

# The Unemployed and the Homeless

**Pray that everyone who is unemployed, homeless,  
or in need may find help.**



Close your eyes and imagine what your life would be like if you didn't have a home. What if you didn't have a bed to sleep in? If you didn't have anywhere to brush your teeth or wash? If your family had no kitchen to cook in? If you had no money to buy food?

These are scary thoughts, but homelessness is a part of life for about three million Americans every year. Those three million people include men, women, and children of all ages who, for some reason, don't have a home. They may sleep in cars, shelters, or campgrounds. Others sleep on the sidewalks.

Many people are homeless because they can't find work, or because the money they make is not enough to pay for what they need. It costs a lot of money to pay for a place to live. In some places, even small apartments cost more than people earn. They also need to buy food, clothes, transportation, and medicine for when they are sick.

This month Pope Benedict is asking us to pray for people who need jobs, for the homeless, and for others in need. The Holy Father is also asking us to be welcoming, helpful, and understanding of the homeless and unemployed. As good Christians, we need to treat those in need as we would treat members of our own family. We are all God's children.

## ***Think about it!***

- What would your life be like if you had no home?
- Why are people homeless?
- What can you do to help the unemployed and the homeless?

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## *How can I help? - Making Care Kits*



Sometimes the homeless and the poor have a hard time getting everyday items they need. These kits are a great way to show that you care while doing something to help others.

You will need a lot of help on this project, but it's a great thing to do as a family!

### How to put together a care kit:

#### Things you'll need:

- Paper lunch bags or gallon-sized Ziploc bags
- Crayons, pens, pencils, and paper
- An assortment of "useful items"

#### Useful items *(list made by the Portland, OR Rescue Mission)*

- Socks
- Toilet paper
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Hand wipes
- Lotion
- Lip balm
- Fast food gift certificates
- Granola bars, boxes of raisins, crackers, and other easy-to-open food items that don't spoil
- Bottle of water
- Soap
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Rain poncho
- Razor/shaving cream
- Gloves
- Hat
- Comb/brush
- Tissues
- Washcloths

1. Look at the list on the left. Where can you find some of the items on the list? Be creative when you look for the things on the list. Maybe your dentist can donate some toothbrushes and toothpaste. Restaurants may be able to donate hand wipes. Hotels might be able to give you some soap, shampoo, and conditioner.
2. Visit the grocery store, dollar store, or drug store. Some of the items can be bought in large packages for very little money. Find some good deals on things you can put in your care kit. Remember, you don't need to find everything on the list to put together a great care kit.
3. If you have paper lunch bags, decorate them with crayons or markers. Write a nice note or draw a picture and put it in the bag.
4. Put one of each item that you bought or found in each bag.
5. Call local groups that help the homeless. Many places can be found in the phone book. You can also call your church for information on area groups. Tell them about your care kits. They will be happy to hand them out to those who need them!