

TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2009

Mission Tuesday #23

Today was my 23rd week of helping out at Mission of Hope. As I've termed them, "Mission Tuesdays," this really has become "my mission." :-) Today I was blessed beyond what I expected to be, and I took a lot more pictures to hopefully share a little more of what goes on at Mission of Hope each day.

Ali and Zach joined me for the day. I enjoy having them there with me, and working alongside of them. It's fun for me to hear some of our patrons, staff and volunteers call them by name now! They will be surely missed in a couple of weeks when they go back to school!

We were busy all day, but not quite as busy as last Tuesday! Phyllis is gone all week, which tends to add a little more to everyone else's plate when she's gone. She's the glue that holds each day together there. :-) She was surely missed and will be all week!

The cooler (refrigerator) was pretty empty when we arrived, but I knew it wouldn't be that way for too long. The Food Pantry shelves looked better than last week (more full) because of wonderful donations, but the bread shelves were empty.





Ormal, a volunteer who brings in the bread and pastries each week which are donated from a local grocery store, soon brought in the totes full of bread and pastries. He's pictured below with another wonderful volunteer, Wilma. Ali and Zach got busy organizing and putting the bread and pastries away.



Since one of the Kernel's baseball games got rained out over the weekend, and Pizza Hut had already made Personal Pan Pizzas ahead for the game, we were the recipients of

LOTS of frozen pizzas and Personal Pan Pizzas! Ali, Zach and I bagged up the pizzas individually to be handed out after lunch was over. This picture shows a very small portion of what we received.



A local Food Service company donated cases and cases of strawberry yogurt.



Our Tuesday shipment of pre-packaged sandwiches also arrived in the morning. Rica organized them and had fun doing so! :-)



Lunchtime rolled around quickly, and before I realized what time it was, Antioch Church was bringing in roasters in which their contents filled the building with a wonderful aroma...beef stew! They also served watermelon, mixed fruit, rolls, no-bake cookies and fruit punch. My job today was to give each person who came through the line their napkin, a fork and a spoon. Like I've mentioned before, I love to be able to speak to each person who comes through the line! Many times my smile brings one to their face. I LOVE THAT! :-)) We served 99 people lunch today.

All these things were great things that happened today at the Mission, but I have to tell you about the most amazing experience I have had there, which happened today! I was in the middle of doing something near the Food Pantry and I saw an older gentleman, whom I've never seen before, looking at me. I didn't think anything of it, until Wilma told me this man wanted to talk to me. He came up to me and said, "I apologize for staring at you, but I was trying to figure out if you were a Christian woman." I told him I was, and asked him what I could do for him. With tears in his eyes, he said, "I've fallen

away from Christ and I want to know what I can do to get my place back with Him. Would you talk to me?"

My heart felt like it was going to pound out of my chest, but I calmly led him to a table where we sat and talked. He shared his story with me, how he accepted Christ as his Savior in 1992, and told me a little bit about his addictions and life. I reassured him that his sin is no greater than my sin, and we all sin...according to scripture, we all fall short of the glory of God. I sat there in awe as he was talking...how God could use little old me, and my years of Bible Study Fellowship training and teaching to reach out to this man who was so laden with guilt, shame and sorrow, and was feeling like he lost his eternal place in heaven because of his sin. I knew God was filling me with words that I could not have come up with on my own...

Sharing scripture with him, I reassured him that Jesus hasn't given up on him and that he is sealed with the Holy Spirit because of his decision to accept Christ many years ago. I encouraged him to pick up his Bible as soon as he got home and begin soaking up God's Word. I also encouraged him to get back to church and surround himself with fellow believers who could help him stay strong. I encouraged him to come to the Mission as often as he could, and any of the staff would be willing to talk with him if I wasn't there.

I asked him if I could pray with him, and after doing so, told him I would be praying for him in the days and weeks to come. I've seen God do amazing things with people at the Mission and I look forward to seeing what He will do with this man. I was humbled and grateful to be an encouragement to this man today.

Before Ali, Zach and I left in the afternoon, the Pantry was a little more full and the cooler was a whole lot more full! Needless to say, I was really touched today...by all the donations, by Ali and Zach being with me, by the man I was privileged to talk to and pray with, by the other volunteers and staff, and by God in an indescribable way. It's a day I won't soon forget. Again, I am very thankful for Mission of Hope!



I'm also helping at the Mission for a couple hours on Thursday this week...I look forward to it! :-)