

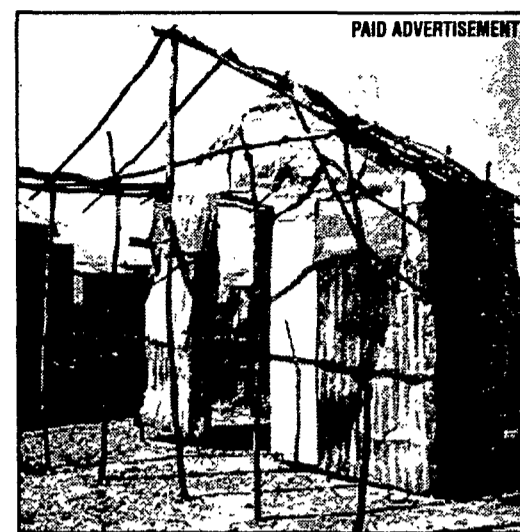
# Caribbean Bishop Beggars For Help To Provide Housing for the Destitute Poor

The needs of the poor weigh heavily on Bishop Paul Boyle's heart. As the spiritual leader for Mandeville, Jamaica, he shepherds a suffering flock - fathers stripped of their dignity by poverty, mothers struggling to care for their malnourished infants and children who are hardened by the adversities of their lives.

"And too often, I find that homelessness is at the heart of the poor's misery," Bishop Boyle explained. "When a family loses its home, it often spirals down into deeper and deeper levels of poverty. These people would be lost if it wasn't for the help of the church and organizations like Food For The Poor."

By partnering with Food For The Poor and making use of its home building program, Bishop Boyle has constructed basic housing for the poorest of the poor in his Diocese. With this helping hand, many families are recovering their dignity and discovering a new sense of hope in their lives. They are experiencing Christ's mercy in a direct and meaningful way.

"A home gives a poor family security and stability. It allows them to get back on their feet again. I beg every American



Thousands of men, women and children are desperately searching for simple shelter after losing their homes and livelihood in a fire or hurricane. For now, their homes are often makeshift structures with walls of cardboard, rusty tin sheets and plastic that can blow down easily in a simple thunderstorm. Food For The Poor's home building program replaces these patchwork shacks with sturdy lumber homes.

Catholic who wants to help the poor to consider the value of Food For The Poor's building program. I know firsthand - it makes a real difference in the lives of the poor," he said.

Building homes through Food For The Poor is simple and cost effective. Each \$2,000 contribution to the home building program allows Food For The

Poor to construct a home for a poor family on behalf of a mentoring priest or pastor like Bishop Boyle.

"I am deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to build a home in my diocese," Bishop Boyle said.

"In fact, on behalf of the many pastors and priests who serve the poor in the Caribbean, I want to

thank everyone who has contributed to build a home through Food For The Poor. Know that we are all deeply grateful for your support," Bishop Boyle said. "The gift you give is a powerful testimony to the love and mercy of Christ among the poor. May God richly bless you for the sacrifice you have made."

## "Building Miracles"

### Unique Program Offers Tangible Way To Help the Poorest of the Poor

Velma Brown stepped out of her patchwork tin shack and faced the brightening dawn sky. It had rained again during the night, and her tears had mingled with the steady drips from the leaking roof. They were tears for her three young sons and the pain they were being forced to endure.

"The littlest one - that is Richard - said 'Mommy, when can we come out of this house and go into a pretty house?' And I said, 'One day, one day, Father God will take you out,'" Velma Brown said, emotionally relating her struggle. "I went outside, turned my face to where the sun was coming from, lifted my hands up to God and cried, 'Touch someone's heart to come and help me.'"

What happened next, Velma firmly believes, was a miracle. Food For The Poor discovered the Jamaican woman's plight and offered her help through the ministry's housing program. An American Catholic - a person Velma had never met - was making a gift to build her and her family a new home.

Within a few months she moved into a sturdy, wooden house - a safe, dry home for her family. That morning, during a prayer of thanksgiving, she



broke into tears, joyful for God's blessing and grateful to the American benefactor who had sponsored her home.

"I hear it often from the families we help; these houses are an answer to prayer. They are a miracle of God," explained Robin Mahfood, President of Food For The Poor. "And the benefactors who sponsor the homes realize this too. They are responding to God's blessings in their own lives by embracing this opportunity to help someone else - someone in desperate need. They are God's tools of mercy in the modern world."

"Many of the families being helped can trace their poverty back two or three generations," Mahfood said. "That's why providing these families with housing is so crucial. It breaks the cycle of poverty that has stolen their hope. It gives them a chance to rebuild their lives."

Those who donate to the home building program in Jamaica also enjoy a unique sense of purpose and accomplishment, Mahfood said. They see a tangible outcome of the gift they've given. To involve as many people as possible, Food For The Poor has created a variety of ways for donors to contribute. Homes can be built with a single gift of \$2,000. Smaller gifts can also be combined with those of other benefactors to sponsor a single home. These "miracle teams" are great for church groups, schools and clubs.

"The joy of giving in Christ's name is powerful. One man called to say his children wanted to give from their piggy

banks to help. That blessed gift, combined with those of others like them, built a house. It had a very tangible result - one those children can understand and appreciate," he said. "The power of combined Christian charity is fantastic."

Once a gift is received, Food For The Poor works through local clergy who locate the most needy people in their communities. Lumber and supplies are then purchased and shipped to the area of need. When it arrives, this "house kit" is assembled by local carpenters - if possible with help from the recipient and church volunteers. "Thanks to the wonderful response we've had from American Catholics, the home building program has been able to provide hundreds of homes to the poorest of the poor in Haiti and Jamaica," Mahfood said. "You can't imagine the difference these houses make to the families who receive them. It gives them a stable foundation to rebuild their lives. It returns their dignity and gives them a new sense of hope. It's a uniquely direct and meaningful form of charity."

## How To Help

To make a tax-deductible donation to Food For The Poor to help build homes, please send your check to Food For The Poor, Dept. # 28601, 550 SW 12th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442. You may also make a donation by logging onto [www.foodforthe poor.org](http://www.foodforthe poor.org).

