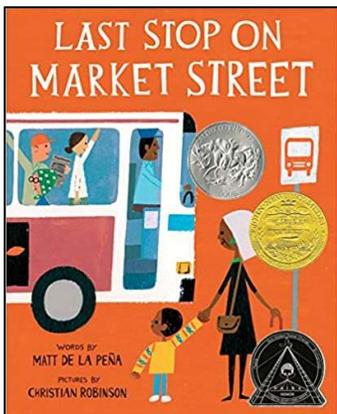


Resources for Talking to Children About Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness

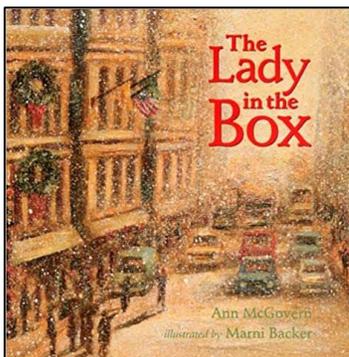
Begin and end by praying with your children. Remind yourselves that God has called us to serve others and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt 22:37-39). For reflection guides on poverty, hunger, and homelessness, check out the site, [Doing Good Together](#). On their page you’ll also find suggested books to read with your children. Another helpful document can be found, [here](#), from Bright Spaces.

Reading with your child can be a tremendous way to start or continue the conversation. To help get you started, below are two lists of books for children aged 3-8 years old and 8-12 years old. All descriptions are from the books’ Amazon pages where the links will take you if you wish to purchase them.

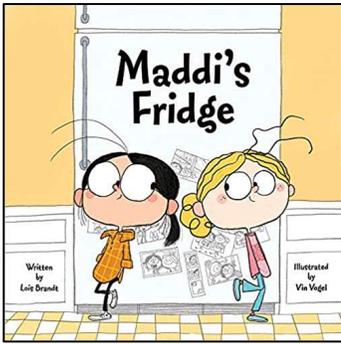
For 3-8 year olds:



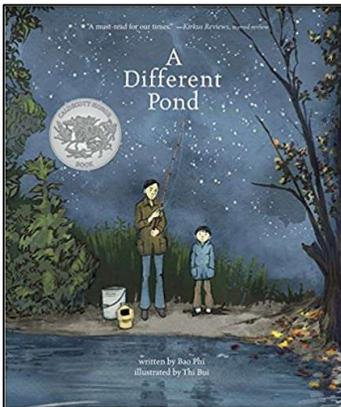
Last Stop On Market Street, by Matt de la Peña: “Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don't own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn't he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? How come they always have to get off in the dirty part of town? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them.”



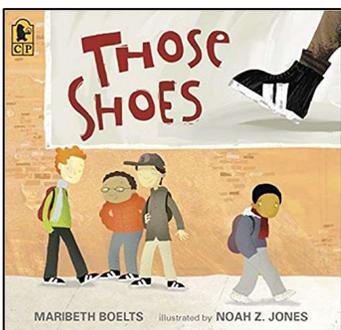
The Lady In The Box, by Ann McGovern : “It is wintertime in the city and freezing cold, but not everyone is inside and warm. Ben and his sister Lizzie know that there is a lady who lives outside in a box over a warm air vent. The children worry about the kind-looking lady, and begin sneaking food and clothes out of their apartment for her. Gently told and powerfully illustrated in rich hues, *The Lady in the Box* deals candidly with the issue of homelessness.”



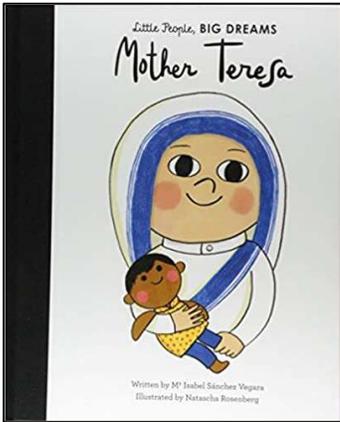
Maddi's Fridge, by Lois Brandt: "Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school, and play in the same park, but while Sofia's fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi's house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi's family doesn't have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she'll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she's faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi's empty fridge. Filled with colorful artwork, this storybook addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons in friendship, empathy, trust, and helping others. A call to action section, with six effective ways for children to help fight hunger and information on antihunger groups, is also included."



A Different Pond, by Bao Phi: "A 2018 Caldecott Honor Book that Kirkus Reviews calls "a must-read for our times," A Different Pond is an unforgettable story about a simple event - a long-ago fishing trip. Graphic novelist Thi Bui and acclaimed poet Bao Phi deliver a powerful, honest glimpse into a relationship between father and son - and between cultures, old and new. As a young boy, Bao and his father awoke early, hours before his father's long workday began, to fish on the shores of a small pond in Minneapolis. Unlike many other anglers, Bao and his father fished for food, not recreation. A successful catch meant a fed family. Between hope-filled casts, Bao's father told him about a different pond in their homeland of Vietnam."

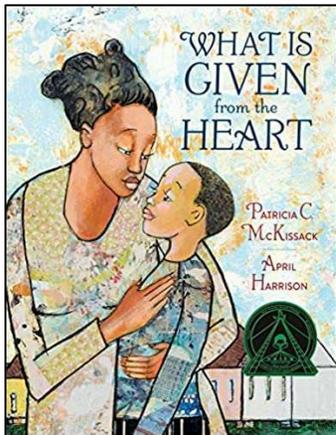


Those Shoes, by Maribeth Boelts: "All Jeremy wants is a pair of those shoes, the ones everyone at school seems to be wearing. Though Jeremy's grandma says they don't have room for "want," just "need," when his old shoes fall apart at school, he is more determined than ever to have those shoes, even a thrift-shop pair that are much too small. But sore feet aren't much fun, and Jeremy soon sees that the things he has — warm boots, a loving grandma, and the chance to help a friend — are worth more than the things he wants."



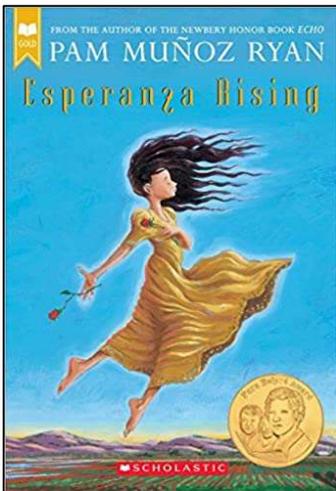
Mother Teresa, by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara, : “Part of the critically acclaimed Little People, BIG DREAMS series, discover the incredible life of Mother Teresa, along with her message of love and charity.

Agnes (later to become Mother Teresa) was born in Skopje, Macedonia. From an early age, she knew she wanted to dedicate herself to religion. She was fascinated by stories of missionaries helping people and wanted to do the same. She spent the rest of her life caring for the sick and poor around the world and is now remembered as Saint Teresa of Calcutta.”

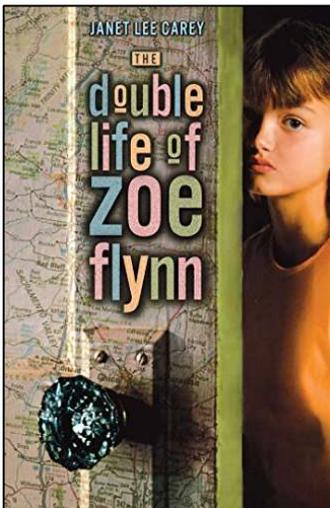


What is Given From The Heart, by Patricia C McKissack:
"Misery loves company," Mama says to James Otis. It's been a rough couple of months for them, but Mama says as long as they have their health and strength, they're blessed. One Sunday before Valentine's Day, Reverend Dennis makes an announcement during the service-- the Temples have lost everything in a fire, and the church is collecting anything that might be useful to them. James thinks hard about what he can add to the Temple's "love box," but what does he have worth giving? With her extraordinary gift for storytelling, McKissack--with stunning illustrations by Harrison--delivers a touching, powerful tale of compassion and reminds us all that what is given from the heart, reaches the heart.”

For 8-12 years olds:

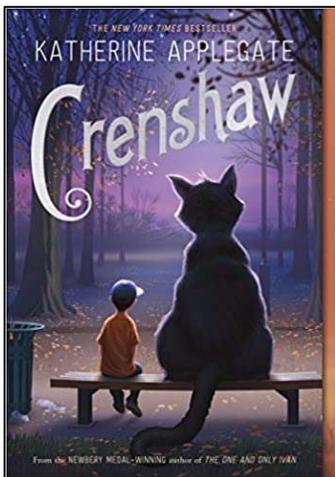


Esperanza Rising, by Pam Muñoz Ryan: “Esperanza thought she'd always live a privileged life on her family's ranch in Mexico. She'd always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home filled with servants, and Mama, Papa, and Abuelita to care for her. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard work, financial struggles brought on by the Great Depression, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When Mama gets sick and a strike for better working conditions threatens to uproot their new life, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances-because Mama's life, and her own, depend on it.”



The Double Life of Zoe Flynn, by Janet Lee Carey: “She used to live in California, in a big old house – the best house in the world really – at 18 Hawk Road. It rambled and creaked and was full of good hiding places. She used to have a best friend named Kellen who lived right down the road, and a dog named Merlin who loved to play with her. But now she lives in a little town in Oregon, and everything has changed.

Now, Zoe has to be careful. Careful that she doesn't tell anyone, not her friends or her teacher or especially that cop who's been watching her, that she doesn't live at 18 Hawk Road anymore. That now her family lives in an old green van that's cramped and dirty and doesn't even work all the time. Zoe's always hoping that someday she'll find her way back home....”



Crenshaw, by Katherine Applegate: “Jackson and his family have fallen on hard times. There's no more money for rent. And not much for food, either. His parents, his little sister, and their dog may have to live in their minivan. Again.

Crenshaw is a cat. He's large, he's outspoken, and he's imaginary. He has come back into Jackson's life to help him. But is an imaginary friend enough to save this family from losing everything?”