

Sunday

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JANUARY

POVERTY AWARENESS MONTH

1 An annual papal message for the World Day of Peace (Jan. 1) has been released every year since 1968. [Read the 2022 message](#) and use [these resources](#) to reflect on its important invitation to all Catholics and people of good will. Take today to also make a resolution for the year that helps work to reduce poverty.

2 For over 50 years, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has been working to empower new mothers, immigrants, the elderly, and families to together address the root causes of poverty in their communities. [Read about the work](#) of CCHD here!

3 Many Americans continue to be severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Say this prayer for [solidarity](#) and for the grace to share in the suffering of our brothers and sisters who experience poverty, and for a deeper conviction to work for justice and peace.

4 Today is the feast of [St. Elizabeth Ann Seton](#), the first canonized U.S. citizen and founder of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, which serves and educates children living in poverty. Her work laid the foundation for the [American Catholic School](#) system. Both her order and Catholic schools continue to further the social mission of the Church to this day.

5 Take a look at this [Poverty Map](#) that shows the levels of poverty in the nation and your specific county. How can you live out the Gospel call to [advocate](#) for and with persons in poverty locally and globally?

6 The relationship between mental health and poverty is complex. [Read more](#) about the ways mental health and poverty intersect and find out how you can get involved in this work in your community.

7 [Poverty](#) is not a catchphrase—it is a serious reality that many are living. Are you familiar with the facts about those living in poverty in the United States? Learn facts about [U.S. Poverty](#) and make two specific commitments to address poverty in your community this month.

8 Every year, CCHD recognizes a young adult who demonstrates leadership in fighting poverty and injustice in the United States through community based solutions. This year Ogechi Akalegbere of the Archdiocese of Washington was the recipient of the [2021 Cardinal Bernardin New Leadership Award](#). How can you get involved in your community's efforts to address poverty?

9 Through [Baptism](#), we share in Christ's prophetic mission as people of God "to bring glad tidings to the poor... proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free" ([Lk 4:18](#)). Learn more about CCHD has been living out this call for more than 50 years, including [addressing housing discrimination by partnering with organizations that have long been fighting to reform and expand access to affordable housing](#).

10 The [Dignity of Work](#) and the Rights of Workers Teaching that is directly related to the migrant experience, especially here in the U.S. [Groups supported by CCHD](#) seek to help migrants know their rights and create a just working environment where their life and dignity is upheld and respected.

11 Today is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Throughout the world today many [children, women and men are being trafficked](#). There are many children, women, and men being trafficked in the world today. Learn more about the Catholic teachings and social service programs developed to protect and serve human trafficking survivors.

12 The CCHD [Creating on the Margins Contest](#) is a cross-discipline art contest educating young people about poverty in the U.S., its root causes, and faith-inspired efforts to address poverty, especially through the local community organizations supported by CCHD. How can you get your local schools and parishes involved in the 2022 [Creating on the Margins Contest](#)?

13 Pope Francis recently called the church to a new [synodal](#) process, one that invites all the People of God to walk together, side by side, along the same road towards renewal in the Spirit and the good of all people. Reflect on how your community can better [reach out and listen at the margins](#) and then learn more about how [CCHD has been walking alongside those experiencing poverty for more than 50 years](#).

14 The church teaches that every person has a right and a duty to [participate in society](#), seeking together the common good and well-being of all. What are you doing to encourage others to participate, especially in the work to address the systems and structures that keep people in poverty? Learn more about [Civilize It: A Better Kind of Politics](#) and pledge charity, clarity, and creativity to promote the common good.

15 Our faith calls us to care for God's creation and help poor countries and communities adapt to the effects of climate change. Read how CCHD supports community organizations throughout the country, working to [tackle many dimensions of the complex social and environmental crisis](#) facing our world.





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16 God empowers all, especially those who are vulnerable, to stand up for themselves and protect their dignity. Read about how the Sisters of Mercy of South Central and the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word co-sponsor [ARISE](#), a CCHD-funded organization that enables community members in South Texas to accomplish their goals, supporting and maintaining the agency of immigrants.

17 As we reflect on the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we are reminded of his tireless fight to eliminate injustice and segregation. For over 50 years, [CCHD has worked for racial justice in all aspects of society](#) like criminal justice reform, affordable housing, environmental justice, and more.

18 Today begins the [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#), celebrated each year on January 18-25. The theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is "[We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him.](#)" (Mt 2:2) chosen by the Middle East Council of Churches. Read and reflect on [this example of a CCHD-funded group](#) empowering people of faith and good will to build unity and create access to affordable housing.

19 The [Two Feet of Love in Action](#) are two unique but complementary ways to fight poverty. [Watch this video](#) about how one foot is social justice—eliminating root causes of poverty, and the second is charitable works—responding to immediate needs. Search for a [local organization](#) you can join and learn about [the current policies](#) affecting persons in poverty.

20 Our faith teaches us that we have a responsibility to work together to safeguard each person's rights, including working together for greater economic justice in the face of persistent poverty, growing income gaps, and increasing economic issues. Learn more about [the call for economic justice](#) and how you can support this important work through CCHD.

21 [Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton](#) was the first African American priest in the U.S. and dedicated himself to his parishioners, many of whom were living in poverty. [Learn more about Fr. Tolton and other inspiring holy men and women](#) who worked courageously to address racism in their communities.

22 We must work together to protect the life and dignity of all persons, at every stage of life, promoting rights for all. Use [this prayer](#) to reflect on how you can work to promote the life and dignity of the human person, including those not yet born and those experiencing poverty and injustice.

23 Throughout our lives, God accompanies us. [In a very special way, God is close to those who suffer and are marginalized.](#) [Watch this video](#) and reflect: What priority do those who experience poverty have in my heart?

24 Poverty [disproportionately impacts the elderly](#). Read about how CCHD funded organizations such as [the Massachusetts Senior Action Council](#) have organized around issues such as healthcare, transportation, and voter engagement that are often challenging for elderly to access, trapping them in a cycle of poverty. Take our [Poverty Quiz](#) and see what you have learned about poverty and the systems and structures that impact our communities.

25 "But racism still profoundly affects our culture, and it has no place in the Christian heart. This evil causes great harm to its victims, and it corrupts the souls of those who harbor racist or prejudicial thoughts," ([Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love - A Pastoral Letter Against Racism](#)). Read about how one [CCHD-funded group](#) is working to address racial divisions in West Baltimore.

26 Poverty does not strike all demographics equally. Nearly all of the roots of systemic poverty such as lack of access to food, affordable housing, and quality education disproportionately affect communities of color. Read how [CCHD is addressing not only homelessness and food accessibility, but the myriad of other issues that arise](#) when a large percentage of a community is affected by poverty.

27 Read about [Living Hope: A Voice for the Vulnerable](#). CCHD provides funds to help Living Hope empower members of the disability community. They work to not only provide wheelchairs, safety, and community to people experiencing poverty and disability, but they also work to give them a voice and place in society.

28 In [Fratelli Tutti](#), Pope Francis invites all people of good will to live out a discipleship built on love that fosters universal fraternity and social friendship. Read more about how [CCHD promotes the culture of encounter](#). [Pope Francis calls for in Fratelli Tutti.](#)

29 [Pope Francis](#) reminds us, "In service of the poor, there is no room for competition. Rather, we should humbly recognize that the Spirit is the source of our actions that reveal God's closeness and his answer to our prayers." Read about how [one parish](#) in Arizona demonstrates this connection in their Sunday worship.

30 [Our faith requires us](#) to go to the peripheries, cross borders, and reach out to our brothers and sisters in need—especially those in need of healing and forgiveness to transform their lives. Learn about how [Catholics and other people of faith and good will are putting this call to restorative justice into practice](#) through the support of CCHD. How can you show God's love and mercy to those in need of healing and hope?

31 Keep the conversation about poverty going with your family, in your parish, and neighborhood by exploring the facts around poverty. Visit [PovertyUSA.org](#) to learn more and check out our [education center](#) for resources designed to help individuals and groups not only begin to understand the size and scope of the problem but also start thinking about the ways in which they can take action to help create awareness about poverty in their communities.

