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The Working Poor at Wal-Mart

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Distinctly Catholic

I know that this story has gone viral: A well-intentioned manager at a Wal-Mart set up a box for donations in an employee lounge so that the store's associates - that would be their employees - who are too poor to afford Thanksgiving dinner can get some help from their co-workers. Wal-Mart's employees are paid so little, and receive no benefits, that they might not be able to afford Thanksgiving. The next time some right-wing critic of the Affordable Care Act dismisses the need for affordable health insurance for millions of America's working poor, remember that if you can't afford a turkey, you probably can't afford health insurance. Indeed, Wal-Mart compensation policies result in the rest of the nation's taxpayers picking up the slack. It is time to raise the minimum wage and implement the ACA as quickly as possible. These twin actions will not cure all that ails our country, but they would be a big first step towards diminishing the curse of income inequality that results in stories like this one.

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