

Help the Neediest This Christmas

76 P is a young mother with two children, one of whom is a deaf-mute. She is presently cut off from public assistance and her rent and utility bills are in arrears. Her sole income is from SSI for the deaf child.

77 The Ms are a young, moderately retarded couple with a year-old baby. As a result of their limitations, jobs are not readily available and their income is such that it is a daily struggle to make ends meet. They live in a house that has no heat in the upstairs bedrooms.

78 X and her two children have recently fled to Rochester from extreme marital difficulties. She is looking for employment and child care. The family has moved, but into an unfurnished apartment and is in severe need of the most basic of household necessities.

79 Although M is disabled, he is the sole support for his severely retarded adult daughter. They have been in dire financial straits because of the termination of M's SSI. Their home is minimally furnished and there are no funds even for clothing. Their food is supplied by an emergency food shelf.

80 The Js have six children. J himself is out of town because of his work and therefore has to support two households. Recently, some of the children began to steal because there wasn't enough money in the house. These children have been put into a youthful offender institution. Another child left the house because he was unable to find work and felt himself a financial drain.

81 L has six children. The family has a history of being on public assistance and is constantly in need. L is not stable and financial problems get the best of her. A caseworker worries whether she will have a breakdown. The children are lax in schoolwork and receive little encouragement in their studies.

82 D is in his middle 40s and has lived for more than a decade in a substandard shack in a rural area. He is a seasonal farmworker. He is ineligible for unemployment and is frequently without income or food.

83 H, a young woman in a rural area, has recently separated from her husband. Her childhood environment was poor since alcoholism was prevalent in the family. Even now her family and friends mock her for trying to make it on her own. She is attending school now in order to find employment to support herself.

84 B is a senior citizen who has sole responsibility for his teenage son. He is a veteran and suffers from numerous ailments which limit his employment possibilities.



This version of the popular Renaissance theme, *The Adoration of the Magi*, was painted by Florentine artist Sandro Botticelli. The original

is in the collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. (RNS)

85 C lives with her husband and five children. This year is the third in a row the family has moved because her husband's wages are inadequate to meet the rent, utilities, food, and heating bills. None of the children are old enough to work.

86 R lives with her two children in a rural area of the diocese. She is unemployed for two reasons: she can find no one to care for her children, and she is unskilled. She stretches her public assistance budget as best she can, but that income goes entirely for food, utilities and doctor bills.

87 The Gs have full responsibility over their two grandchildren now the parents have separated. The Gs are on a fixed income and feeding and clothing the babies has placed an extraordinary strain on an already strained budget.

88 M is alone with three young children and a grandchild to raise. She receives a small SSI check for herself and partial welfare for the children, but her budget can include no special expenses for a holiday celebration.

89 B is the handicapped mother of three children. She is unable to work — or even get around. The family is living on a fixed income which is barely sufficient to meet the household needs much less cover holiday expenses.

90 M has been raising his two teenage sons for the past four years on a fixed income. He suffers from a serious medical problem, constantly requiring a doctor's care for the past eight years. The family has no funds for anything but survival.

91 P is a middleaged woman on a fixed income. She supports her four high schoolers on that income and pays for the bills from her frequent hospitalizations.

92 W is partially responsible for her two grandchildren. She is in poor health and is living on SSI. Such an income makes it impossible to pay for anything but the most basic needs of her family.

93 L is a teenager and the only one working in a family of his parents and four siblings. The income from his job is insufficient to purchase clothing and furniture which the family needs.



94 A has five neglected grandchildren whom she has cared for nearly all their lives. Her utilities bills are in arrears, and she and her family live in tenement housing. She is unable to stretch her fixed income to pay for anything other than the basic necessities.

95 The Ts are multi-handicapped grandparents faced with severe diabetes and arthritis. T is confined to a hospital-type bed. The two need special foods for themselves. In addition, they are caring for their eight-year-old grandson, all on a fixed income.

96 H is epileptic. She lives in an extremely small apartment with her two children. The income is so severely limited that even the thought of more than the basic necessities is beyond her.

97 O is in her 70s, has no family and is almost completely blind. She lives in a poor neighborhood and has been robbed several times. Although she is proud of her independence, her limited income is such that even that may be taken from her.

98 N is the single parent of an 8-year-old girl. Recently the child had to be placed in a residential home, an event which caused N much anxiety. The family income is so limited that, even with her child home for the holidays, it is doubtful there will be a celebration.

99 The Ms are in their early 60s. Mrs. M's health is poor and Mr. M, though employed, does not earn much. They have no children or family to help them face the fears and insecurities about the future.

100 S is the mother of six children. She recently moved to Rochester and has been living with an aunt. Because of the ages of her children, she is unable to find work and has had to apply for public assistance. On her limited income, she finds herself unable to locate decent housing for her family away from the aunt's home.



Praying Hands, an engraving by Albrecht Dürer.