

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2009

Mission Tuesday



"A smile can start a conversation without saying a word."

I found this saying, of all places, on our Daisy sour cream container tonight at dinner. We had a "taco bar" for dinner...choices of taco salad, soft shell tacos or hard shell tacos, with your choice of toppings. When I opened the sour cream container to put some on my taco salad, I smiled when I saw the above saying. It made me think of a friend of mine who really likes sour cream, and it made me think of my day today at Mission of Hope! :-)

A smile CAN start a conversation without saying a word! I experienced that today! When I arrived at the Mission this morning, a little later than I planned, I was met with some very pleasant, "Hi Julie('s)!" I almost felt like Norm on Cheers! (Remember that t.v. show?) Being welcomed like that certainly brought a smile to my face! :-)

Phyllis and Steve G. put me to work right away in the food pantry and answering the Mission phone, which I enjoy doing both. The food pantry was especially busy today. The people that needed food would sign in, then I would take them into the pantry and help them pick out their food. Some were very grateful and expressed their gratefulness, some were very quiet and didn't talk much, and some were, I could tell, very excited to get some food for them and their families. One thing I noticed, when I smiled at them, no matter what kind of mood they were in...they smiled back. :-) Even a grumpy guy, who sometimes intimidates me, smiled back.

One young couple, who were expecting their first child in April, had never been into the Mission before. They wanted some food, but I could tell they were a little embarrassed as we were going through the process. I wanted to make them feel comfortable. When I didn't know quite what to say, I just smiled. The young woman kept looking at me...almost as if looking for reassurance

that everything was going to be ok. I didn't know fully their situation, but I did what I felt I could do in encouraging them and helping them understand the other services available for them at the Mission. That interaction with that couple is something I won't soon forget.

I helped serve lunch. Seventy four people had lunch at the Mission today. We had goulash, pizza, sweet potatoes (yum!), carrots, coffee cake, peach, pecan or blueberry pie. My job was to serve dessert and drinks. I'm sure I looked cute in a plastic apron, plastic gloves and a hat! I chose NOT to take a look at myself in the mirror! :-) That is certainly a way to get to know people, as they go through the food line. Some would smile back, some would act like I wasn't there, some would smile first at me! I also enjoyed the time I was able to eat with Phyllis, and some of the other staff and volunteers afterwards.

It was fun to meet some new people, and get reacquainted with others that I hadn't seen for awhile. The time went so quick! Before I knew it, it was time for me to leave to go pick up the kids from school! I left feeling a little exhausted, but exhilarated...all at the same time!

"A smile can start a conversation without saying a word."

I look forward to my next Mission Tuesday! :-)