

# U. S. Poverty Quiz:

## Who Are the Poor Among Us?

**Directions:** Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. See how much knowledge you have regarding some basic aspects of poverty in the United States.

**Fill in the Blank:**

1. The U.S. Government counts any family of four making \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or less as being in poverty.
2. 20.5 million Americans live in extreme poverty. This means their family’s cash income is less than half of the poverty line, or less than about \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a year for a family of four.
3. The number of people in poverty in 2011 is the largest number in the past \_\_\_\_ years.
4. One in \_\_\_\_\_ children in the U.S. live in poverty. Almost \_\_\_\_\_ of these children live in extreme poverty.
5. The U.S. poverty rate is now \_\_\_\_\_ among the developed nations of the world.
6. More than \_\_\_\_\_ million Americans have now qualified for Medicaid (health care for the impoverished).
7. The number of Americans receiving food stamps in 2011 is \_\_\_\_\_.

**True or False**

- \_\_\_\_ 8. In 2011 in the U.S., 43.6 million people were poor.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Over 12% of our citizens were at or below the nation’s official poverty income in 2011.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. The Federal Minimum Wage Act ensures that all working people make an adequate income.
- \_\_\_\_ 11. The number of the working poor, people with jobs but still in poverty, is rising.
- \_\_\_\_ 12. Small children without adequate nutritional food can develop learning problems that last a lifetime.
- \_\_\_\_ 13. Ten million low-income households have some type of housing problem.
- \_\_\_\_ 14. The number of people without health insurance increased to over 5 million in 2011.
- \_\_\_\_ 15. The U.S. Food Stamp program (SNAP) provides food aid; 75% of all participants are families with children.
- \_\_\_\_ 16. The number of Americans on SNAP food stamps has set a new all-time me record.
- \_\_\_\_ 17. The National School Lunch Program now reaches over 50 million children.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. As Catholics, we are challenged to work to change the structures and systems that create and sustain poverty.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. Catholic Social Teaching promotes a special concern and option for the poor.

## Answers

1. \$22,350 for a family of four.
2. \$11,000 for a family of four.
3. 15.1 of Americans live in poverty in 2011, the highest in the past 52 years.
4. One in every 5 children live in poverty, which is 22% of all children; almost 50%, or 7 million, live in extreme poverty.
5. The U.S. Poverty rate is now the third worst among developed nations.
6. 50 million.
7. 46 million.
8. False. In 2011, 46.2 million people were poor, up from 44.4 million in 2009.
9. False. Over 15.1% or 46.2 million people were at or below poverty level in 2011.
10. False. The Federal Minimum Wage is \$7.25, which is \$15,080 in yearly income.
11. True. In 2010, 22% of all jobs provided income below the poverty line.
12. True. 5 to 10% of American children have been impacted by a lack of adequate nutritional food.
13. False. 16 million is the 2010 figure; 95 million people experience housing problems such as: paying more than half of their income for housing, and/or living in overcrowded conditions; endure poor housing quality; lack hot water, electricity or other necessities for decent living.
14. True.
15. True. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food stamps to citizens that qualify.
16. True. As of 2011, 45.8 million people received food stamps.
17. True. The U.S. government funds The National School Lunch Program to feed millions of children.
18. True. As Catholics, we are called to change policies, systems and structures that create and sustain poverty.
19. True: **“While the common good embraces all, those who are weak, vulnerable, and most in need deserve preferential concern. A basic moral test for our society is how we treat the most vulnerable in our midst” (#50)** from *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2007

Updated 2012; sources: U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Government agencies; Children’s Defense Fund

