

My Name Is Not "Those People"

By Julia Dinsmore

My name is not "Those People."

I am a loving woman, a mother in pain, giving birth to the future, where my babies have the same chance to thrive as anyone.

My name is not "Inadequate."

I did not make my husband leave – he chose to, and chooses not to pay child support.

Truth is thought, there isn't a job base for all fathers to support their families.

While society turns its head, my children pay the price.

My name is not "Problem and Case to Be Managed."

I am a capable human being and citizen, not a client.

The social service system can never replace the compassion and concern of loving Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Fathers, Cousins, Community – all the bonded people who need to be but are not present to bring children forward to their potential.

My name is not "Lazy, Dependent Welfare Mother."

If the unwaged work of parenting, homemaking and community building was factored into the Gross National Product, my work would have untold value. And I wonder why my middle-class sisters whose husbands support them to raise their children are glorified – and they don't get called lazy and dependent.

My name is not "Ignorant, Dumb or Uneducated."

I live with an income of \$621 with \$169 in food stamps.

Rent is \$585. that leaves \$36 a month to live on. I am such a genius at surviving that I could balance the state budget in an hour.

Never mind that there is a lack of living-wage jobs.

Never mind that it is impossible to be the sole emotional, social and economic support to a family.

Never mind that parents are losing their children to the gangs, drugs, stealing, prostitution, social workers, kidnapping, the streets, the predator.

Forget about putting money into schools – just build more prisons.

My name is not "Lay Down and Die Quietly."

My love is powerful and my urge to keep my children alive will never stop. All children need homes and people who love them. They need safety and the chance to be the people they were born to be.

The wind will stop before I let my children become a statistic.
Before you give in to the urge to blame me,
the blames that lets us go blind and unknowing into
the isolation that disconnects us, take another look.
Don't go away.
For I am not the problem, but the solution.
And...My name is not "Those People."

Ms. Dinsmore's poem, *My Name Is Not "Those People,"* is included in her book, *My Name Is Child of God ... Not "Those People": A First-Person Look at Poverty* (Augsburg Fortress Publishers).