

# People Living in Poverty

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Submitted by John Cumming, Delegate, St. Peter's, San Francisco (jcumming@northcoast.com) and member of the Board of Directors of the Association for Episcopal Deacons.

*Resolved*, That the 163rd Convention of the Diocese of California calls upon all of its constituent committees, commissions, institutions and congregations to include as part of every meeting in calendar year 2013, no matter what the purpose, the following agenda item: "How will what we are doing here affect or involve people living in poverty?"

### **Explanation:**

At the 2009 General Convention, Resolution A155 called for the establishment of a program to address domestic poverty and called on The Episcopal Church to "recognize the pressing challenges to those living in poverty and the working poor throughout this nation[.]" At the 2012 General Convention, Resolution A135 called for a number of steps to be taken to address the alleviation of poverty and increasing economic and racial justice. The third "resolved" of A135, which came to be known as the "Deacons' resolved" states as follows:

"Resolved, that the church cultivate mindfulness about poverty in our community and world as well as the poverty into which Christ calls us by including in our prayer and in every meeting agenda, time for reflection on how our work engages issues of poverty and economic and racial justice[.]"

On behalf of the Association for Episcopal Deacons (AED), I offer this resolution as a specific way to implement the "Deacons' Resolved" in A135. This resolution in fact is based on the original language that AED proposed for adoption by General Convention. AED's resolution in turn was based on a 20-year old experiment by the late Roman Catholic Bishop Kenneth E. Untener of Saginaw, Michigan, who decreed that for a three month period, every church meeting at the diocesan or parish level, no matter what the purpose, would start with the agenda item "How will what we are doing here involve or affect the poor?" (See Bishop Untener's reflection piece "How Should We Think About the Poor?" published online at <http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/ac0792.asp>.) More recently, this resolution has been adopted by the Dioceses of Atlanta and Indianapolis in our own church.

This resolution is not a program or plan to alleviate poverty. Rather, it is an effort to change the conversation in the church, to encourage people to think diaconally and live their baptismal covenant, whether the subject is outreach ministries, auditing the books, or where to hold the Sunday School picnic. It is also a matter of assessing our own relationships and placing our conversations into a context where God's people can invite each other into accountability and into friendship with those living in poverty.



# Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

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Submitted by Patrick Melendez, Delegate, Christ Church, Alameda on behalf of the Official Youth Representation at Diocesan Convention.

*Resolved*, That the 163rd Convention of the Diocese of California calls upon all congregations in the Diocese of California to mark Martin Luther King Jr. Day, as celebrated in the civil calendar, as a Day of Service for all members of the congregation and particularly for children and youth.

### **Explanation:**

In memory and in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the government of the United States of America has designated Martin Luther King Jr. Day a National Day of Service. While recognizing that as Christians we are called to service in our lives every day, we also see the virtue of designating a day of service in community that will unite us as Christians and as Episcopalians, while remembering the legacy of Rev. Dr. King in selfless and courageous service to humanity and particularly to all those who suffer from social oppression, degradation, and poverty. On this day, congregations are invited to search for ways in which communal service is possible for all ages, to engage in this service together.

