

Poor People

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saying that such massive disparity violates the "minimum standard of distributive justice" demanded by Catholic social teaching.

The poorest fifth of the U.S. population received only 4 percent of the total personal income in the country in 1982, and the poorest two fifths got only 13 percent, the draft says. The richest fifth got 49 percent of the total income that year, it says.

It adds that the disparity is even more evident if ownership of wealth is used as a measure: the bottom half of American families hold only 4 percent of the net wealth in the nation, while the top 1 percent own 20 percent and the top 4 percent own 43 percent.

The draft calls for tax reforms that reduce or eliminate tax burdens on the poor, complaining that recent tax reforms have done exactly the opposite, increasing the burden on the poor while reducing it for the rich.

The draft also calls for programs and policies that stimulate self-help programs among the poor, stressing that small, locally based programs are most effective and suggesting that government assistance should come mainly through partnerships with the private sector.

It also urges a commitment to improved education among the poor as an essential basis for moving out of poverty. It seeks improved child care assistance and services by both government and employers, to reduce the obstacles to employment of parents with small children.

The draft calls public welfare "the only economic safety net" for millions of poor. It urges "major reform" to unify the system and rid it of many "punitive" and "humiliating" aspects.

It also calls for far greater public understanding of the real facts about poverty and welfare. "In few areas is misinformation and misrepresentation as rampant as in discussions of welfare," it comments.

It sharply challenges American attitudes toward welfare, noting that "the middle classes receive far more from the federal government than do the poor" through policies ranging from interest and real estate tax deductions to veterans' allowances, college loans and farm price supports.

Neediest Cases

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8 T is a 15-year-old mother who has spent the last few years living from relative to relative and friend to friend. Her immediate family gives little support and no longer will allow her to live at home. T has little extra money to buy clothes for herself or her child. She would like to return to school to finish her education and get off public assistance.

9 The Ts are a young Hispanic couple with three children who depend on welfare to raise their family. Mrs. T is pregnant and in great need of baby items for her infant and her future infant. She tries very hard to provide adequate living arrangements but can't provide any extras for the family.

10 B is 80, has terminal cancer, and lives alone in a sparsely furnished apartment. He tries to get out and keep busy as much as possible to keep his mind off his illness. When he can't, he stays home and listens to the radio. He is growing weaker and weaker. He doesn't own a TV because he can't afford to buy one.

11 G is elderly and very poor. She pays her bills before she buys herself food. Her income is so limited that the prospect of fuel costs this winter will create severe problems.

12 Y, 85, is recuperating from a heart attack for which he had to be hospitalized. He has only Medicare insurance because he cannot afford any other health insurance. The outstanding bills are approximately \$800. His case has been described as one which truly "falls between the bureaucratic cracks."

13 Mrs. F is an elderly woman whose husband just died in a nursing home. She is not receiving Social Security checks because they are being adjusted. She has been warned of shut-off by the local utility company

for back bills. Medical bills from her husband's final illness are still being paid. She is very depressed.

14 A is 60, indigent, and unable to work because of disability. She did not qualify, however, for disability benefits. She is without family. She is malnourished.

15 The Hs are elderly and disabled. Paying their bills and meeting their everyday living expenses have become increasingly more difficult because of their small fixed income. Many months they go hungry and in need. Inadequate clothing and heat cause a great deal of their suffering during the winter season.

16 L is a widow living alone in a run-down apartment. She has difficulty making ends meet on her Social Security.

17 V owns her own home. It is a large old house and is not well insulated. She cannot afford to heat the building in winter.

18 The Rs live in the inner-city with their eight young children. The family's home is in need of repair and winterization. However, the family's income is inadequate to meet these needs. Trying to meet their food and clothing costs takes up much of their income.

19 S lives with her five children in a run-down apartment. The apartment is not insulated and becomes quite cold during winter. Her income barely covers her rent.

20 P has five young children. She is also seven months pregnant, and her husband recently abandoned her. She is in great financial need.

21 R is a mother of two small girls and expecting another child in

Among major recommendations the draft makes for welfare reform are:

- Sufficient funding to give recipients "decent support" and cover all basic needs.
- National eligibility standards and minimum benefit levels, with gradual consolidation of current programs into a unified system.
- Broader coverage for poor two-parent families to assure that welfare programs aim at strengthening rather than weakening the family.
- Programs designed to encourage rather than penalize gainful employment, but at the same time to recognize the value of work in the home, particularly in caring for children and other dependents.
- Participation of the poor in designing welfare programs.
- Elimination of program aspects that isolate or stigmatize the poor, such as replacing food stamps or vouchers with cash grants.
- Respect for the poor in the administration of programs.

It also calls for "a moratorium on rhetoric about 'welfare cheaters' and on stereotypes of welfare recipients."

The draft comments: "It is hard enough to be poor in this country without having to bear the slurs of the ill-informed or the taunts of the prejudiced. Our welfare system has many flaws, but if it errs in any direction it is in doing too little rather than too much for the needy."

'Messiah' Scheduled

The Rochester Oratorio Society will celebrate the start of its 40th anniversary year with a performance of Handel's "Messiah" at 8 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 2, in the Eastman Theatre.

The concert will feature the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and four soloists -- Andrea Matthews, soprano; Gwendolyn Lentz, mezzo-

soprano; Glenn Siebert, tenor, and Richard Crist, bass.

The society was founded in December 1945. Its first concert was a performance of "Messiah," and the group has built a tradition of performing this work in December most years. It is an independent choral society.

Diocese Thanked for Peter's Pence

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has received a note of gratitude from Archbishop Pio Laghi, the apostolic nuncio, for the \$77,355.96 contributed by Rochester diocesan to the 1983 Peter's Pence collection.

The archbishop thanked Rochester with a "word of appreciation in the name of the Holy Father for this valuable assistance. In addition to sharing in the material responsibilities facing Pope John Paul II, this expression of generosity by your people reveals their deep awareness of the bonds of faith, worship and love which they share with the Universal Church and God's people, especially the poor throughout the world."

Lay Carmelites

The regular monthly meeting of the Rochester Lay Carmelites will begin 2:45 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 2 at St. Ann's Home. The program includes recitation of the rosary, Mass and a community meeting. Visitors are welcome.

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AT YOUR PARISH

St. Ambrose

Parishioners at St. Ambrose Church were alerted last week to the need for booster chairs and high chairs at St. Martin's Place Soup Kitchen at Mount Carmel Church. Prospective donors are asked to call Joanne Bailliet, 288-2715.

Precious Blood

A special prayer service will open the Most Precious Blood Church Advent program, 7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 3. On the following two Mondays, Sister Margaret Mary Mattel RSM will address the topic of peace within ourselves. The public is invited to the events.

St. Michael

Newark — A Happy Holiday Bazaar will be held 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1 in St. Michael's School gymnasium.

St. Philip Neri

The annual Christmas party of St. Philip Neri's Women's Club will be held 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 11 at the Colonial Inn. Participants are asked to bring a new Christmas tree ornament to exchange and \$1 for the needy. Tickets are available by calling the rectory, 482-2400, before Dec. 1. Chairman is Msgr. John Duffy. Santa Meloni and her committee are in charge of the program.

Guardian Angels

Henrietta — The Rosary Society and the human development committee of Guardian Angels Parish will sponsor an Advent Evening of Prayer for Peace, 7:30-9 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 4 at the church. The evening will include recitation of the rosary and an address on the spirituality of peace-making by James Lund, social ministry education and training coordinator for the diocese.

Lady of Lourdes

Elmira — The Rosary Altar Society of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish will host a Christmas party for all women of the parish Dec. 11 at the Downtown Holiday Inn. Tickets are \$8.

St. Margaret Mary

The Home School Association of St. Margaret Mary Parish will hold its annual craft and antique sale, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Dec. 1 in the auditorium and cafeteria. St. Pius

St. Pius — The Altar and Rosary Society of St. Pius Church will hold its annual Christmas Bazaar 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. in the basement of the church.

Mother of Sorrows

Mother of Sorrows Parish has invited all parents to bring their children to a finger-printing clinic of the Rochester Police Department, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 2 in the parish hall below the church.

Blessed Sacrament


A First Friday Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for an end to abortion, for world peace, and in thanksgiving for blessings, will be celebrated 7:30 p.m., Dec. 7 at Blessed Sacrament Church. Rosary will be recited at 7:15 p.m.

St. John Rochester

Fairport — A "Touch of Country" Bazaar will be held 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 30 in the parish hall of St. John of Rochester Church. Lunch will be served 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The facility is accessible to the handicapped.

St. Mary

Bath — St. Mary's Church will hold its annual Christmas Bazaar, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8, in the school hall.



You are cordially invited to share the Christmas spirit at the St. John Fisher College Glee Club

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Friday Evening
December 7, 1984 — 8:15 p.m.

Kearney Auditorium
St. John Fisher College
3690 East Avenue

Free and Open to the Public