

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

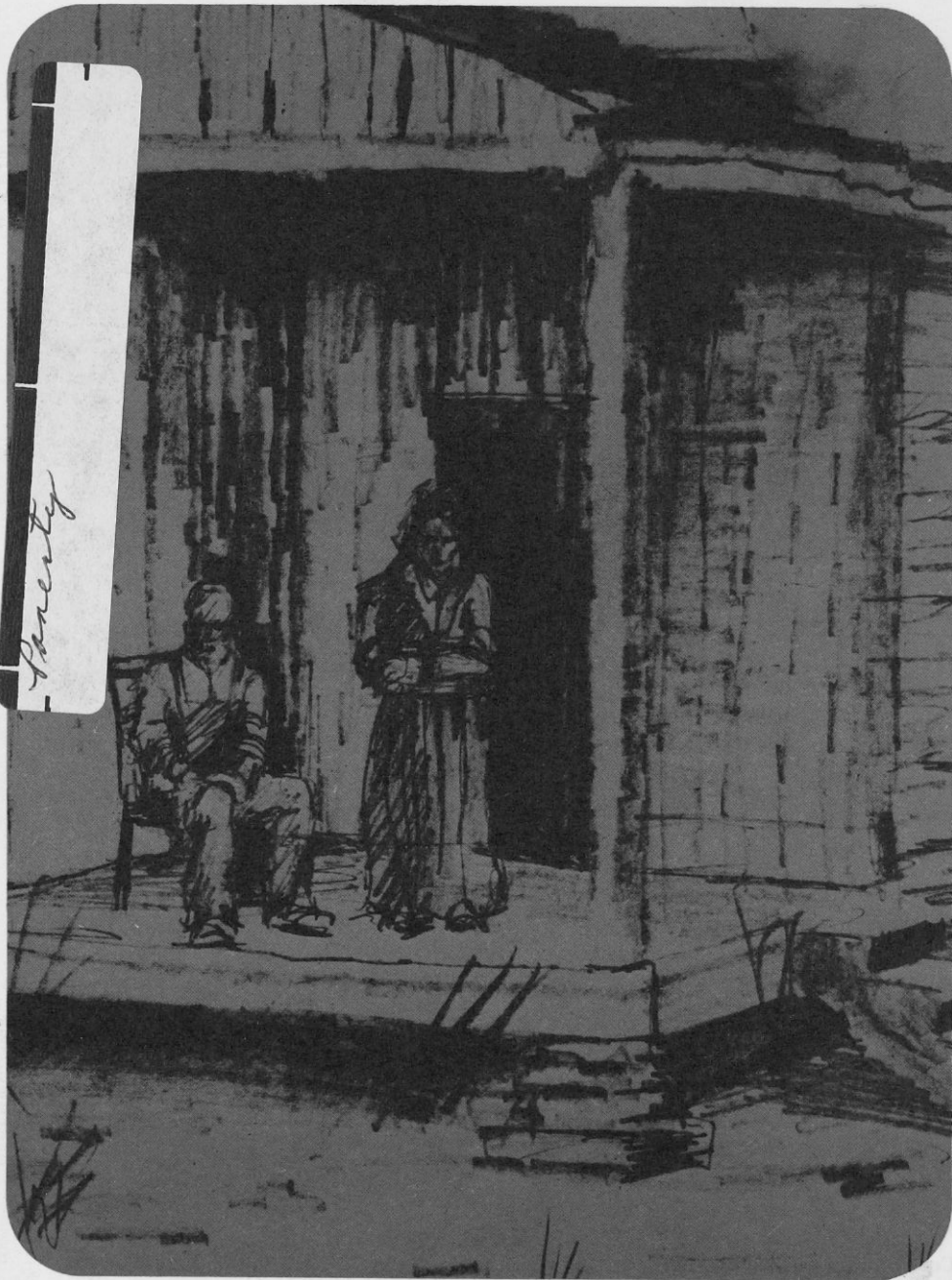
# Where are the Poor?

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

MEI Campaign for Human Development  
RE - Where are the poor?  
ADY 2765

COLLEGE LIBRARY  
VERTICAL FILE

Poverty



(Note: Teacher should take the Pre-test before reading further.)

**PRE-TEST:**

(May also be *reused* as post-test, but students should *not* know this in advance.)

1. In the U.S. there is more incidence of poverty in the
  - a. North
  - b. East
  - c. South
  - d. West
2. The people in that area of the U.S. known as Appalachia are
  - a. quite poor
  - b. of medium income
  - c. comparatively rich
  - d. somewhat poor
3. Which of the following areas in the U.S. has the highest incidence of poverty?
  - a. farm areas
  - b. rural (non-farm) areas
  - c. suburban areas
4. In the U.S. the *least* incidence of poverty occurs in the
  - a. North
  - b. Northeast
  - c. Southeast
  - d. West
5. Most Mexican Americans live in the
  - a. North
  - b. South and West
  - c. East
  - d. North and East
6. Mexican Americans are known as
  - a. Chicanos
  - b. Wops
  - c. Cubans
  - d. Puerto Ricans
7. There is usually more poverty in the suburbs of metropolitan areas than in the cities themselves.
  - a. True
  - b. False
8. A place which is segregated is
  - a. a place where many people (races) live together
  - b. cut off from the general masses of people
  - c. for Blacks only
  - d. found in large cities only
9. In the present big cities of the North and East, the white ethnic Catholics (that is, Italians, Irish, Polish, Czechs, Slovaks, etc.) are
  - a. 10% of the population
  - b. 20% of the population
  - c. 30% of the population
  - d. 40% of the population
10. In Appalachia most of the people are
  - a. White
  - b. Black
  - c. Mexican American
  - d. Indian
11. One of the greatest problems among U.S. Indians is the incidence of
  - a. heroin use
  - b. alcoholism
  - c. abortion
  - d. euthanasia
12. Of the following which was the most *historically* predominant occupation of the South?
  - a. Manufacturing
  - b. Mining
  - c. Fishing
  - d. Farming

Deacidified



13. During the past 20 years in the U.S. there has been a mass migration of people
- a. to the inner city
  - b. out of the suburbs
  - c. out of rural areas
  - d. into rural areas
14. The group with the highest incidence and deepest level of poverty in the U.S. is
- a. Indians
  - b. Chicanos
  - c. Blacks
  - d. Ethnic (Irish, Italian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, etc.) Catholic
15. Of the following minority groups, which has the largest representation in the big cities of the North and East?
- a. Mexican Americans
  - b. Blacks
  - c. White ethnic Catholics
  - d. Jews
16. About what percentage of the *entire* U.S. population lives in urban areas?
- a. 25%
  - b. 50%
  - c. 75%
  - d. 90%
17. About what percentage of *all* U.S. poor live in the *South*?
- a. 10%
  - b. 30%
  - c. 60%
  - d. 90%
18. In the present big cities of the North and East, the Black population is about
- a. 10%
  - b. 15%
  - c. 30%
  - d. 40%
19. Farm areas now contain about
- a. twice as many people as a generation ago
  - b. 70% as many people as a generation ago
  - c. 50% as many people as a generation ago
  - d. three times as many people as a generation ago
20. More than 40% of the U.S. Blacks live in the
- a. West
  - b. South
  - c. East
  - d. North
21. Which of the following statements about farmers is the most correct?
- a. We need more of them now than ever before.
  - b. We need fewer of them now than ever before.
  - c. They are not able to produce sufficient food for the population.
  - d. They produce just enough food for the population.
22. The highest suicide rate in the U.S. is among
- a. Whites
  - b. Blacks
  - c. Mexican Americans
  - d. Indians
23. The average wage among U.S. *white* workers is about
- a. \$10,000
  - b. \$9,000
  - c. \$8,000
  - d. \$7,000





### TEACHER OVERVIEW:

If students have been studying the story of poverty in Modules I and II, they should have a fairly good idea of what poverty *is* and *who* is poor in the U.S. The object of Module III, therefore, is to introduce the concept of where poverty exists. At the same time there has been an attempt to correlate the location of poverty with a description of who the poor are and of what poverty is. This method has been used to emphasize the fact that an understanding of the poverty syndrome requires an awareness of the interrelationship of the above factors.

The purpose of Module III is:

1. to help the student discover any misinformation which he may have about the subject;
2. to present factual material;
3. to examine student attitudes and values;
4. to suggest student activities;
5. and to suggest the possibility of certain kinds of response to the problem.

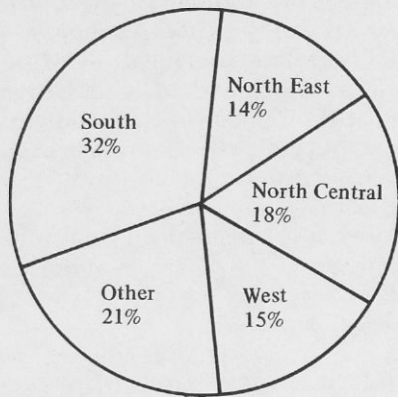
*Suggested time:* two months.

### WHERE IS POVERTY?

The facts about the location of poverty are these:

1. Poverty is not equally distributed in the United States.
2. The South has more poverty than any other section of the United States. The high incidence of poverty in the South is due to the decreased need for farming in an area which rests on an agricultural economy and to the failure of the mining industry in Appalachia.
3. Poverty in the United States may be divided into rural and urban areas.
4. In rural areas, the most acute poverty is among those who live on farms.
5. A special kind of rural poverty exists among those Americans who live on Indian reservations. Almost 99.7% of reservation Indians are poor.
6. The highest percentage of urban poverty is in the inner-city areas.
7. During the past 20 years the population of the American poor has shifted from rural to urban areas.
8. During this time more than one-half the poor population of rural areas has fled to the cities.
9. Many former city residents have escaped to the suburbs.
10. This shift in population has several serious consequences for American cities.
  - a. Migration to the suburbs has left the inner city to the poor.

- b. The population of the inner city is not homogeneous. There is a great deal of conflict between Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other ethnic poor.



**“WHERE IS POVERTY?”**

“Poverty in the U.S.” Fact Sheet – Msgr. Geno Baroni, U.S.C.C. Task Force on Urban Problems.

**RURAL SOUTH:**

Of all the geographical sections of America, the South is the most poor. In fact, one out of every three American poor live in the South.

There are at least two reasons for the extreme poverty of the South. First, the history of the South is a history of agriculture. With the increased use of chemicals and machines, fewer and larger farms are required. Thus, many farmers have lost their farms. Second, the one section of the South (Appalachia) which was based on an industrial economy has lost its economic foundation. Generations of Appalachian residents have made their living in the coal mines. Today, however, mining is dying as a major industry.

As a result of these severe economic conditions, life among the rural poor in the South is very different from life among the urban poor. Since most federal programs are based on the conditions of the urban poor, the programs have done little to alleviate conditions in the South.

“Government administrators seem not to understand,” Negro leader A. Philip Randolph told the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, ‘that the poorest people simply don’t have money.’ The South is thick with Negroes who live in a primitive world of barter. They work or they don’t work, but when they do work it is for past debts or to establish future credit. No money changes hands. They wear cast-off clothes, they eat charity food. They buy nothing. The sharecroppers wound up the season last October either in debt to their landlords or coming out of the cotton year with, say, \$50 — which promptly went to pay debts in town. Their pockets have

been empty for six or seven months, at least. To them, \$2 a head — or even 50 cents a head — for the stamp program might as well be \$2,000 a head. They simply can't raise it. If they could raise it, it would only be by borrowing from their landlords, who charge up to 50 per cent interest..." (Robert Sherrill, "It Isn't True That Nobody Starves in America," *New York Times Magazine*, June 4, 1967, p. 22. Copyright 1967 by N.Y. Times Co.; reprinted by permission.)

As a result rural poor do not qualify for federal food assistance programs. Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, a former sharecropper and now a leader of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party, describes the problem of what to eat when you are poor.

"The main problem about bein' poor is that it only leaves you the choice between not eatin' at all and eatin' so bad you wonder if that is a improvement."

"Although reared on a farm and now middle-aged, she has eaten turkey only twice in her life, once a couple of years ago when comedian Dick Gregory shipped a batch of the birds to Mississippi Negroes and the other time when she bought a turkey on the installment plan and paid for it at the rate of 70 cents a week. When the conversation turns to food, Mrs. Hamer will always mention those two turkeys, because otherwise she has nothing to talk about except the customary meat that gets on her table — meat that is thinly attached to hog neckbones (she broke off a front tooth discovering just how thinly attached). She is a big woman, built out in rings of starch — rice and grits and more grits and flour — held together by bean proteins. Perhaps once a year she eats fruit, but only if a friend who has moved to the relatively luxurious welfare rolls of the North sends it. She cannot afford it herself." (Sherrill, p. 22.)

Rural poverty, however, is not limited to the South. It is found throughout the nation.

"'Years ago,' says an old Maine man, 'a boy could leave school, get himself a saw and a jitterbug [tractor] and go into the woods to cut lumber. He'd do all right.' Men like Everett Williams, thirty-five, can no longer do all right. Williams, a lean, bony man in outsized boots and a gas-station-green work shirt, lives with his wife and eight children in a rusty 8- by 23-foot trailer on the swampy shore of Lake Winnecook, just off Interstate 95 near Unity, Maine. During the summer he runs a lakeside parking lot for tourists; during the fall he digs potatoes for \$1.40 an hour; between times he drives a chicken truck when he can. In 1967 he earned about \$3,000, but after breaking a leg while ditchdigging last fall he missed much of the lucrative potato-digging season. He did not receive workmen's compensation." (Sherrill, p. 22.)

## FARM WORKERS

Over twenty-six per cent of America's population lives in rural areas. Of these rural Americans, the farmers suffer the most from poverty. Among farmers, moreover, migrant workers are even poorer than the average. In the Southwest, Midwest, and Far West, many of these are "Chicanos," Americans of Mexican descent. Some live in southern California or Florida or southern Texas, where a long growing season means a succession of harvests. Others follow the hot summer sun as it ripens grains, fruits, and vegetables. They travel from South to North through the agricultural regions of the central plains and coastal United States.

Stooping all day under the hot sun, carrying cases of fruits or vegetables, is hard work. Hours are long, too. Crops must be picked when they are ripe. A delay of a few hours could mean a total loss. Despite the hard work and long hours, wages are low. Women and children, too, work in the fields and the canning operations.

Low income is not the only hardship of migrant workers. Farm owners supply housing for their laborers, but the harvest season is short, so little attention is given to living quarters for workers. One-room shacks, outdoor toilets, and a single pump for running water are common in workers' camps. The health of workers and their families suffers under conditions like these.

Probably the children suffer most from the conditions imposed by migrant employment. Stoop labor begins at the age of seven or eight. As soon as he is strong enough to heft a crate of fruit, the migrant boy is expected to add to the family's meager income.

Many migrants are denied a good education. Their families move from place to place; the children are never enrolled in a school longer than two or three weeks. School authorities insist that Mexican American children must speak English, though most Chicanos learn Spanish at home. The child is always a "new kid," often not dressed as well as the others, and he speaks with an accent. Naturally, he suffers in the school's atmosphere of rejection. With these problems there is little wonder that the Mexican American has one of the lowest educational levels in the United States. Though he has the strength of religion, family ties, and undying strength and persistence, he has little hope for a decent living. He's subjected to indignities because of his language, his culture, and his burden of poverty.

## POVERTY AMONG AMERICAN INDIANS:

While all areas of the country share the burden of poverty, the areas which support the greatest burden are the Indian reservations.

The first American has a proud heritage. In his ancestry are



leaders whose power and wisdom rank with those of the greatest European rulers. His people learned to make their living by using wisely the resources they found on the American continents. The tribes cared for their poor, their widows, and their orphaned children.

Each Indian and each tribe, drawing on its unique experience and the materials nature provided, expressed beauty in its own way. You may have seen a few examples, or imitations, of their art — their dances, songs, perhaps their graphic designs. Centuries passed and the riches of the forests, plains and mountains of the Americas supported the many Indian nations who lived there.

Europeans introduced a new way of life to the continents. For the Indians it was disastrous. Whole tribes were wiped out by white men's diseases and continued conflict. By the end of the last century the few poor remnants of the Indian nations were herded into barren reservations. Today most American Indians, whether they live in the city or on a reservation, experience dire poverty. Their income is far below that of most Americans. They lack medical care, housing, nourishing food, security in old age.

The facts about poverty on the reservations are no less bleak. An indication of the gravity of the problem may be seen from the fact that the number of suicides and alcoholics has greatly increased in recent years among the native population. In general, statistics on poverty among the rural Indian population are appalling.

U.S. INDIANS/HEALTH - 1970\*                      American Indians                      U.S. Average

|                    |   |              |              |
|--------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Infant Death Rate: |   | 30.9/1000    | 21.8/1000    |
| Suicide rate:      |   | 17.0/100,000 | 10.8/100,000 |
| Tuberculosis rate: | Seven times more Indians have TB than the U.S. population on a proportional basis. (Incidence rate is seven times as high.) |              |              |

IN 1966

|               |  |                                  |
|---------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Influenza:    | (  | 300% higher than U.S. average    |
| Hepatitis:    | (  | 800% higher than U.S. average    |
| Strep Throat: | (  | 1,000% higher than U.S. average  |
| Dysentery:    | (  | 10,000% higher than U.S. average |
| Water supply: | Public Health Survey in 1966 revealed that for 42,506 Indians in eleven western states, the water had to be hauled by vehicle over a mile. 77.8% of water supply was potentially contaminated due to its being shared with livestock, or from stagnant ponds, or from sources adjacent to outhouses. |                                  |

HOUSING - 1970

For 95,000 Indian families, there are 83,200 housing units. This means 12,000 families are living with other families. Of the 83,200 units, 52,700 are substandard (63%). This data comes from a housing survey carried out by the BIA. The U.S. Public Health Service estimated in 1969 that, for Indians on reservations, 90% of all housing was substandard.

EDUCATION - 1960 CENSUS\*\*                      American Indians                      U.S. Average

|  |           |            |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Average number of years schooling for all adults | 8.4 years | 10.6 years |
|--|-----------|------------|

\*Statistics on American Indians from Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior.

\*\*Latest complete figures on attainment.

### URBAN POOR:

In the past 20 years the population of the cities has shifted from the center of cities to the suburbs. The population of the city, therefore, is composed of Blacks and ethnic populations who cannot or do not wish to move. For the most part, the inner city has been left to the poor. Poverty in the city wears many faces: poor housing, unemployment, rats, garbage, crime, and frustration.

Many inner-city residents are Black. Blacks have arrived in inner-city ghettos after a long history of discrimination. Brought from Africa, first as servants who were to work for their freedom, later as slaves, Blacks in America were subjected to inhuman treatment. Slaves were property. They were sold and beaten. Their religious and social structures were broken down.

After the Civil War the economic situation of Blacks was still critical. Slaves who had been trained to be docile and obedient were hardly equipped to compete economically with whites. Later, toward the end of the last century, the introduction of "Jim Crow" or segregation legislation guaranteed that Blacks would remain in poor-paying jobs.

Discrimination is not limited to historical circumstances. In the cities of today many Blacks work at full-time jobs which would barely support a single person and certainly cannot support whole families. For some men the only way to support their families is to desert them. Desertion often assures the fact that the federal government will support the family.

Lack of economic opportunity, poor family life, inadequate housing, education and medical care often lead to a certain kind of apathy in the inner city.

### WHITE POOR IN URBAN AMERICA:

Blacks are often associated with inner-city poverty. While it is true that there is a greater percentage of poor among Blacks, the actual number of whites who are poor far exceeds the number of poor Blacks.

Ethnic Americans came to the United States for greater economic opportunity or to escape political or religious persecution. Unfortunately, the ideal America which they had envisioned did not exist. Ethnics had to settle for low-paying jobs in the city. Nevertheless, they formed communities and maintained their culture. Now the mobility of the urban population and the uncertain state of the economy have begun to threaten even these neighborhoods. Some ethnics are poor, and many others are in a marginal income group, not poor but living on the brink of economic hardship.

The frustration which ethnics feel is demonstrated by the following article by Barbara Mikulski, a young Polish American.

**"WHO SPEAKS FOR ETHNIC AMERICA?"**

*"The Ethnic American is forgotten and forlorn. He is infuriated at being used and abused by the media, government and business. Pejorative epithets such as 'pigs' and 'racists' or slick, patronizing labels like the 'silent majority' or 'hard hats' are graphic examples of the lack of respect, understanding and appreciation of him and his way of life.*

*"The Ethnic Americans are 40 million working class Americans who live primarily in 58 major industrial cities like Baltimore and Chicago. Our roots are in Central and Southern Europe. We have been in this country for one, two, or three generations. We have made a maximum contribution to the U.S.A., yet received minimal recognition.*

*"It was this working class which built the Great Cities — constructed the skyscrapers, operated the railroads, worked on the docks, factories, steel mills and in the mines. Though our labor was in demand, we were not accepted. Our names, language, food and cultural customs were the subject of ridicule. We were discriminated against by banks, institutions of higher learning, and other organizations controlled by the Yankee Patricians. There were no protective mechanisms for safety, wages, and tenure. We called ourselves Americans. We were called 'wop,' 'polak,' and 'hunky.'*

*"For our own protection, we formed our own institutions and organizations and clung together in our new neighborhoods. We created communities like 'Little Italy' and 'Polish Hill.' The ethnic parish church and the fraternal organizations like the Polish Women's Alliance and the Sons of Italy became the focal points of our culture.*

*"The Ethnic American is losing ground economically. He is the victim of both inflation and anti-inflation measures. Though wages have increased by 20 per cent since the mid sixties, true purchasing power has remained the same. He is hurt by layoffs due to cutbacks in production and construction. Tight money policies strangle him with high interest rates for installment buying and mortgages. He is the man who at 40 is told by the factory bosses that he is too old to be promoted. The old job is often threatened by automation. At the same time, his expenses are at their peak. He is paying on his home and car, probably trying to put at least one child through college.*

*"In pursuing his dream of home ownership, he finds that it becomes a millstone rather than a milestone in his life. Since FHA loans are primarily restricted to 'new' housing, he cannot buy a house in the old neighborhood.*

*"When the Ethnic worker looks for some modest help, he is told that his income is too high. He's 'too rich' to get help when his dad goes into a nursing home. Colleges make practically no*

effort to provide scholarships to kids named Colstiani, Slukowski, or Klima.

*"The one place where he felt the master of his fate and had status was in his own neighborhood. Now even that security is being threatened.*

*"Liberals scapegoat us as racists. Yet there was no racial prejudice in our hearts when we came. There were very few black people in Poland or Lithuania.*

*"Old prejudices and new fears are ignited. The two groups end up fighting each other for the same jobs and competing so that the new schools and recreation centers will be built in their respective communities.*

*"What is necessary is to get rid of the guilt of phony liberals, control by economic elitists and manipulation by selfish politicians. Then, let us get on with creating the democratic and pluralistic society that we say we are."* (Barbara Mikulski, "Who Speaks for Ethnic America?," *New York Times*, Tuesday, Sept. 29, 1970. Copyright 1970 by N.Y. Times Co.; reprinted by permission.)

#### NEW TENSIONS IN THE CITIES:

America's cities are faced with increasing tensions on many levels. Services and interrelationships, of communication networks cut across urban-suburban governmental lines. Yet, increasingly, the inner cities are being populated by the poor and marginal classes: Blacks, Spanish Speaking, white ethnics, white immigrants from rural areas such as Appalachia and the Midwest. The more affluent classes are increasingly inhabiting a suburban ring around the cities. The question of who will pay for the rising costs of government and services in the cities is unresolved, and in many areas the major wealth of the cities goes home to reside in the suburbs at night. Meanwhile, the social tensions of changing neighborhoods continue to grow within the cities.

This tension, plus the exodus from the cities, threatens the very existence of our urban communities. Robert Janes, professor of sociology at the University of Maryland, has suggested a solution for this problem.

*"The pluralist interaction of culture groups will to a large extent take place within the framework of the political institutions. It will express itself through the public opinion process, elections, political campaigns, community action programs, and local policies dealing with metropolitan problems. It will be reflected in shifting political coalitions of local culture groups especially in connection with elections.*

*"The scenario for this drama of political behavior has been anticipated in New York City, the great American laboratory of*

*experiment in ethnic relations. The cast of actors in the old industrial centers of the northeast and midwest metropolises such as Pittsburgh, Chicago, Cleveland, Baltimore, are developing into metropolitan electorates whose make-up is roughly as follows: 1/3 white Protestant, 1/3 white Catholic ethnic, 1/6 Black Protestant, 1/6 Jewish and independent.*

*"Each of these four groupings seems to have a major and minor faction — as in New York, the Catholics split between Irish and Italians, or in many cities such as Washington the Blacks split between militants and conservatives. It will be in the political coalitions of these factions that the interaction of the basic segments of the population will operate at the metropolitan level." (Robert Janes, *The Shape and Role of Ethnic Groups in American History: An Overview*. Washington: The Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs, 1970.)*

#### **SUBURBAN POOR:**

The suburban poor are a minority which has received very little attention. They face many of the same problems faced by the urban poor. Indeed, antipoverty officials say, the effort to reduce poverty is more difficult to win in some ways in the suburbs than in the city.

"We're fighting not even a holding action because of the limited resources we get," said Adrian Cabral, executive director of the Economic Opportunity Commission, the antipoverty agency of Nassau County (Long Island), N.Y.

The suburban poor are particularly helpless, he and others note, because the poor lack the population concentration that is the basis of political power. They are victimized by a lack of low-cost housing, isolated by inadequate public transportation, and often scorned by their unsympathetic and more affluent neighbors.

Suburban antipoverty workers and some public officials complain that too many suburbanites still do not acknowledge the poverty that festers among them.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Poverty affects many millions of Americans in many different ways. If the location of poverty is investigated, however, some idea of the effects of poverty may be seen.

## U.S. POVERTY

### *Urban Areas*

*Population:*

73.5% of total U.S. population.  
65% of all urban people are white.  
Receive large exodus from rural areas.  
Mass exodus over recent years from inner city to suburbs.

*Health:*

Most poor do not have personal health insurance.  
Much sickness; can't afford private doctors, dentists.  
Some poor do have access to good free clinics in cities.  
Large number of drug addicts, alcoholics.

*Education:*

High rate of dropouts.  
Quality of education often poor in inner cities.  
Inner-city schools often overcrowded.  
Doesn't usually prepare for work.

*Social:*

In inner cities and suburbs, often tension between minority groups or between minority groups and whites.  
High crime rate.  
High rate of violence.

*Wages:*

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Under \$2,000 yearly | 4.2%  |
| Under \$4,000 yearly | 13.2% |

*Employment:*

Large number of unemployed or underemployed, particularly in inner city and particularly among minority groups.  
Many unable to work due to illness.

*Housing:*

1960 Census - 14% of all dwellings unsafe, poor, or lacking screens; bad plumbing; no central heating; insect-borne disease.\*

### *Rural Areas*

*Population:*

Decreasing due to less need for farmers and lack of opportunity.  
85% of all rural people are white.  
1 out of 3 poor Blacks are in the South.  
10 million exited from rural areas between 1950-1960.

*Health:*

Due to relative isolation of location, hospitals are poorly staffed, understaffed, poorly equipped (in most places).  
Highest maternal death rate in nation.  
Highest rate of injury.  
Highest rate of accidental death.  
Lowest percentage of health insurance.

*Education:*

Often low level, especially in deep South.  
High rate of dropouts.  
Dropouts drop out sooner than in the cities.  
Fewer go to college.  
Doesn't deal with individual problems.

*Social:*

Often tension between minority groups and between whites and minority groups

*Wages:*

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Under \$2,000 yearly | 12.1% |
| Under \$4,000 yearly | 28.7% |

*Employment:*

Large number of unemployed and underemployed; rate is highest among minority groups, such as Blacks and Chicanos.  
Many unable to work due to physical handicaps and ill health.

*Housing:*

1960 Census - 27% of housing unsafe and beyond repair.\*

\*All other figures based on Census Bureau 1970 figures.

## RESPONSE TO POVERTY:

### A. General Discussion Guide:

General discussion of the problem according to the following guide:

1. What does it mean to say that one should take a job with a purpose?
2. Do you think young people are concerned with their own *personal purpose*? If so, how?
3. What do you think of the idea that everyone should give at least several hours a week to working with those who lack opportunity? Could you do this as a high school student, or would this be asking too much?
4. As an informed citizen, what could you do for society as a teacher, lawyer, doctor, sociologist, senator, mayor, voter, parent, farmer, day laborer, office worker, maintenance worker? Be specific. State what your preparation for this service should be *now* in high school.
5. Do you think high school students desire to influence society? Do *you*?
6. Give examples of people who have definite needs due to poverty: broken homes, neglected children, illness, self-image, lack of enthusiasm for life, alcoholism, drugs, fear, crime. Take these examples from the actual studies you have made of poverty in this module or in the books you read related to this module.
7. What are the specific needs of the poor in your community? Who or what is responsible for such a lack of opportunity in our affluent society? Do you and your companions have any obligations toward these people suffering from poverty? Is their condition futile?
8. What can you *do* for the poor of your neighborhood? What do you think the poor can do for *you*? *More importantly:*
  - a. What do the poor of your area see as their own needs?
  - b. How could the poor in your community lead themselves?
9. What changes will urban renewal bring in your area? Will it lessen the suffering of the poor?
10. What changes would take place in society if the schools were open 20 hours a day? What kinds of adult education could help lessen the suffering of the poor?
11. What are your feelings about: ex-convicts, mental retardates, adopted children, defective persons? Do they *need* you? Do you need *them*?

(The above discussion areas are adapted from Sister Michael Doherty, IHM, *Dynamic Approaches to Teaching High School Religion*. New York: Alba House, p. 94; reprinted with permission of the publisher.)

B. As one studies the *poverty syndrome*, one becomes acutely aware of a universal situation. The poor have not been allowed to determine their own destiny. Consequently, they are lacking in leadership in just about every area of life. Others are constantly *showing* them the way, when they want to "go it on their own."

Blacks especially have rebelled against this injustice. On every front they have tried and are trying to reverse this situation. However, many whites and ethnics in poverty have not yet seen the importance of self-determination. And in those instances where they know its value, they feel powerless to accomplish it.

If *any* group is to exert leadership, it must plan for this. It seems that educational institutions hold a unique position for the solution of this dilemma. They have the means of training for leadership in the public sector. But they must not train just their *own*. They must reach those in the community who have a peculiar need for such training.

Once the commitment to training for leadership is made, there will be some basic paths to follow. First, there must be training in basic leadership techniques, i.e., in the methods of contacting people and organizations, of establishing good public relations, and of learning how to conduct effective conferences, forums, institutes, and workshops. Then, either during or after the period of training, the students should be given opportunities to exercise their new knowledge. For example, the students could conduct conferences and workshops among the youths of their community. These workshops could have the aim of bringing various sectors of the community together to discuss their common problems and to set common goals. The following problem areas will most likely come under consideration:

**Health** — drugs, alcoholism, pre- and post-natal care, proper nutrition, health insurance, and public clinics.

**Education** — the quality of schools, teachers, and curriculum; the problem of dropouts.

**Employment** — kinds of jobs, wages, laws against discrimination in hiring.

What is the *function* of the educational institution in all of this? The schools must provide trained personnel, manpower, physical and educational resources. The effort of the school would be not to direct the poor, but to aid the poor in every way possible in their attempt to direct themselves.

**Activity:**

Are there any programs operating in your area designed to train members of the poor community in the techniques of leadership and community organization? If there is such a program, have members of the class visit the place and study the program. Who runs the program? Who participates in the program — Blacks, Puerto Ricans, white ethnics, a mixed group?



What does the actual training consist of — classroom work; practical experience, a combination of the two? Does a particular philosophy seem to underlie the program? If so, what is it? Finally, is the program effectively performing its primary function of training the poor to govern and represent themselves?

If only a small group of students have visited and studied the training program, have those students prepare a full report for the rest of the class.

If such a program does not exist in your area, have the students investigate published reports on such programs in other areas. In particular, have the students concentrate on how these programs are structured.

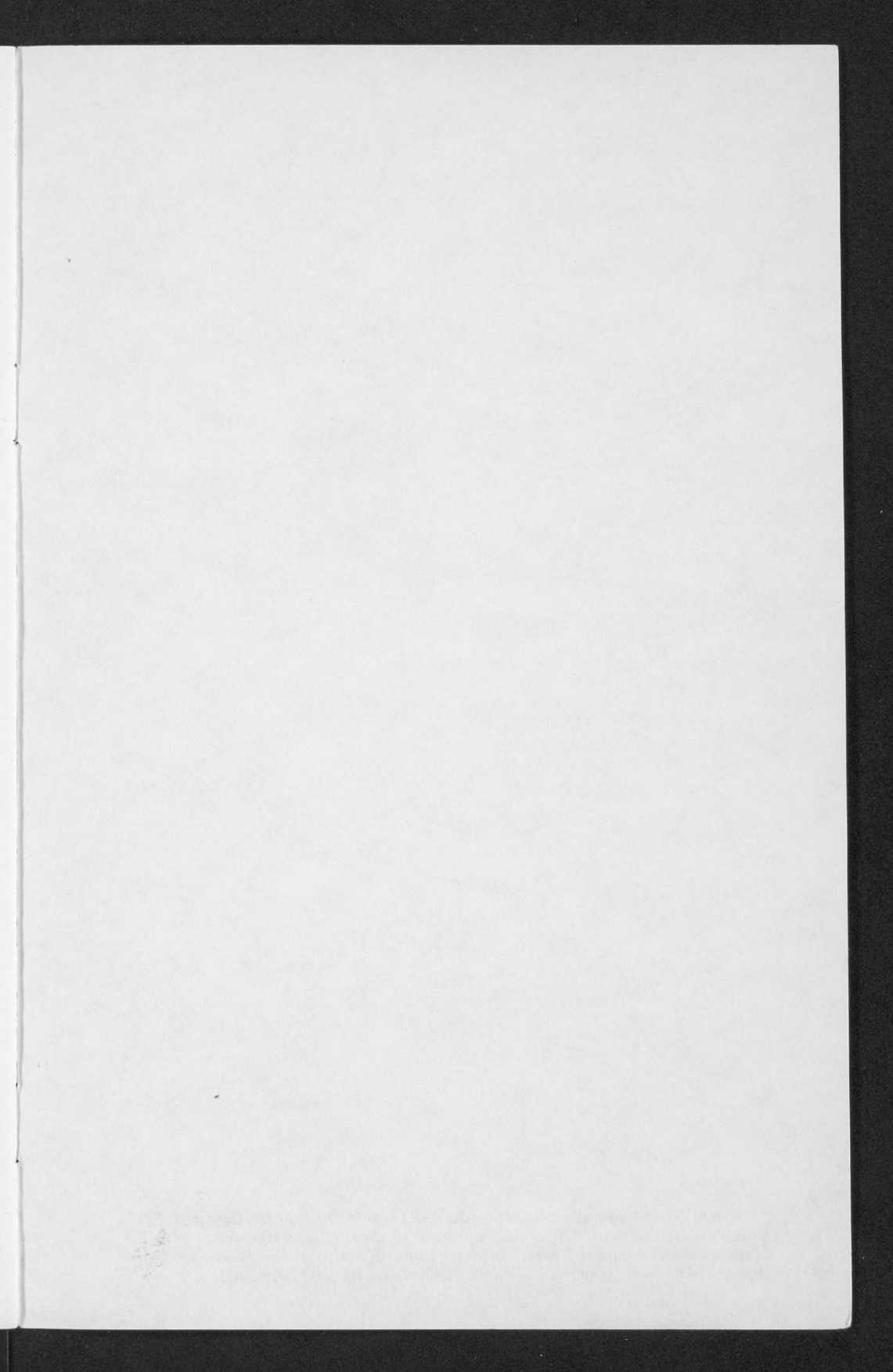
C. Map your local community. Where is poverty in your area? What ethnic and/or racial groups live in your poverty areas?

D. A student discussion of the following topic may bring the question of the “where” of poverty into focus: *Integration or Separation?*

**Study Questions:**

1. Is the cultural identity of a subgroup an important phenomena? Is it something desirable?
2. How has the isolation of subcultures such as the Appalachian mountain people, the American Indian, the Black American, the Italian American contributed to a sense of cultural solidarity?
3. Describe the effect of leaving a subculture and of entering the “main stream” of American life.
  - a. If you come from a family which has roots in an ethnic or racial culture and which has been integrated into “American” culture, investigate that process of integration. What are the characteristics which are associated with your subculture? How many of these are a part of your personality?
  - b. Investigate the history of an ethnic group which has been absorbed into American life, e.g., the Irish Americans.
  - c. Investigate the problem of maintaining the tribal culture of the American Indian while “bringing the Indian into the mainstream of American life.”
4. If the current shift in population continues (the poor to the cities and the rich to the suburbs), the effect on the American cities will be disastrous. Construct an ideal city.





Prepared by the educational staff of the Campaign for Human Development, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, in conjunction with the Curriculum Development Center, Catholic University of America. Design by Irving Miller of New York; composition by NC Publications, Inc., of Washington.