

CARING FOR THOSE IN NEED

GRADES 4-6- Lesson II

Goal:

Students will be encouraged to explore the meaning of poverty here in the United States as well as around the world. What does poverty look like? Why is help for the poor central to Jesus' message?

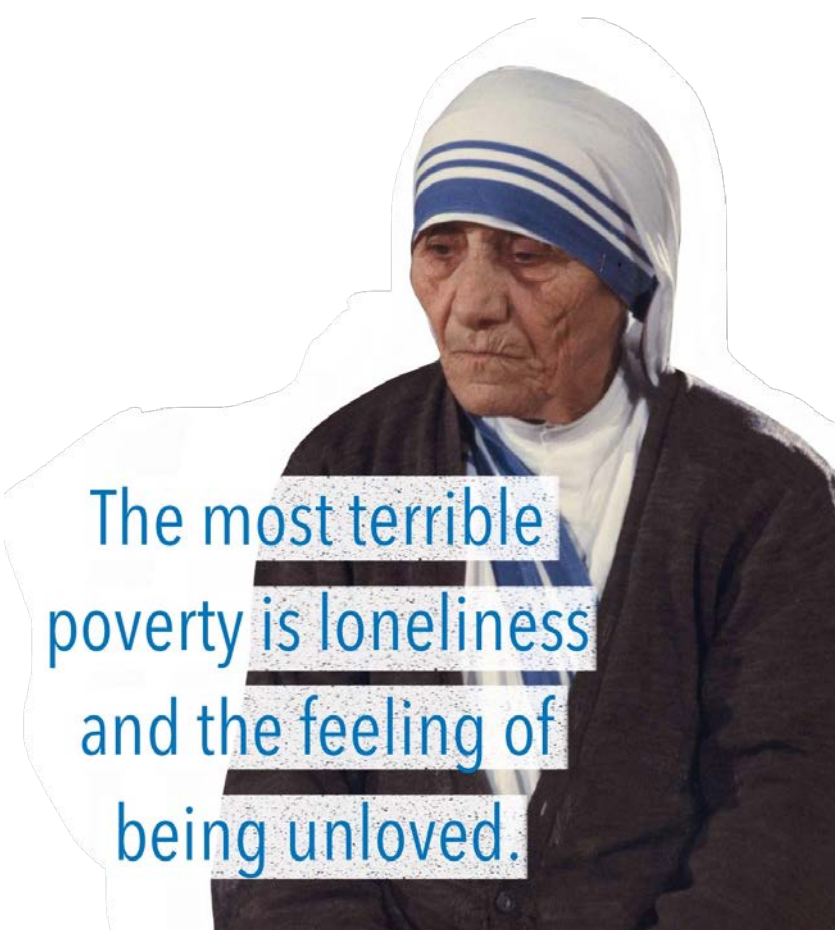
Lesson:

Students will explore what is meant by poverty. They will see how Jesus wants them to treat those who are poor with dignity, care, generosity, and love. They will discuss what poverty looks like in the world around them (physical and spiritual). As Mother Teresa says, people can be just as hungry for love as they are for bread.

Bible

Story:

Take out bibles and popcorn read [Luke 10:25-37](#).



The most terrible
poverty is loneliness
and the feeling of
being unloved.

Discussion:

- Throughout the Bible, we hear Jesus talk about his great love for the poor. He means not only people who don't have anything to eat but also people who are lonely (poor in spirit).
- Why does he spend so much time talking about these people? It is because people who are poor are open to receiving from others—there is a humility to their presence that invites us to be generous and merciful and share with them what we have. Jesus wants all of us to be open to giving and receiving help.
- The Good Samaritan had no connection to the wounded man but he spent time and money taking care of him anyways. God cares about the wounded man and wants him to be helped but He wants us to be agents of His love in the world. We are called to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves, so when we see someone in need (physically or spiritually) we should treat them with the dignity and care they deserve as fellow children of God.
- What are different ways of being a Good Samaritan to people? We can give material things like food, water, or shelter, but many people need immaterial things like our attention and time. Many times people in material or spiritual poverty need someone to show them their dignity through a smile and intentional care that stems from a love of the person and not merely fulfilling a duty to serve the poor.

Watch:

[Two feet of Love in Action / Los dos pies del amor en acción](#) – a bilingual video about social justice

[Meet Mary](#) – a video about a grassroots program to help people break out of the cycle of poverty

- What are some of the concerns that Mary has about her neighborhood?
- What does she do to try to make things better?

Activity:

[Stack the Deck Illustration](#) or [Take a Step Illustration](#)

- These activities help students understand how growing up with the disadvantages make it challenging for a person to break out of the cycle of poverty and understand the root causes of poverty.

[Mother Teresa on Spiritual Poverty](#)

- Can someone be poor without lacking material things?
- How can poverty of love affect people?

- Can someone be poor from not knowing the love of Jesus? Many people don't know that there is poverty in not knowing the love of Christ.
- How can we make a difference with people who are lacking love or don't know Jesus?
- What do you see most? Practical, extreme, or spiritual poverty?

Activity/Prayer:

Ask students to close their eyes (place hands palm up in front of them if comfortable) and then read out loud slowly and prayerfully, *beginning in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:*

- “Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world.
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.
Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

~ Teresa of Ávila

Ask these series of questions (eyes still closed) and pause giving students time to stop and consider each question.

- How do you use your body to interact with other children of God? Do you use it kindly by helping others or giving hugs? Or do you use your body to hurt others by saying mean things or causing physical harm to friends or family? How can you use your body to honor God and care for others?
- How do you use your eyes to see the world around you? Do you view every person as a child of God or do you use your eyes to look at others with hate? Do you use your eyes to judge people or do you use them to find ways to help those in need? How can you use your eyes to honor God and care for others?
- How do you use your feet to interact with the world God created? Do you use them for kicking and stomping or for finding others to help? Do you use your feet to walk to mass and school or for disobeying mom or dad when they ask you for help? How can you use your feet to honor God and care for others?

- How do you use your hands to work with the world around you? Do you use them for hitting and slamming doors or giving a helping hand? Do you use them to build things up or break them down? How can you use your hands to honor God and care for others?

Ask students to repeat after you:

- Jesus, help my eyes to look with Your compassion on the world.
- Jesus, help my feet to walk to do good for You.
- Jesus, help my hands to bless the world through You.
- Jesus, help me to love others through my body as You wish them to be loved.
- *Amen. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*