

“Homelessness is the canary in the mine. It’s the prophetic call to all of us that there’s something radically wrong in our society if anybody is living on our streets.” – Sister Mary Scullion

## AI Overview

Sister Mary Scullion, a prominent advocate for the unhoused in Philadelphia and co-founder of Project HOME, uses this quote to highlight that homelessness is a symptom of systemic societal failures—such as poverty and lack of affordable housing—rather than just individual failings. She views the presence of people on the streets as a "prophetic" warning sign requiring a radical, compassionate, and structural response. [1, 2, 3]

Key aspects of this perspective include:

- **Systemic Causes:** Scullion attributes homelessness to deep-seated issues, including unaffordable health care, institutional racism, and endemic poverty.
- **The "Canary" Metaphor:** Similar to how miners used canaries to detect deadly, invisible gases, Scullion uses the visibility of homelessness to signal that society's foundational values are deeply flawed.
- **Call to Action:** She urges society to move beyond stigma and toward action, including advocacy for affordable housing and direct support for non-profits.
- **A "Prophetic" Challenge:** She views the existence of unhoused people as a direct, moral challenge to society to change its priorities. [1, 2, 3]

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