Commemoration
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
October 17, 2018 – Clincho, VA

Community Contribution from a group of young adults,
Dublin, Ireland

We are 20 young men and women from Dublin who worked together to write this message for October 17. Most of us know very well what it means living on a very low income, and some of us have slept in the street. We know what it is to be put down.

To leave no one behind, we first have to put the homeless on a bigger agenda. They live extreme poverty and are isolated, especially the very young. It's easy to turn to drugs when you're homeless, because you give up.

Jackie said: “Leaving no one behind means bringing back a homeless person to my home, like some one from my family. I could lose my flat for taking this risk. But I do it because I was homeless.”

Teresa said: “Now I have my flat, but I would not walk past a homeless person. If you're my friend when I'm on the street, you're still my friend when I'm not.”

Around town we see homeless people, young and old. Why can't all the empty buildings be used to offer them proper homes?

What can we do to leave no one behind? We are born equal and in innocence, but our paths in life are not equal.
**One father** said, “I was left behind at school years ago. The class teacher hit me and I reacted. I told the teacher what I thought of him. I was then thrown out. I was just 13 and school was finished for me. There were no more chances to learn. I stopped going to school. No one ever came to my house to ask why?. Yes, I was left behind.” It is life-long access to education that gives people another chance.

**Our communities** can offer the chance not to be left behind, we have to understand each other, to take time to walk in each other's shoes. Let's not turn our backs on those who face hardship and isolation, on those who get a prison sentence.

**An answer lies in friendship** and in the people you get to know in your community; keeping contact and talking with each other; and being a good neighbour is very important. All this gives you the understanding of belonging somewhere. And we never should, put anyone down. Everyone should have their chance to make their mark in their community.

**We need to have a sense of humour as well**, that we share with others. It is part of being together. Today we want to remember all those who have died in misery, especially those who died during the past year. Their lives were too hard. Sometimes our lives are the same.

**Even if our problems take us to hell and back**, we still have feelings and we have the right to live with respect.

**Our humanity can never be taken away from us.**