emotional terms.*** Housing continues to be a significant determinant of being poor. Almost one quarter (23%) of low-income respondents say that not having a home or adequate housing is what is meant by being poor in the U.S. Lack of jobs and money are also high on the list. But many respondents continue to describe being poor in terms of how they feel. They describe being poor in the U.S. as depressing, degrading, being looked down on, ignored, hopeless, lonely, powerless. For many, being poor has less to do with what they do or do not have than with how they are treated:

**What does it mean to be poor in the United States?  
How would you describe being poor in the U.S.?**

**Table shows only responses with at least 2%.**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Inadequate housing/homeless/no home	23	19	23
Jobless/underemployed	10	18	19
No money/not enough money	18	13	17
Can't meet basic needs	18	15	13
Hungry/no food/inadequate food	13	10	12
No health care/inadequate health care	9	10	10
Depressing/hard/bad/terrible/hell	10	7	8
Lacking education/uneducated	8	9	7
Ignored/rejected/left out/invisible	4	3	6
Can't make ends meet	1	3	5
Unable to support self/family/provide for family	8	9	5
Degrading/feeling inadequate/worthless	6	4	4
Uncertainty/worry how to pay/fear	2	4	4
On welfare/need assistance/hand out	2	3	4
Looked down upon/discriminated/blamed	7	3	4
No opportunities/choices	3	3	4
Not having enough/anything	3	3	3
Lacking legal power/representation	2	1	3
No one helps/cares	2	2	3
Lack of access to resources/what others have	3	3	2
Working hard/overtime/extra jobs	3	2	2
Living paycheck to paycheck/day to day	2	2	2
Struggling	2	1	2
Hopeless	4	2	1
Going without/sacrificing	3	2	1
Income below certain specified level	2	2	1
No one in America is poor/not as bad as elsewhere	2	1	1
Powerless	2	1	1
Unfair/inequality/injustice	2	1	1
No documentation/no papers	2	*	1
Lonely/alone	2	*	*
Responsible for being poor/their own fault	1	2	-
Miscellaneous	14	12	13
No answer	9	12	9
Base – Total low-income respondents	399	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance  
of more than one response from each respondent.

## Verbatim comments from respondents:

Going hungry, being sick without healthcare, overdrawing bank accounts, getting kicked out of homes for not being able to pay rent.

Not being able to provide for yourself or your family.

When you are poor, you can't do anything that you want to do. No money to go to hospital or educate your children.

Being poor = invisibility. Constant scrambling to pay bills, buy groceries (especially in the summer when my kids are at home and not able to access free lunch programs). Less opportunities for my kids.

Not enough food, unsafe living conditions, unable to buy medicine.

Being left out.

When you are poor you get little respect.

Without food, healthcare, childcare, dental care. No light at the end of the tunnel.

It means that each and every day is a struggle. It means you have no voice. It means that you're treated differently and unfairly.

Seeing no light at the end of the tunnel. Being in despair, without hope, seeing no possibility of improving one's situation.

No food. No shelter. No hope.

*Low-income people are most likely to describe themselves as being “low income” rather than “poor.”* This has remained constant since the question was first asked in 2002. Most respondents describe themselves as “low income,” but “poor” and “living below the poverty line” also received considerable mention (22% and 20% respectively – some respondents put themselves in more than one of these categories. Respondents were provided with the response categories). Some even describe themselves as “middle class” or “upper class.” [Note: Please refer to the Objectives and Methodology section for the definitions used to qualify all of the respondents in this survey as “low income.”]

**Which of the following best describes your family?**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%	%
Upper class	-	1	1
Middle class	16	14	11
Low income	56	55	57
Poor	13	19	22
Living below the poverty line	19	17	20
Other	3	2	1
Base – Total low-income respondents	399	442	457

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

*Lack of adequate and appropriate education continues to be identified as the primary cause of poverty.* Most low-income respondents (68%) cited various problems with education as the causes for poverty, but lack of a living wage and a lack of employment opportunities ranked highly as well (58% and 44% respectively). There were also increases in those saying that unjust laws (from 38% to 47%) and discrimination (from 30% to 38%) are causes of poverty. But there was a significant drop in those who feel that the poor themselves are to blame (personal laziness or lack of motivation fell from 23% to 12%). [NOTE: Respondents were provided with a list of possible causes and were asked to select only three, but some selected more than that. Some respondents also gave their own causes for poverty, not on the list. Items in bold in the following table were provided to respondents in the questionnaire.]

**Which of the following do you feel are the main causes of poverty  
in the United States? Why are people in the U.S. poor?**

**NOTE: ITEMS IN BOLD WERE LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. OTHERS WERE  
PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ON AN UNAIDED BASIS.**

	2002	2003	2004
	%	%	%
<b>Lack of education (any education comment)</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Lack of understanding/importance of education</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Poor education system</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Lack of access to education</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Lack of desire for education</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Other education</b>	<b>2</b>	-	<b>1</b>
<b>Lack of living wage</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Unjust laws or social policies</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Lack of employment opportunities</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Racial/ethnic discrimination</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Health/medical problems</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Lack of job skills</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Physical or mental disabilities</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Personal laziness/lack of motivation</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>
No documents/papers/illegal	1	1	1
Unfair distribution of wealth/rich take advantage	*	1	1
Language barriers	1	*	1
Government	-	*	1
Lack of services/awareness of services	-	1	*
Inadequate transportation	*	*	*
Family cycle/single parents	*	*	*
Corporations/businesses	-	*	*
View of poor people/not understood/respected	1	-	*
Hopelessness	*	-	*
Housing/lack of affordable housing	*	-	*
Substance abuse	-	1	-
Financial education/management	*	-	-
Wastefulness/spending/consumerism	*	-	-
Taxes	*	-	-
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
Base – Total low-income respondents	399	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance  
of more than one response from each respondent.

The general public agrees that education is the main cause of poverty, but they are also more likely to put the blame on the poor themselves. Personal laziness and lack of motivation ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> among the general public in response to this question and 9<sup>th</sup> among the low-income. Unjust laws were also less likely to be cited among the general public than among the low-income respondents. [Note that the methodology of these two questions differs. Among the general public it was entirely an unaided question and among the low-income group, it was partially aided but allowed for additional responses not presented in the questionnaire.]

**Low Income -- Which of the following do you feel are the main causes of poverty in the United States? Why are people in the U.S. poor?**

**General Public -- What do you feel are the causes of poverty in the United States, that is, why are people in the U.S. poor?**

**2004 RANK ORDER**

	<b>Low Income Rank</b>	<b>General Public Rank</b>
Lack of education (any education comment)	1	1
Lack of living wage	2	5
Unjust laws or social policies	3	7
Lack of employment opportunities	4	2
Racial/ethnic discrimination	5	13
Health/medical problems	6	9*
Lack of job skills	7	6
Physical or mental disabilities	8	9*
<u>Personal laziness/lack of motivation</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>

\* Health problems and disabilities were not separated in the general public survey.

***A lack of adequate housing is a major issue for many living with low incomes.*** Forty three percent (43%) of the respondents in this survey indicated that their current living arrangements were not adequate. Size was the primary problem, with 12% indicating it was too small (a significant increase from the previous year). More than a third of all respondents had been homeless at some point (only 1% were currently homeless). The majority of respondents (68%) were living in houses or apartments alone or with immediate family members. The percent who shared their living space with another family dropped from 27% to 16%.

**Would you say that where you currently live is adequate?  
Is it safe and comfortable for yourself and your family?**

**In what way is it not adequate?**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Yes, adequate	54	53
No, not adequate	41	43
Size/too small	6	12
Needs repairs/bad condition	5	9
Crime/violence/unsafe/dangerous/drugs	7	5
Too expensive/can't afford	4	4
Too many/other people	3	3
Dirty/vermin	1	2
Lack of services	1	1
Not ours	1	1
Homeless	1	*
In a shelter	1	*
Utilities too high	1	*
Treatment center	*	-
In jail	*	-
Miscellaneous	7	5
Don't know/no answer why not adequate	7	7
No answer	5	4
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Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

### Have you ever been homeless?

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Yes, been homeless	37	36
No, not homeless	61	61
No answer	2	4
Base - Total low-income respondents	442	457

### Which of the following best describes your current housing situation?

**NOTE: ITEMS IN BOLD WERE LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. OTHERS WERE PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ON AN UNAIDED BASIS.**

	<b>2003</b>		<b>2004</b>
	%		%
<b>Living in own house/apartment - renting **</b>	<b>59</b>		<b>46</b>
<b>Living in own house/apartment - own **</b>	<b>**</b>		<b>22</b>
<b>TOTAL LIVING IN HOUSE/APT</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Sharing with other family</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Shelter/group home</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Homeless</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>
Subsidized housing/public housing	2		4
Living with parents/relatives	1		2
Trailer/mobile home	1		2
Religious community	1		-
Treatment center	*		-
In jail	1		-
Living with boyfriend/girlfriend/partner	1		-
Other	1		3
No answer	1		2
Base - Total low-income respondents	442		457

\* Less than 0.5%

\*\* In 2003, only one choice was provided - Living in own house/apartment

*The government continues to be seen as the primary entity responsible for responding to the needs of poor people.* More than three-quarters (78%) of the respondents indicated that the government should address poverty. The second highest response was “everyone/general public.” The “government” and “everyone” were also the top two mentions in the general public survey.

**Whose responsibility is it to respond to the needs of poor people in the United States and to address other issues related to poverty?**

**NOTE: ITEMS IN BOLD WERE LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. OTHERS WERE PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ON AN UNAIDED BASIS.**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%	%
<b>The government</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Everyone/general public</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>The poor themselves</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Churches</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Corporations/businesses</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Other charitable organizations</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>
Rich people	1	1	1
Friends/family	*	*	1
Schools/colleges/universities	*	*	*
Media/press	*	*	-
Me/my responsibility	*	*	-
Anyone who cares	*	*	-
Miscellaneous	2	1	2
Base – Total low-income respondents	399	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

*Although the government was seen as having the primary responsibility for addressing the needs of those in poverty, the best way to end poverty was thought to rest with community based organizations.* Low-income respondents were asked, “What is the best way to help permanently put an end to poverty or to help someone who is poor?” A list of possible solutions was provided to them, but they were also given an opportunity to write in a response. Forty six percent (46%) cited community organizations as the best way to help those who are poor. Community-based organizations were also at the top of the list in previous years of the low-income survey. After an increase last year in the percent of those who indicated that giving money to an organization helping the poor was the best way to end poverty, the response for this option fell back to the level in 2002.

**What is the best way to help permanently put an end to poverty or to help someone who is poor?**

**NOTE: ITEMS IN BOLD WERE LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. OTHERS WERE PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ON AN UNAIDED BASIS.**

	<b>2002</b>		<b>2003</b>		<b>2004</b>
	%		%		%
<b>Have more community based organizations</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>41</b>		<b>46</b>
<b>Provide government assistance</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>18</b>		<b>19</b>
<b>Give money to an organization helping the poor</b>	<b>17</b>	s	<b>26</b>	s	<b>16</b>
<b>Encourage people to volunteer their time</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>17</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Give money directly to a poor person</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Mentor or provide non-financial support</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>7</b>
Provide well-paying jobs	4		4		4
Education/training	5		3		3
Change social/economic systems	2		1		1
Help them to help themselves/empower	1		1		1
Money management/financial education	*		1		1
Increase minimum wage	1		-		1
Provide affordable housing	1		*		*
Provide food/clothes	1		-		*
Don't give as much money/handout hurts poor people	*		*		*
All of the above/no single way	*		*		*
Nothing/poverty will never end	*		*		-
Miscellaneous	4		3	s	10
Base – Total low-income respondents	399		442		457

\* Less than 0.5%

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

*Low-income people feel that education, housing and food are the most important things to provide to people living in poverty.* Respondents were asked to choose from a list the item that would be the most important to provide a person living in poverty. About a third of the respondents chose each of three items – housing (37%), education (36%) and food (32%). There were no significant differences as compared to the previous year.

**Which of the following is the most important thing to provide to someone living in poverty?**

**NOTE: ITEMS IN BOLD WERE LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. OTHERS WERE PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ON AN UNAIDED BASIS.**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
<b>Education</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Adequate housing</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Food</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Health care</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Spiritual guidance</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Clothing</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Childcare</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>
Everything/all of the above	6	7
Job with living wage	2	5
Opportunity	1	2
Money	1	1
Miscellaneous	4	6
Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

Percentages add up to more than 100% due to the acceptance of more than one response from each respondent.

*There was no change in regards to perceptions of the public's willingness to help those in poverty.* After an increase from 2002 to 2003 in those who felt that people are less willing to help, the levels are the same this year as last. Close to half of all respondents (48%) felt that people are less willing to help. About a quarter (23%) felt that people are more willing to help.

**With everything that has happened in the last year,  
have you noticed that people are more willing,  
just as willing or not as willing to help people living in poverty?**

	<b>2002</b>		<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%		%	%
More willing to help	28		23	23
Just as willing to help	34		27	25
Less willing to help	35	s	47	48
No answer	4		3	4
Base - Total low-income respondents	399		442	457

*The expectations with regard to necessary income are much lower for low-income people than they are for the general population.* Respondents in both surveys were asked a similar question on the amount of income needed to take care of basic needs. The general public was asked the question in terms of the income needed for a family of four. The low-income respondents were asked about the income *they* would need to meet the basic needs of their family. The mean income for a family of four among the general public was \$44,460 (the median was \$40,000). For a family of four in the low-income survey, the mean is \$29,553 and the median of \$27,500. This is actually a decrease from the levels last year in the low-income survey where the mean was \$31,417 and the median was \$30,000. [NOTE: Responses were tabulated by the household size indicated by each respondent on the questionnaire.]

**The basic needs of most families include food,  
housing, utilities, health care, childcare, and transportation.  
How much annual income would be necessary for you  
to provide for these needs for yourself and your family?**

**MEAN INCOME NEEDED  
BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE  
2004**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	
Just one	\$21,529	\$18,000	
Two	\$22,622	\$20,000	
Three	\$29,547	\$26,600	
<b>Four</b>	<b>\$29,553</b>	<b>\$27,500</b>	
Five	\$35,250	\$32,500	
Six	\$28,004	\$27,500	*
Seven	\$42,676	\$38,000	*
Eight	\$37,872	\$42,500	*
Nine or more	\$31,335	\$45,000	*
Total	\$29,031	\$25,000	

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\* Caution – Base sizes for these means are very small

# **Appendix**

**Additional Tables  
Questionnaires**

### Gender

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Male	34	29
Female	62	69
No answer	3	2
<hr/>		
Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

### What is your age?

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Under 35	29	27
35-54	37	33
55-64	11	13
65 and older	6	6
No answer	17	21
<b>Mean</b>	<b>42.1</b>	<b>43.0</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>
<hr/>		
Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

### Including yourself, how many people are living in your household?

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Just one	18	19
Two	14	14
Three	15	16
Four	14	16
Five	12	15
Six	12	9
Seven	7	6
Eight	3	3
Nine or more	5	4
No answer	1	*
<hr/>		
Base – Total low-income respondents	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

**Into which of the following categories does your  
actual total annual household income fall?**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Less than \$9,310	35	35
\$9,310 to \$12,489	18	18
\$12,490 to \$15,669	11	9
\$15,670 to \$18,849	8	8
\$18,850 to \$22,029	6	7
\$22,030 to \$25,209	3	6
\$25,210 to \$28,389	2	3
\$28,390 to \$31,569	3	3
\$31,570 to \$34,749	3	2
\$34,750 to \$37,929	1	1
\$37,930 to \$41,109	*	*
\$41,110 to \$44,289	1	*
\$44,290 or more	2	*
No answer	7	6
Base - Total low-income respondents	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

**What is the highest level of education that you finished?**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Finished elementary/primary/1-8	15	21
Some high school	18	14
Finished high school	28	26
Some college	18	21
College grad	9	10
Graduate school	5	3
Other	5	2
No answer	3	2
Base - Total low-income respondents	442	457

**Which religious denomination do you identify with?**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
	%	%
Catholic	45	49
Protestant	33	29
Mormon/LDS	1	1
Jewish	*	1
Muslim/Islam	2	4
Buddhist	1	2
None	9	7
Other	7	6
No answer	4	2
Base - Total low-income respondents	442	457

\* Less than 0.5%

### What state do you live in?

	2003		2004
	%		%
Alabama	-		*
Alaska	2		-
Arizona	1		3
California	14	s	27
Colorado	1		2
Connecticut	-		*
Delaware	1		-
District of Columbia	2		-
Florida	*		1
Georgia	3		3
Idaho	-		1
Illinois	10		5
Indiana	1		1
Kansas	1		*
Kentucky	1		1
Louisiana	1		2
Maine	3		2
Maryland	1		1
Massachusetts	1		1
Michigan	6		1
Minnesota	3		2
Missouri	3		1
Mississippi	-		*
Montana	*		1
Nebraska	3		*
New Hampshire	1		*
New Mexico	-		3
New Jersey	2		*
New York	10		10
North Carolina	3		1
Ohio	2		2
Oregon	1		*
Pennsylvania	1		2
Puerto Rico	2		*
Rhode Island	*		-
South Carolina	*		1
South Dakota	2		*
Tennessee	1		2
Texas	*	s	10
Vermont	*		-
Virginia	1		2
Washington	2		*
Wisconsin	10	s	1
<b>Poverty</b>	*		*
United States	1		1
No answer	5		6

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Base – Total low-income respondents      442                      457

\* Less than 0.5%

# Catholic Campaign for Human Development

## Survey Questionnaire

Dear Friend,

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is trying to educate Americans about poverty and the concerns of people living with low incomes. We need your help by providing your opinions so that we can report them to the American public.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. We don't need for you to give us your name and your response to this questionnaire is entirely voluntary, but we encourage you to complete it so that we can hear your opinions. You know the importance of having your voice heard. This is just one way to be able to do that.

If by chance you have gotten more than one copy of the questionnaire, please just fill it out once. There is no need to do it more than one time. If you completed a similar questionnaire last year, please go ahead and complete this one as well. There are some new questions and we would like to get your opinions once again.

This survey is for people who are living in poverty or with low incomes. If you feel that you are not living with a low income, please pass this questionnaire on to some one else.

We are providing a postage-paid reply envelope for you to return the questionnaire directly to us. Please return the questionnaire no later than **September 1, 2004**.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Rev. Robert J. Vitillo  
Executive Director  
Catholic Campaign for Human Development  
United States Catholic Conference

PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION USING AN "X" TO MARK YOUR RESPONSE OR BY WRITING IN YOUR ANSWER.

1. What do you feel is the biggest problem facing society in the United States today? PLEASE JUST LIST ONE PROBLEM YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM.

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2. What other issues or concerns do you have with regard to society in the United States? What other problems are you concerned about? LIST ALL OF THE ISSUES YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT.

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3. How concerned would you say that you are about each of the following? Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned with this problem? Think just in terms of the problem here in the United States.

	Very	Somewhat	Not Very	Not at All
Crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immorality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prejudice or racism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
War/terrorism	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

4. What concerns do you have specifically for yourself or your family? What do you worry about the most for yourself or your family?

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5. What does it mean to be poor in the United States? How would you describe being poor in the U.S.?

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6. Which of the following best describes your family?

- 1 Upper income      3 Low income      5 Living below the poverty line  
2 Middle income      4 Poor      6 Other PLEASE WRITE IN \_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you say that where you currently live is adequate? Is it safe and comfortable for yourself and your family?

- 1 Yes, it is adequate  
2 No, it is not adequate -- In what way is it not adequate? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you ever been homeless?

- 1 Yes, have been homeless      2 No, have not been homeless

9. Which of the following best describes your current housing situation?

- 1 Currently homeless
- 2 Living in a shelter or group home
- 3 Sharing space with another family
- 4 Living in a house or apartment that you own
- 5 Living in a house or apartment that you rent
- 6 Other PLEASE WRITE IN: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Which of the following do you feel are the main causes of poverty in the United States? Why are people in the U.S. poor? CHECK NO MORE THAN THREE.

CHECK

THREE

- 1 Unjust laws or social policies
- 2 Physical or mental disabilities
- 3 Health/medical problems
- 4 Racial/ethnic discrimination
- 5 Lack of employment opportunities
- 6 Lack of work that pays a living wage
- 7 Lack of job skills
- 8 Lack of education -- PLEASE ALSO CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
  - 9 Lack of access to education
  - 10 Lack of understanding of the importance of education
  - 11 Lack of desire for education
  - 12 Poor education system
- 13 Personal laziness/lack of motivation
- 14 Other causes PLEASE WRITE IN \_\_\_\_\_

11. Whose responsibility is it to respond to the needs of poor people in the United States and to address other issues related to poverty? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 The poor themselves
- 2 The government
- 3 Churches
- 4 Other charitable organizations
- 5 Everyone/general public
- 6 Corporations/businesses
- 7 Other PLEASE WRITE IN \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the best way to help permanently put an end to poverty or to help someone who is poor? PLEASE CHECK JUST THE ONE BEST WAY.

- 1 Give money directly to a poor person(s)
- 2 Give money to an organization helping the poor
- 3 Mentor or provide non-financial support to an individual
- 4 Encourage people to volunteer their time to organizations that help the poor
- 5 Have more community based organizations work to address poverty or injustice
- 6 Provide government assistance
- 7 Other PLEASE WRITE IN \_\_\_\_\_

13. Which of the following is the most important thing to provide to someone living in poverty? PLEASE CHECK JUST ONE

- 1 Food
- 2 Adequate housing
- 3 Clothing
- 4 Education
- 5 Childcare
- 6 Transportation
- 7 Spiritual guidance
- 8 Health care
- 9 Other PLEASE WRITE IN: \_\_\_\_\_

14. During the past year, have you noticed that people are more willing, just as willing or not as willing to help people living in poverty?

- People are . . .
- 1 More willing to help people living in poverty
  - 2 Just as willing to help people living in poverty
  - 3 Less willing to help people living in poverty

15. Are you familiar with the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD)?

- 1 Yes - CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 16      2 No --- SKIP TO QUESTION 18

16. What do you think of the mission of CCHD? CCHD was founded to help poor and low-income people help themselves by supporting community-based projects that are started and led by poor and low-income people.

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17. Have you seen CCHD's advertising campaign on Poverty in America?

- 1 Yes      2 No      1 Yes      Why do you say that?  
2 No      2 No

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**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE ASKED TO HELP US UNDERSTAND THE RESULTS BETTER.**

18. Are you:    1 Male      2 Female      19. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Including yourself, how many people are living in your household?

- 1 Just one      4 Four      7 Seven  
2 Two      5 Five      8 Eight  
3 Three      6 Six      9 Nine or more

21. The basic needs of most families include food, housing, utilities, health care, childcare, and transportation. How much annual income would be necessary for you to provide for these needs for yourself and your family?

WRITE IN AMOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Into which of the following categories does your actual total annual household income fall?

- 1 Less than \$9,310      5 \$18,850 to \$22,029      9 \$31,570 to \$34,749      13 \$44,290 or more  
2 \$9,310 to \$12,489      6 \$22,030 to \$25,209      10 \$34,750 to \$37,929  
3 \$12,490 to \$15,669      7 \$25,210 to \$28,389      11 \$37,930 to \$41,109  
4 \$15,670 to \$18,849      8 \$28,390 to \$31,569      12 \$41,110 to \$44,289

23. What is the highest level of education that you finished?

- 1 Attended or finished elementary/primary/grades 1-8      5 College graduate  
2 Some high school      6 Graduate school  
3 Finished high school      7 Other PLEASE WRITE IN  
4 Some college      \_\_\_\_\_

24. Which religious denomination do you identify with?

- 1 Catholic      5 Muslim/Islam  
2 Protestant (Baptist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.)      6 Buddhist  
3 Mormon/LDS      7 None  
4 Jewish      8 Other \_\_\_\_\_

25. What state do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE POSTAGE PAID RETURN ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO THE CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY!

# **Campaña Católica para el Desarrollo Humano**

## **Cuestionario**

Querido(a) amigo(a),

La Campaña Católica para el Desarrollo Humano trata de educar los estadounidenses acerca de la pobreza y de las preocupaciones de las personas con bajos ingresos. Le pedimos su ayuda: Dénos su opinión para poder compartirla con el resto de la población.

Por favor, tome unos minutos para rellenar este cuestionario. Responder es totalmente voluntario y no es necesario que nos dé su nombre. Sin embargo le pedimos que responda para que podamos hacer conocer su opinión. Usted sabe lo importante que es hacernos oír. Esta es una forma de hacerlo.

Si usted recibió el cuestionario en inglés y en español, por favor, sólo rellénelo una vez en el idioma que le sea más cómodo. Sin embargo, si rellenó un cuestionario parecido el año pasado, por favor rellene este también. Hay algunas preguntas nuevas y también queremos saber si sus opiniones han cambiado.

Éste cuestionario esta diseñado para personas que viven en la pobreza o con bajos ingresos. Si Usted no piensa que cae en esta categoría, por favor pase este cuestionario a alguien que si califica.

Si recibió más de una copia del cuestionario por favor también sólo rellene una.

Le adjuntamos también un sobre con el franqueo pre-pagado para que nos mande el cuestionario de vuelta. Por favor, devuélvalo antes del 1 de Septiembre del 2004.

Gracias por su participación.

Atentamente,

Rev. Roberto J. Vitillo  
Director Ejecutivo  
Campaña Católica para el Desarrollo Humano  
Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos

POR FAVOR MARQUE SU RESPUESTA CON UNA "X" O ESCRIBA SU RESPUESTA EN LAS LINEAS PROVISTAS AL EFECTO.

1. En su opinión, ¿Cuál es el mayor problema al que se enfrenta la sociedad de los Estados Unidos hoy en día? POR FAVOR SOLO ESCRIBA UN (1) PROBLEMA QUE A SU PARECER ES EL MAYOR.

2. ¿Qué otros temas o asuntos le preocupan en relación con la sociedad estadounidense? ENUMERE TODOS LOS ASUNTOS QUE LE PREOCUPAN.

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3. ¿Cómo de preocupado está Usted con los siguientes temas? ¿Diría Usted que esta muy preocupado, algo preocupado, no muy preocupado o nada preocupado con los siguientes temas? Piense solamente en lo que se refiere a los Estados Unidos.

	Muy	Algo	No Muy	Nada
Crimen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pobreza	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inmoralidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educación	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cuidado Medico	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prejuicios o racismo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guerra/ Terrorismo	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

4. ¿Que le preocupa específicamente en relación a Usted y su familia? ¿Que es lo que más le preocupa en relación a Usted y su familia?

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5. ¿Qué significa ser pobre en Estados Unidos? ¿Cómo describiría Usted ser pobre en Estados Unidos?

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6. ¿Cual de estas categorías mejor describe su familia?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Ingresos altos    | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Pobres                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ingresos medianos | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Viviendo bajo la línea de la pobreza |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Bajos ingresos    | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 OTRO: POR FAVOR ESCRIBA AQUÍ: _____  |

7. ¿Diría Usted que su vivienda actual es adecuada y confortable para Usted y su familia?

- 1 Si, es adecuada  
2 No, es inadecuada → POR FAVOR ESCRIBA AQUÍ PORQUÉ ES INADECUADA:

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8. ¿Alguna vez ha estado Usted sin hogar?

- 1 Si, he estado sin hogar alguna vez      2 No, nunca he estado sin hogar



15. ¿Conoce Usted la Campaña Católica para el Desarrollo Humano (CCHD)?

1 Si: Siga con la pregunta número 16

2 No: Vaya a la pregunta numero 18

16. ¿Que opina Usted de la misión de CCHD? CCHD fue creado para apoyar a programas comunitarios de auto-ayuda iniciados y dirigidos por los pobres mismos y por las personas de bajos ingresos.

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17. ¿Ha visto Usted la Campaña Publicitaria de CCHD acerca de la pobreza en los EE.UU.?

1 Sí  
2 No



¿Le gustó?

1 Sí  
2 No

¿Por qué lo dice?

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**LAS SIGUIENTES PREGUNTAS NOS AYUDARÁN ENTENDER LOS RESULTADOS MEJOR:**

18. Es Usted: 1 Hombre

2 Mujer

19. ¿Que edad tiene? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Incluyéndose a sí mismo, ¿Cuántas personas viven en su casa?

1 Solo una

4 Cuatro

7 Siete

2 Dos

5 Cinco

8 Ocho

3 Tres

6 Seis

9 Nueve o más

21. Las necesidades básicas de la mayoría de las familias incluyen comida, vivienda, luz y gas etc., cuidado médico, cuidado infantil y transporte. ¿Que ingreso anual necesitaría Usted para poder suplir estas necesidades básicas para Usted y su familia?

INGRESO ANUAL NECESARIO: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

22. ¿Cual es el ingreso real total por año de su hogar?

1 Menos de \$9,309

6 \$20,030 a \$25,209

11 \$37,930 a \$41,109

2 \$9,310 a \$12,489

7 \$25,210 a \$28,389

12 \$41,110 a \$44,289

3 \$12,490 a \$15,669

8 \$28,390 a \$31,569

13 \$44,290 o más

4 \$15,670 a \$18,849

9 \$31,570 a \$34,749

5 \$18,850 a \$20,029

10 \$34,750 a \$37,929

23. ¿Cual es el nivel de educación más alto que ha completado usted?

1 Algo de o acabé escuela primaria/grados del 1 al 8

5 Graduado de la universidad

2 Algo de secundaria

6 Escuela graduada

3 Acabé la secundaria

7 Otro POR FAVOR ESCRIBA AQUI

4 Algo de universidad

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24. ¿Con cual de estas denominaciones religiosas se identifica usted?

1 Católica

5 Musulmán/Islam

2 Protestante (Bautista, Episcopal, Luterana, Metodista, Presbiteriana, etc.)

6 Budismo

3 Mormón/LDS

7 Ninguna

4 Judía

8 Otra \_\_\_\_\_

25. ¿En que Estado vive Usted? \_\_\_\_\_

POR FAVOR DEVUELVA ESTE CUESTIONARIO RELLENADO EN EL SOBRE CON FRANQUEO PRE-PAGADO Y DIRIGIDO A LA CAMPAÑA CATÓLICA PARA EL DESARROLLO HUMANO.

**¡GRACIAS POR SU TIEMPO Y POR SU PARTICIPACIÓN EN ESTA ENCUESTA!**