

## Lesson 1: Putting a Face on Poverty Opening Prayer Quotations

Directions: Cut out the following quotations and place in a bowl. Ask volunteers to take a quotation out of the bowl and read it to the group. Each quotation is from a real person who is responding to the question: What does it mean to be poor in America today?

*"You are voiceless and somewhat powerless to change your situation because you are too busy trying to survive to make the changes you need to improve your situation."*

- Female, 40, Washington, household of one, income less than \$10,294

*"I'm a senior, disabled, all alone, no money, sit in front of T.V. all day - why? Too poor to socialize. Poverty is like being in prison. Why even try to stay alive? For what?"*

- Female, 62, Oregon, household of one, income less than \$10,294

*"Struggling to pay bills, constant disconnection notices, not having money to wash and purchase clothing to work in because bills and household needs have to come first. Listening to your children say they are hungry, but not knowing what you are going to be able to give them before your food stamps come."*

- Female, 32, Missouri, household of five, income of less than \$10,294

*"People look down on you, thinking that you're nothing, like not one poor person tried in their life."*

- Female, Kansas, 16, household of three, income of less than \$10,294

*"Not having enough money to have a nice Christmas. Not being able to have nice things for birthdays."*

- Female, 23, Michigan, household of one, income of less than \$10,294

*"Feeling like you always owe everyone either an apology or an explanation or both."*

- Female, 52, Kansas, household of four, income of less than \$10,294