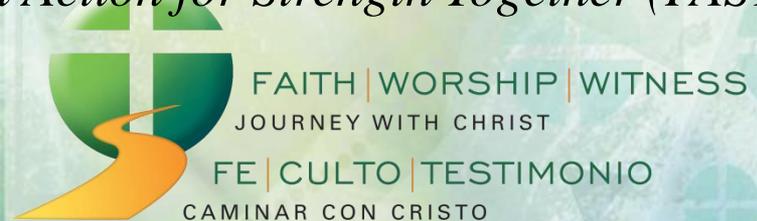


# The New U.S. Poverty Statistics and Our Catholic Response

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USCCCB

# Pope Francis

*... the times talk to us of so much poverty in the world and this is a scandal. Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry.*

*June 7, 2013*



# Poverty in America 2012

- Most major stats remained unchanged (and that's bad news)
  - poverty rate **15** percent... **46.5** million people
  - child poverty **21.8** percent... **16** million
  - 34** percent of the country's total population lived in or near poverty

[Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012.](#)

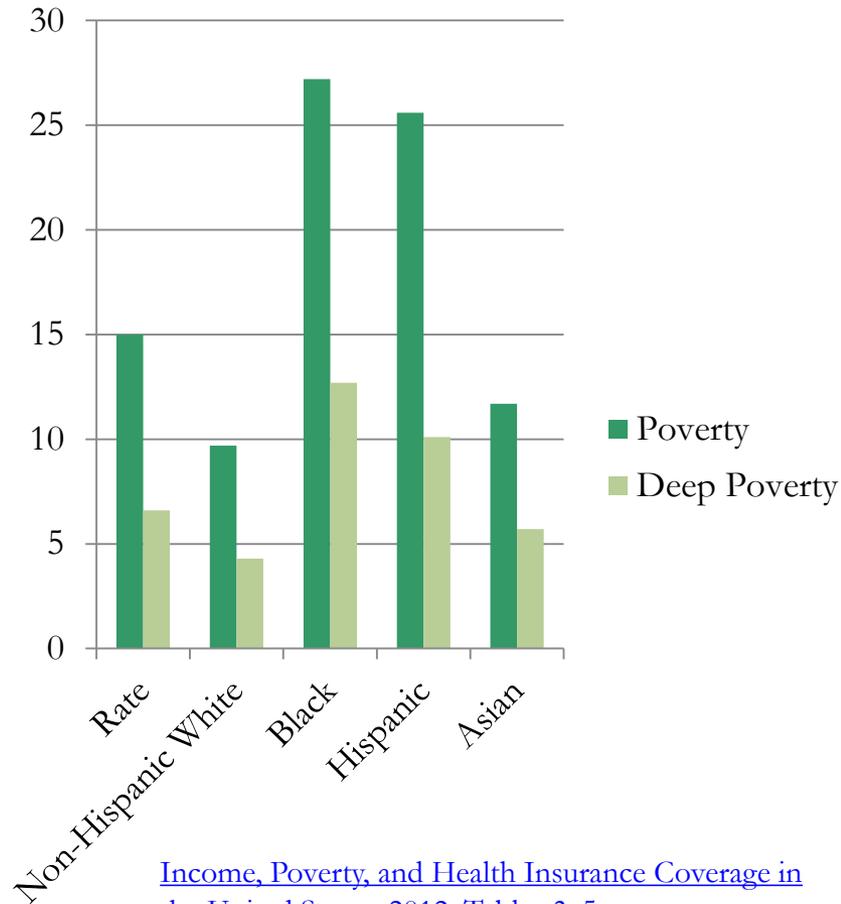


# Stats hide severe pain...

- ▶ Over **20 million** people lived in deep poverty--less than **\$11,500/year**.
- ▶ For the bulk of people and families living in poverty, their pain is deep and they are far from secure.



# Stats hide severe racial and ethnic disparities...



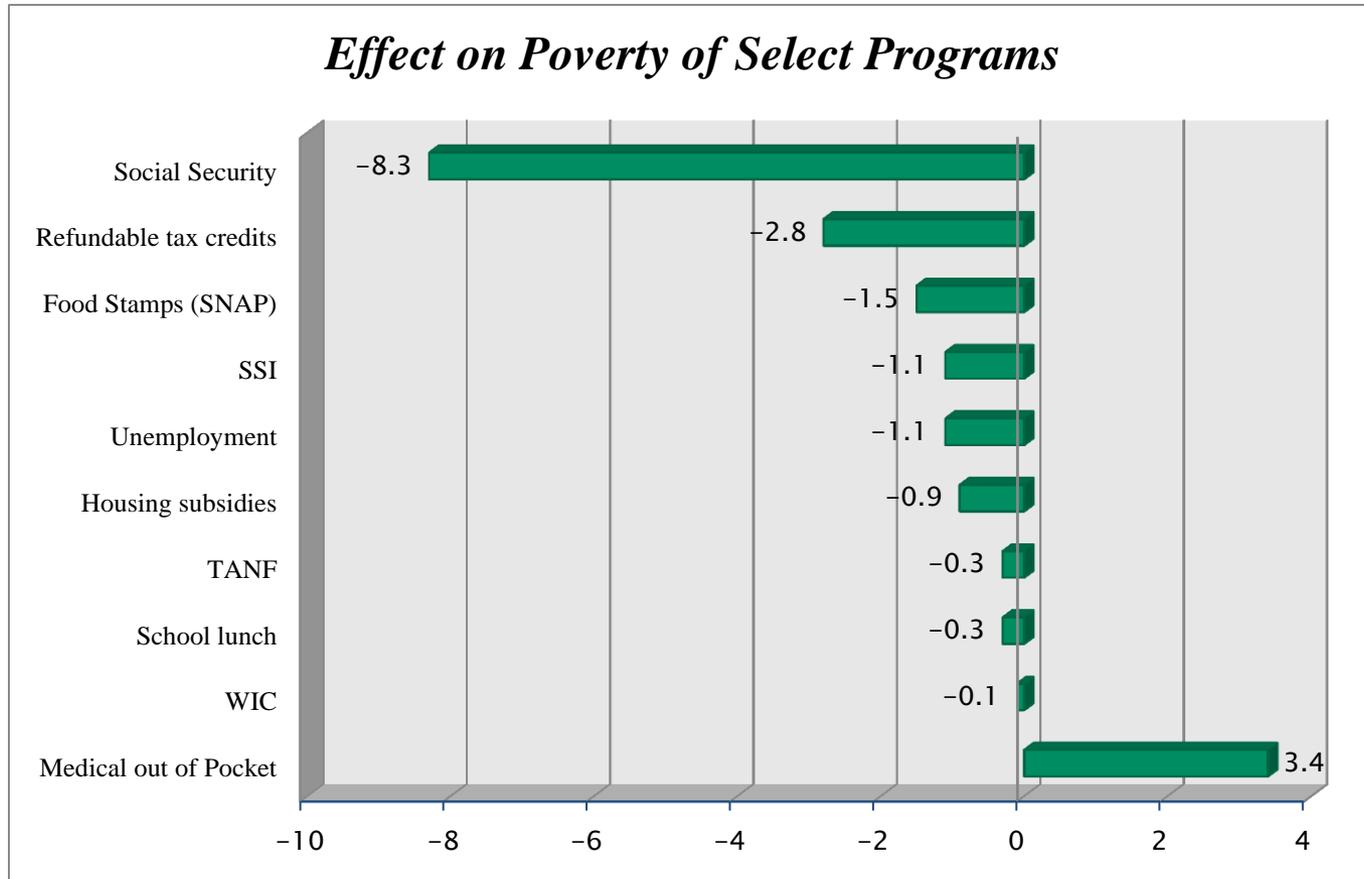
<b>Median Income</b>	<b>\$51,017</b>
Asian	\$68,636
Non-Hispanic White	\$57,009
Black	\$33,321
Hispanic	\$39,005

[Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012. Figure 1.](#)

[Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012. Tables 3, 5.](#)



# Federal Antipoverty Programs



[The Research Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2011](#)



# Income and Inequality

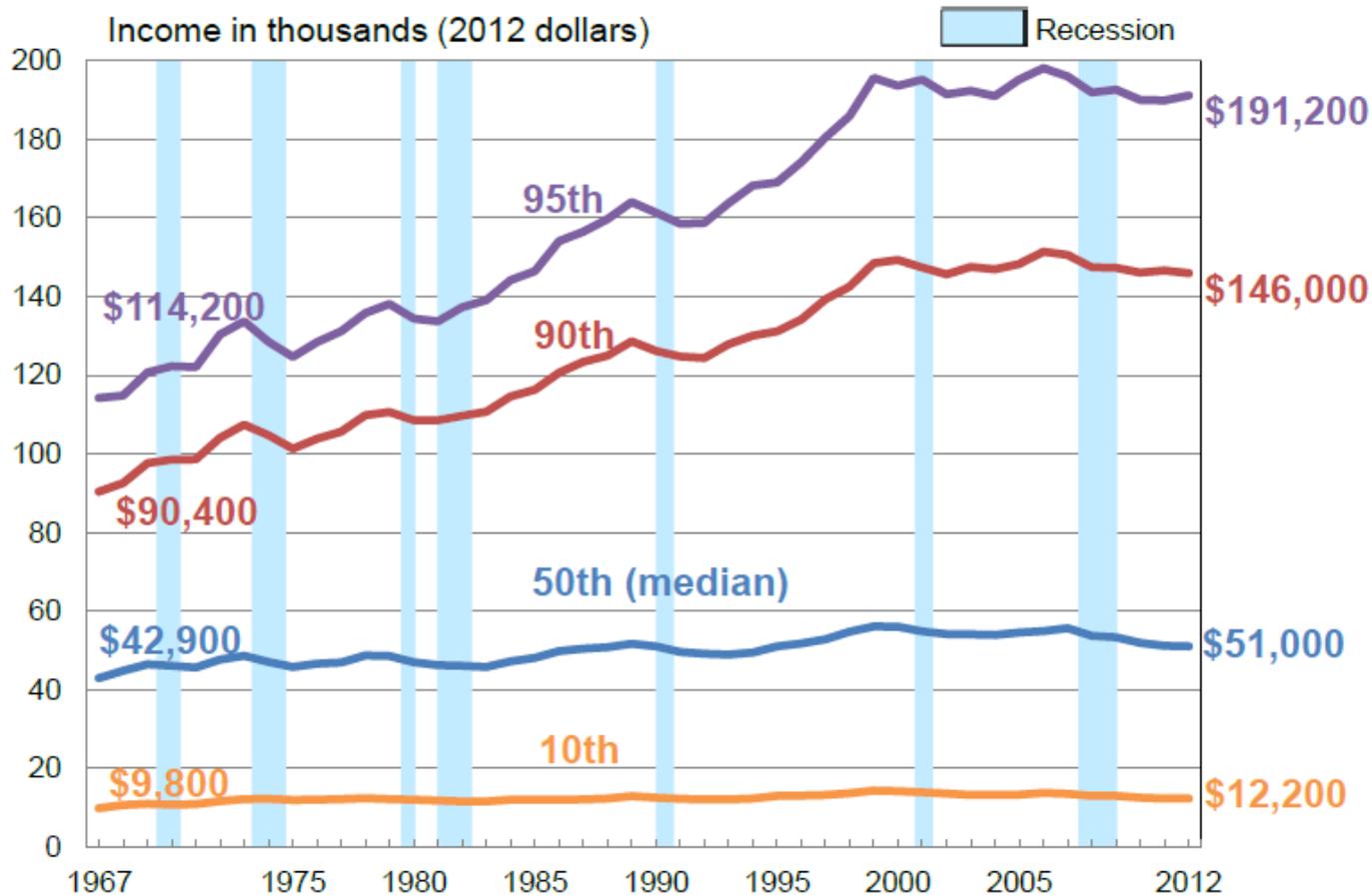
*“Most people want to live in a more equal society that provides opportunities for growth and development. The current imbalances are not inevitable, but demand boldness in promoting a just economy that reduces inequality by creating jobs that pay a living wage and share with workers some profits of the company.”*

-Bishop Stephen Blaire

[2013 Labor Day Statement](#)



# Household Income of Select Percentiles



[Source: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2013 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.](#)



# Labor and Jobs

*“No consideration of the problems associated with development could fail to highlight the direct link between **poverty** and **unemployment**. In many cases, poverty results from a violation of the dignity of human work, either because work opportunities are limited (through unemployment or underemployment), or ‘because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family.’”*

*-Pope Benedict XVI, [Caritas in Veritate](#), No. 63*



# work opportunities are limited...

- ▶ Real unemployment rate of 13.7%.
- ▶ [11 million unemployed](#), [3.7 million job openings](#)--over **3** job seekers for every **1** available job.
  - Add in the 8 million part-timers who want full-time work, there's over **5** job seekers for every **1** available job.

# a low value is put on work...

- ▶ A married couple with one child and a minimum wage job (\$15,080) lives below the poverty line (\$18,500).
- ▶ [There are 10.4 million “working poor.”](#) That's over seven percent of the entire workforce--the largest percentage of the workforce on record.



# USCCB Webinar: “The New U.S. Poverty Statistics and Our Catholic Response”

“The FAST Story”

By

Parisrice Robinson, Member  
St. Joseph Catholic Church  
St. Petersburg, Florida  
September 19, 2013

*Faith and Action for Strength Together (FAST)*

# Problem



- ▶ In 2011, we repeatedly heard that people were struggling to get jobs. Especially people who have a criminal record, even if it was only for driving without a license or being caught with drugs when they were a teenager.
- ▶ At our October Annual Assembly, 500 of our leaders voted to work on jobs, and in particular, ex-offender jobs.

# Unemployment Data



Pinellas: 7.6% or 70,000;  
and  
140,000 Underemployed

2011 Pinellas County Estimated Unemployment  
Statistics

# Solution:

## *Look for Best Practices Across the Country*

- ▶ We looked for best practice solutions across the country.
- ▶ We found other cities had been successful at using city dollars to put local residents back to work.
- ▶ These cities created a local hiring ordinance to require contractors to hire a certain number of unemployed people on city jobs.
- ▶ The City of St. Petersburg (Pinellas County) is spending over \$90 million of tax payer money in the coming year on a new Pier, Police station, and sewers. This is a historic amount of construction that could be used to put local people to work.
- ▶ So, we knew we wanted St. Petersburg to create a hiring ordinance that would require contractors to try and hire ex-offenders and other local unemployed people.

# Stay Active and Stay Tuned!

*‘None of us can say, ‘I have nothing to do with this, they govern. . . .’ No, no, I am responsible for their governance, and I have to do the best so that they govern well, and I have to do my best by participating in politics according to my ability. Politics, according to the Social Doctrine of the Church, is one of the highest forms of charity, because it serves the common good. I cannot wash my hands, eh? We all have to give something!’*

-Pope Francis, September 16, 2013

- ▶ [Povertyusa.org](http://Povertyusa.org) updated soon!
- ▶ More resources and action alerts from JPHD. Sign up for [Notes for Neighbors](#) to stay informed.

