



We are Called
TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.

Team Reflection – Huddle

No. 2 Death Gap – Poverty is more than Economic

The 2017 book *The Death Gap: How Inequality Kills* called attention to the glaring differences in health and life expectancy between neighborhoods in the same city. Research done in Chicago revealed a 16-year difference in life expectancy along a mere 5 mile stretch of the famous "L" train system. These stark differences are present in cities across the nation. Years before Ansell's book, Fr. Daniel Groody, CSC, professor at the University of Notre Dame, wrote how the poor are *those who die before one's time!* [2.1]

The experience of being poor is so multidimensional and layered with complexity that it cannot be conflated with mere economics. Fundamentally, those who are poor experience far fewer options and opportunities in many aspects of life. There is so much that is needed for us to give and to change the structures around us. May the challenges before us never obstruct our efforts to keep our hands and hearts open.

Consider

Do I see those whom I serve and care for as my sister and brother? What feelings do I notice when I think about others in this way?

Let us pray together,

God of all peoples, you created all of us from the depth of your love and delight in each one of our sisters and brothers. May your divine care enfold us in our poverty. May your grace soften our hearts, enlarge its concern for our neighbors in need, and open our hands to remove the barriers that keep everyone in our community from flourishing in fullness.

[2.1] *The Option for the Poor in Christian Theology*, edited by Daniel G. Groody, University of Notre Dame Press, 2007, p. 6.