

**THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2009**

## **Mission Tuesday #12**



Tuesday was another great day at Mission of Hope. This is the twelfth week that I've been volunteering there...usually on Tuesdays. I am so amazed at how God has given me such a great desire to spend one of my days each week at the Mission! I am thankful and grateful He has given me this wonderful opportunity to help and give back to others!

If you've read my previous posts about my Mission Tuesdays, you already know that each time I'm there I get to experience different things. I like that! It's never boring, and it's never monotonous! **It is a joy for me to be there!**

I arrived around 10am on Tuesday. I enjoy seeing familiar faces when I walk in, and I like to see new faces as well. I always hope that "new faces" will soon become "familiar faces" in just a few weeks for me! I was greeted by Phyllis, Ray and Tom, I put my things in the office, and got to work in the kitchen. The coffee pot needed filled and the treat tray needed to be re-filled as well. The Mission patrons were enjoying pastries, doughnut holes, and small peanut-filled cups for morning snacks. These things were probably breakfast for most of them.

I helped a couple people with food in the Food Pantry when the other volunteers were busy doing other tasks. My heart sinks when I walk in the Food Pantry and I see bare shelves. We had NO cans of fruit and NO meat items (canned tuna, chicken, ravioli, etc). I felt terrible not being able to give these nice people fruit and meat like we normally can! But a very cool thing happened...A local community college brought in many non-perishable food items late in the

morning! **What a great blessing!** We all of a sudden had the fruit AND meat items we were needing! I guess every year when the students leave college and go back home, many leave their food behind in their cupboards! The school cleaned out the cupboards and brought this food to us for our Food Pantry! **God is SO good, and His timing is perfect! :-)**

That incident made me smile and encouraged me the rest of the day...if only the college knew what a help that food was to so many people! I'm sure they will be receiving a thank you from us soon!

A couple of other cool things happened Tuesday. Antioch Church again brought in lunch. I really enjoy it when other churches and groups take care of lunch...making meals is not a natural gift for me, so when I'm doing that on Tuesdays, it really stretches me. When others bring the food in or prepare it there themselves, I can just assist with what's needed and be able to do other things to help out. :-) They brought in barbecued pork for sandwiches, baked beans, pasta salad and one of my favorite things...rhubarb crisp with vanilla ice cream on top! As soon as I saw what was for lunch, I had the idea to call my brother Pat and invite him over for lunch! He accepted my invitation and joined me about 12:30, just after I helped serve the pasta salad to those were there for lunch. We served around 70 people, I believe. Two of the 70 were Pat and I. It was fun to share a little of what I do there with him. He was able to meet some of the people I work with there and a few Mission patrons. Plus we enjoyed a great meal together! Tina ate with us also, which was wonderful!

During lunch, Tina was talking with a guy named Chuck. I had never met him before. After hearing their conversation, I asked Tina a little about him and what they were talking about. He shared with Tina that he has gone ten months with being sober! Ten months may not seem like a lot to most people, but with an addiction, ten months of sobriety is a great accomplishment! Chuck was upbeat, positive and was excited about his work of ten months! **I love hearing real-life stories like that!** I was excited for Chuck and very encouraged. What is going on at the Mission is life-changing...for the patrons and for ME!

Another man, who I can't remember his name right now, shared bits and pieces of his life story with me. Growing up in San Diego in poverty, his dreams as a child and how those dreams are still in his heart today, and how he enjoys coming to the Mission. I think he just needed

someone to stop for a moment and listen to him. After a few minutes, he was on his way to talk to the next person who would listen. :-)

Life changing...that's my description of the Mission for today. The experience for everyone who is at Mission of Hope can be life changing if they allow it to be. God is truly at work there...and I'm glad He's using me in just a small part of His work. I'm am blessed!

After cleaning up the kitchen and helping Jackie with dishes, it was time for me to leave and go pick up Ali and Zach from school. What a rewarding day it was for me...to have a hand in making the meal today, and to help make Steve's day extra-special! I will never forget the smiles on his face today! It's a day I will remember for a VERY long time!