

Chaplain's Bulletin November 2, 2025



Dear Folks,

There is serious concern that many things that are meant to help the poor are actually keeping them trapped in poverty. I've been told that these are hard to change because many people make money helping the poor to stay poor.

The books *"Toxic Charity"* by Robert D. Lupton and *"When Helping Hurts"* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert and the documentaries at Povertycure.org and Povertyinc.org can shed some light on the disparity between good intentions and good results.

In the Greenville and Belding area we have programs that are worth looking at. IM Kids Third Meal makes portable meals for children in food insecure situations to have something to eat in the evening. I'm not an educator, but even I know that children go through different stages of development, including their brains, at certain ages, and if they don't have adequate nutrition during those times that development does not happen and can't be made up for later. Children must never go unfed. Some will say that the parents should be doing this and I agree, but I don't know all their situations, and I'm not sure how to make it happen. One thing I'm not willing to do is let children go unfed to incentivize the parents to solve the problem.

Have Mercy helps the homeless to look for work and to find a stable home. They celebrate every time someone "graduates."

Alpha Family Center and the Walking with Moms in Need ministry help families during pregnancy and when their children are little. This is a pivotal and especially vulnerable time for them, and so what they do is valuable beyond imagining.

Habitat for Humanity engages people and gives an assist as they work to better their own situation. It is known to make a lasting and profound difference in people's lives, so they can move from squalor to flourishing.

Many churches have food pantries and make meals for people in the community, and these can help people through difficult times (eating has become an expensive hobby).

All these and other programs could use support, including financial and volunteers. Might God be calling us to reexamine how we could participate?

For us to answer this challenge, we the Church must grow stronger and sharpen our focus on caring for those in need. The more we do that, the more people may believe the Gospel that we preach with our words. We cannot do it by our own power, of course. Without God's grace we are helpless; with God's grace nothing is impossible. If we want a better world, the first step is falling more deeply in love with Jesus.

Blessings,
Fr. Jim