

SUNBEAMS

Being a mother is a noble status, right? Right. So why does it change when you put “unwed” or “welfare” in front of it?

Florynce Kennedy

There’s a group of Americans who are fully employed. They aren’t very well paid or they’re not paid at all. They’re called mothers, and I’ve never heard of a mother who wasn’t a working mother. And that includes the mothers on welfare.

Theresa Funicello

How come it’s a “subsidy” when Pan American Airlines asks the government for a hundred million dollars to keep flying, but when people ask for considerably less to keep going, it is a federal handout?

Russell Baker

The poor have been sent to the front lines of a federal-budget deficit-reduction war that few other groups were drafted to fight.

Marian Wright Edelman

Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn’t commit.

Eli Khamarov

There is something about poverty that smells like death. Dead dreams dropping off the heart like leaves in a dry season and rotting around the feet; impulses smothered too long in the fetid air of underground caves.

Zora Neale Hurston

That the poor are invisible is one of the most important things about them. They are not simply neglected and forgotten, as in the old rhetoric of reform; what is much worse, they are not seen.

Michael Harrington

The last thing people want to see outside the marquee of *Les Misérables*, after they leave their \$250 seats, is the real *misérables*, the children on the sidewalk.

Jonathan Kozol

We who are liberal and progressive know that the poor are our equals in every sense except that of being equal to us.

Lionel Trilling

When a poor man knocks at your door and says, “I’m hungry,” and your first thought is *Why can’t you get a job?*, you’ve invaded his privacy. Why would you need to know why he can’t get a job? He didn’t come to discuss his inabilities or bad habits; he came to discuss his hunger. If you want to do something

about it, feed him.

Rabbi Manis Friedman

Poverty made me feel weak, as if I were coming down with an awful, debilitating, communicable disease — the disease of being without money. Instead of going to the hospital, you went to the poor farm. The difference was, you never got well at the poor farm.

Faith Sullivan

His books having brought in little revenue, Anatole France was still a poor man when he was awarded the cross of the Legion of Honor. His friends sympathized with his plight; one of them suggested that it would have been more generous to have given the writer a cash prize instead of the cross, which served no useful purpose. “Oh, I wouldn’t say that,” said France. “When I wear the sash, it will cover the stain on my jacket. That’s useful.”

The Little, Brown Book of Anecdotes

It would be nice if the poor were to get even half of the money that is spent in studying them.

Bill Vaughan

When I gave food to the poor, they called me a saint. When I asked why the poor were hungry, they called me a communist.

Dom H. Camara

It is an unfortunate human failing that a full pocketbook often groans more loudly than an empty stomach.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

I get so tired listening to one million dollars here, one million dollars there; it’s so petty.

Imelda Marcos, during her trial for embezzlement

Denial, abstraction, pity . . . are a few of the ways in which the mind reacts to suffering and attempts to restrict or direct the natural compassion of the heart. This tension between head and heart leaves us tentative and confused. As we reach out, then pull back, love and fear are pitted against one another. As hard as this is for us, what must it be like for those who need our help?

Ram Dass and Paul Gorman

A rich man is nothing but a poor man with money.

W.C. Fields

Life shouldn’t be printed on dollar bills.

Clifford Odets

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