

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2009

Mission Tuesday #16



Giving people the best... those are the words I would use today to describe my experience at Mission of Hope yesterday! Being on the Board of Directors at the Mission I have always known that has been our mission and our focus. It even says that in our "Mission Statement" which is written out on Mission of Hope's website (missionofhopecr.org):

At Mission of Hope we believe in giving people the best. So many of the people we serve have been given "the leftovers" all their lives. That's why we offer fresh-baked cookies after each worship service, hot homemade meals at our Shelter, a clean & inviting atmosphere, and nice (and often new) clothes in our emergency closet ... These are all ways we show people we care, that they have value, and that they are loved - by us and by God.

I witnessed this yesterday, as I do every day I'm at the Mission, as well as on Sundays during our worship services! Here are just a few examples:

- Fresh brewed coffee is available all day, with creamers and sugars (I like my coffee!)
- Fresh pastries and snacks are set out nicely on trays morning and afternoon each day (no one should ever leave the Mission feeling hungry!)
- Fresh bread is stocked in the Food Pantry (after talking to Melissa from HACAP yesterday, that's a rare thing!)
- Many name brands of canned and boxed food is stocked in the Food Pantry!

- New, not used, grocery sacks are used to help people carry the food they receive from the Food Pantry!
- All dates on food are checked, and if questionable, they are thrown out!
- Only lightly used and new clothes are available for emergency clothing in our Clothes Closet (I opened up a brand new package of white Hanes socks to help a man who needed a pair yesterday)!
- Eggs, bacon, containers of cottage cheese and Personal Pan Pizzas from Pizza Hut were given to each Food Pantry recipient yesterday as well!
- Wonderful lunches are served Tuesday through Friday, and if available, people can go back through the line for seconds!
- Mission of Hope is kept clean...sweeping, vacuuming, picking up, etc. is done all throughout the day!
- Chairs in the sanctuary are aligned perfectly...it always looks neat and tidy!
- Fresh baked cookies and treats are served after each worship service on Saturday evening and Sunday morning!

This is one aspect I certainly appreciate about Mission of Hope! :-)

Yesterday was a busy day at the Mission. Zach and I worked in the Food Pantry after we arrived in the morning...we helped people with food bags, restocked the Pantry, and organized each section of food. **Zach is becoming quite the "pro"** at helping people fill their food bags! I'm impressed with his outgoing attitude and kindness to each person!

Pizza Hut donated a large amount of frozen, but previously baked, Personal Pan Pizzas! Zach and I bagged each one separately so they could be given out to the people who went through the Food Pantry. **What a blessing that was!** You should have seen people's faces when we asked them if they would like a couple of pizzas from Pizza Hut! :-) What a treat!

I picked up Ali and her friend, Cassidy, after summer school at 11:30 and returned just in time to help for lunch! Antioch Church brought in the meal today...spaghetti, meatballs, breadsticks, green beans, watermelon slices, and amazing Oreo cupcakes! (Ok, I confess...I had two cupcakes!) Ali and Cassidy helped with making sure each

lunch patron signed in, and Zach wrapped a fork in a napkin for each person. I floated and helped wherever I was needed during lunch. When lunch was winding down, I saw we had already **served 110 people!** I'm sure there were a few more that came through after that!

Ali, Cassidy and Zach went to their stations at Food Pantry after lunch...it was so cute to see Cassidy, who had never been to the Mission before, sitting at the welcome desk signing people in for the Food Pantry! Ali and Zach took turns walking people through the Food Pantry. That entire sight made me smile...and **I'm sure it brought a smile to God's face too! :-)**

I helped more women yesterday with personal care items than I ever have before. Again, the Mission's services are much-needed by many! One woman, who is experiencing bladder problems, was completely embarrassed to even ask for some disposable undergarments. It felt good to touch her on the arm and say, "It's okay...that's why we are here. I'm glad you stopped in today. We can help you." She was very grateful.

It also felt good to reach out to another man yesterday who visits the Mission frequently. He has an alcohol addiction, and many times when he comes in, he's intoxicated. Because he's used to me being there now, he usually tells me one of his life stories. I never know if he's telling me the truth or if he might be embellishing a story...I listen anyway. Just **simply listening to people and remembering their names** makes more of an impact on them than you realize!

Mission of Hope is becoming my **"home away from home."** It feels comfortable to be there, reaching out and helping others. I can see as Ali and Zach are becoming more familiar with helping there, they too are becoming more comfortable too! People are beginning to strike up conversations with them now too! :-)

I am excited that this Sunday I will be giving the "message" at our worship service at Mission of Hope. I will be sharing some of what I've shared through these posts on my blog. **Loving God and loving others and giving people the best...**that's what Mission of Hope is all about!

Looking forward to next week!