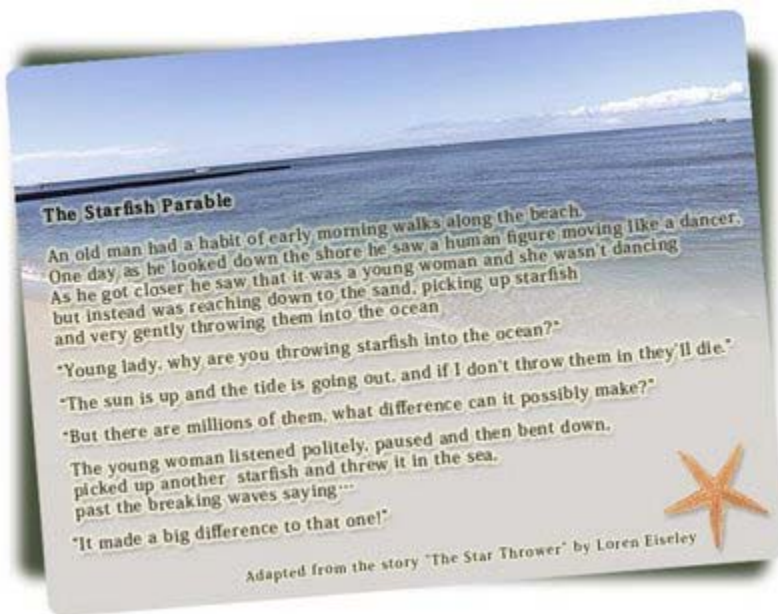


WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2009

Mission Tuesday #20

It's hard for me to believe that this week is week #20 for me volunteering at Mission of Hope! I guess as the saying goes..."time flies when you're having fun!"

I was reminded yesterday of the Starfish Parable..."It made a big difference to that one!"



Yesterday I felt like the woman in the Parable..."picking up starfish and very gently throwing them into the ocean." I felt as if everything I did yesterday at Mission of Hope, whether big or small, made a difference. Making pots of coffee, filling up the sugar decanter twice, doing dishes, restocking the Food Pantry, cutting angel food cake, wiping down counters, serving brownies at lunch, refilling the pastry trays, getting a bar of soap for a patron, listening, encouraging, smiling...it all made a difference!

Yesterday was a VERY rainy day...ALL DAY! Every time I looked out, it was pouring down rain! Many Mission patrons came in soaked, chilled and thankful for a dry place to hang out for awhile! I was thankful to be indoors too! We went through many pots of coffee, and lots of pastries and snacks throughout the day as people hung around to either dry off or stay dry!

Both Ali and Zach joined me for the morning. They were busy helping me in the kitchen and also in the Food Pantry. Ali learned how to thicken creamed chicken and vegetables that Scott, another volunteer, was preparing for lunch. Ali also added marshmallows and coconut to a fruit salad that was already chilling in the cooler (refrigerator). They both helped organize the prepackaged sandwiches that came in, and helped serve lunch. Zach took care of the lunch logbook and handed out napkins and plastic silverware to those going through the lunch line. Ali served Gatorade. I served some awesome chocolate and peanut butter brownies. :-)

It was a wonderful lunch...creamed chicken and vegetables over mashed potatoes and biscuits, fruit salad, angel food cake with raspberries, and brownies. We served 123 people lunch today!

Ali had volleyball camp in the afternoon, so after returning from taking her there, it was time to clean up after lunch. James, who has been a friend of ours for a very long time, was already doing dishes when I returned. I appreciated his work and told him so! He doing the dishes allowed me to clean up the rest of the kitchen. :-)

I had some meaningful conversations with a couple of the Mission patrons yesterday, which I believe also made a difference...

A couple of weeks ago I shared about a woman who was trying to decide of how to handle getting back in touch with her adult son, whom she hadn't seen for seven years after he was placed in foster care. She shared with me yesterday that they had been reunited over the past weekend, and even though it wasn't a "fairy tale meeting," she felt God had opened the door for them to get to know each other again, and she was hopeful in seeing him again soon. Even though I encouraged her in our conversation, for some reason, I left that conversation feeling encouraged too! :-)

A young man, who visits the Mission now and then, came in with his girlfriend and told me they were leaving town last evening and wanted to make sure he said goodbye. They were going to move in with her family a few hours away. He said, "I have no place else to go." Some of the choices he as made for his life in the past haven't served him very well. He seemed very sad to be leaving, and they spent the whole afternoon talking with the

Mission staff and volunteers. I hugged them both, wishing them the best, and encouraging them to seek God in their move. I also encouraged them to stay in touch with us at the Mission!

I saw my friend Mike again...hadn't seen him for weeks. He looked thin and tired. He had just finished his lunch when I had a chance to talk to him. I told him it was good to see him, and again, he lit up when I called him by his name.

I was reminded yesterday that sometimes the little things we do make the biggest difference! Is there a place in your life, or in someone else's life, that you can make a difference in today? It doesn't have to be big and grand...even a smile can make a difference! I pray as you read this that God will prompt you to make a difference in some way today!

"It made a big difference to that one!"