



The Poor in Our Midst  
Sixth Sunday After Epiphany, Year C

## OVERVIEW

### Focus Text: Luke 6:17-26

Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

### Pastoral Reflection by Jocleen McCall, Religion Instructor, Johnston Community College, Smithfield

Luke, however, presents us with a problem. "Blessed are you who are poor." "Blessed are you who hunger now." "Blessed are you who weep now." "Blessed are you when men hate you." Not a whole lot of comfort in these words for contemporary American Christians, nor is there a large measure of welcome or reassurance. Ninety-nine percent of us are knocked out of the "blessed" group before the first sentence is complete.

### Personal Vignette by Doris Long, Efland, NC

After I was laid off from Nortel in 2001, I knew that my life was going to dramatically change financially. I attended Alamance Community College in Graham in Medical Office Administration in 2002 and 2003. In September 2003, before I finished, I still did not have a job. I prayed and asked God to help me.

### Key Fact

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 (as of July 24, 2009); this equals \$290/week or \$15,080/year for full-time (40 hours) every week of the year. In 2007, 45.6 million or 15.3 percent of Americans did not have health insurance.

Image adapted from original by NC Farmworkers Project, [www.ncproyecto.org](http://www.ncproyecto.org)