

Appendix II: 50 Ways to Help the Poor

1. Donate food to your church food pantry, or if they don't have one, donate to your local food pantry.
2. Choose a day to serve at a local food pantry. Check their website; most contain requirements for service.
3. Respect people who are poor or homeless. Give them the same courtesy and goodwill that you would accord your friends, your family, or your employer. Treat them as you would wish to be treated if you needed assistance.
4. Respond with kindness to all those in need. We can make quite a difference in the lives of people who are destitute when we love them rather than ignore or dismiss them. Try a kind word and a smile. Don't assume they are in this predicament because of bad choices.
5. Get freezer-size zipper-lock plastic bags and create "care packages" with bottled water or an electrolyte drink, a nutritious snack, and a church invite. Keep four or five in your car and distribute them as the opportunity arises.
6. Purchase \$5 gift certificates from various fast food restaurants to give away as needed.
7. Volunteer at a nursing or senior adult center. Mother's or Father's Day are great days to visit. Ask the director of the facility which patients most need encouragement or get few visits from relatives.
8. Contact your State's Department of Social Services and get certified to be a foster parent. The majority of states are greatly in need of foster parents.
9. Adopt a child. In many states, children can be adopted at no cost through the Department of Social Services. Adopting children in need helps break the cycle of poverty.
10. Donate money to help families who are in the process of adopting.
11. Downgrade your cell phone or cable plan and donate the money to HOPE worldwide or some favorite charity that helps the poor.
12. Drop off toys or handheld video games at your local children's hospital (most hospitals' websites will have a list of needed items).
13. Carefully go through your closet and donate all clothes and shoes that you no longer use. Perhaps even downsize your wardrobe and donate the excess to Goodwill or the Salvation Army.
14. Downsize your electronics collection (televisions, iPads, Kindles, etc.) and give to church friends in need or to the poor in your community.
15. If you have spare or guest bedrooms, open your home to host people at no cost who are receiving medical treatment or have other needs.
16. Sponsor a child through Compassion International or Food for the Hungry.
17. Sign up to coach a youth sport in a poor community in your city. Use the opportunity to tell kids they're smart, needed, and important.
18. Donate time and money for Meals on Wheels or other organizations that serve the elderly who are homebound or disabled.
19. Sign up to drive cancer patients or others in need of medical service to their appointments.
20. Start a group in your church that is dedicated to home repairs and housework to help single moms and other needy individuals.
21. Find a widow or widower in your neighborhood and invite them to your home for a meal.

22. Research and compile a list of soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and free medical clinics to print out and give out to the homeless and needy.
23. Find out the items most needed by your local homeless shelter (e.g., towels, blankets, socks) and donate them.
24. Mentor disciples who are unemployed or underemployed on how to improve their job skills or how to work harder to improve their value to employers.
25. For those who are perpetually unemployed, help them to develop skills that are required by the marketplace. Spend some weekly time helping them research jobs that may be suitable to their skills.
26. Build a relationship with someone who is indigent. Offer to be their friend and personal coach, monitoring their weekly progress until they become independent and productive.
27. Set up a donation drop box and invite the community to donate items that will help the needy.
28. Buy an MP3 player (you can find many inexpensive models now) and fill it with uplifting songs, some sermons, and an audible version of the New Testament. Give it to a homeless or needy person.
29. Instead of having a garage sale, take all those items and donate them to an organization that helps the poor.
30. Volunteer your professional services. You can help people who are homeless with your job talent and skills. Doctors, psychiatrists, counselors, and dentists can treat the homeless in free medical clinics. Lawyers can help with legal concerns.
31. Volunteer for follow-up programs. Some people who are indigent need help and training with fundamental tasks such as paying bills, balancing a household budget, or cleaning. Follow-up programs to give further advice, counseling, and training are extremely important to help the poor become independent and successful.
32. Tutor homeless children. A tutor can make all the difference. Just having extra attention can motivate a child to do their best. Many programs exist in shelters, transitional housing programs, and schools that need interested volunteers. Begin your own tutor volunteer corps at your church.
33. Help tutor the poor, or recent immigrants, especially teaching them English. Education is one of the greatest tools in moving someone toward self-sufficiency.
34. Volunteer at shelters that serve battered women. Most women who are battered are involved in abusive relationships. Lacking resources and afraid of being found by their abusers, many have no recourse other than a shelter or life on the streets. These shelters are especially in need of donations. Call to see how you can help.
35. Educate your children and get them involved. Volunteer as a family at a shelter or housing program. Suggest that your children sort through their toys, books, and clothes and donate some to organizations that help the poor and needy.
36. Donate a weekend to serve with Habitat for Humanity. This housing ministry builds homes for families who are in great need or who are in danger of becoming homeless.
37. Donate blood in your community. Donate plasma and give the funds to indigent medical care.
38. Fast at least one day a week on behalf of the poor and donate the money saved each month to a worthy cause.
39. Plan a mission trip to serve the needy in a third-world country (check HOPE worldwide for current and future opportunities).
40. Sign up to be an organ donor. It's a great way to serve those who are in medical crisis, and you won't need that body where you are going anyway!

41. Do your best to always donate your time, energy, and money when your congregation is doing an activity to raise funds to help the poor. The more people are involved, the more good work can be done for the cause of Christ and the needs of the poor.
42. Take the time and initiative to educate other disciples, families, and friends about the needs of the poor. More would help, if they only knew.
43. Provide free babysitting for a needy single mom.
44. Write your local civic leaders, politicians, and others of influence to advocate for government programs that will help meet the needs of the poor.
45. Education is one of the most important tools to eradicate poverty. Donate money to schools that specialize in teaching the poor and needy.
46. Volunteer your time at local hospitals that provide indigent care. Volunteer needs are usually available on their websites.
47. Find an elderly person or couple in your area and volunteer to mow their yard, clean their home, or run errands for them.
48. Be a mentor to kids in need. Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and similar organizations are great ways to meet the needs of kids.
49. Help sponsor a needy kid for a summer church camp or program.
50. Donate money to organizations that provide source funding for sustainable small business creation in third-world countries