

What do the U.S. Bishops say about Hunger?

The bishops of the United States have established moral criteria to evaluate the allocation of our nation's resources:

- whether it safeguards or compromises human life and dignity
- how it affects "the least of these" (Matthew 25)
- how it reflects a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially workers and families.

As citizens or residents and as people of faith we have a duty to take part in our communities and in our democracy to address the ways that some have been left behind. Our bishops say we should look to our "faith to give us insight into all issues that affect the common good, especially issues of life and dignity." Adequate and affordable food is a basic human right and is an important life issue (From: U.S. Bishops, [Nutrition and Food Security](#)).

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) advocates in support of federal nutrition programs and other policies to address hunger and encourages each of us to advocate for these policies as well. All the food that charities and churches provide is a small fraction (about 10%) of what is provided by federal government nutrition programs; churches cannot do it alone ([Bread for the World](#)).

Would you like to learn more? Visit: [Hunger, Food, Nutrition Home | USCCB](#)

What About Our Popes?

Our popes understand hunger as a human rights issue defining hunger as "criminal" and access to food as an "inalienable right." Food insecurity is not simply a lack of food; Rather, the crisis of food insecurity is a complex and multifaceted issue, and its challenges can be framed through questions:

- How can hunger be overcome?
- How can safe, affordable, nutritious and sustainable food be ensured?
- How can farm workers, small farmers around the world, live and work with dignity?
- How can rural communities, especially women, survive and thrive?
- How can land, water and other elements of God's creation be preserved, protected and used well in the service of the common good?
- How do we respond to climate change in this regard?"
([Vatican officials say lack of food 'criminal' and call for greater access | Crux](#) 2021)

"Freedom from the yoke of hunger is the first concrete manifestation of that right to life which, although solemnly proclaimed, often remains far from being effectively implemented." -- Pope Benedict XVI, World Food Day 2011

"A way has to be found to enable everyone to benefit from the fruits of the earth, and not simply to close the gap between the affluent and those who must be satisfied with the crumbs falling from the table, but above all to satisfy the demands of justice, fairness and respect for every human being." Pope Francis to the Food and Agriculture Organization (June 2013).