



Project Hunger

Feed the Hungry - Clothe the Naked - Heal the Sick - Visit the Prisoner - Welcome the Stranger

December Issue, 2007



Project Hunger Inc.

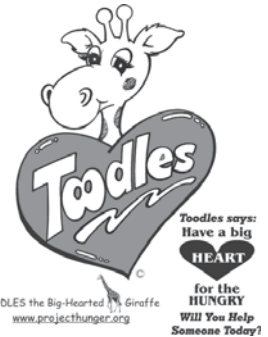
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But the needy will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish - Psalm 9:18 ... By Al Knoepfel

David, the Psalmist, also known as a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13: 14), and moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), makes a profound statement in writing that, left to man's wisdom, the needy people of God's creation are always forgotten – back then, and still today. "How is that so?" one might ask, or are there not exceptions?

A picture from many years gone by comes to mind of an elderly, wealthy and rotund man seated alone at a festively decorated table near a large window in a cozy restaurant feasting on a meal consisting of just about every imaginable food and drink and of such lavish and extravagant portions that the table could hold no more. Outside, in the cold and snow, the figures of several boys and girls, shabbily dressed and with tattered gloves and mittens, press their faces and hands against the glass with longing in their eyes and their stomachs. The artist also illustrates other restaurant patrons witnessing everything and taking it all in. One is left with the question as to whether the man with more than he could possibly consume himself, or any of the others for that matter, ever took it upon themselves to respond with compassion to the situation at hand and share what they had. If any one ever runs across this picture, please let me know how I might obtain a copy.

How do modern-day individuals, families, churches, groups and communities respond to the needy in today's society; are the needy still "always forgotten"? Jesus once said "yes" to the ones who turn "one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine" away with an excuse (Matthew 25:40), and "no" to those who respond in love, mercy and compassion (verse 45).

The Christmas season is traditionally the time of year when the needy are somewhat remembered. The Salvation Army Christmas kettles, surrounded by volunteer bell ringers, can be heard and seen near many retail outlets. The local Christmas Cheer drive establishes a goal and raises funds

toward that end all during the month of December with donors being rewarded by being recognized in print via the local newspaper. Year after year the needy are to be reminded that Christmas is coming. Even though Jesus said, "The poor you will always have with you," (Mark 14: 7) like all twelve months in the calendar year, Christmas has become the *special time* for society to demonstrate gifts of generosity toward the less fortunate.

How do we in our individual and family lives respond to the needy? Who are the needy in our lives? Are there some in our own family, our next-door neighbor, the homeless persons that we often tend to overlook or ignore, those citizens from small towns nearby? Are there needy folks among the alien community within our midst? Are the needy across oceans in refugee camps, orphanages, shelters, clinics and hospitals where they are never personally seen, heard from or communicated with? Is it fair to limit the needy in our lives only to those we see can see, hear, touch or smell? Whose responsibility are the others? Our gracious Lord poses such questions directly to each one of us through His Holy Word and also furnishes workable solutions to those who would listen to and follow His wise direction.

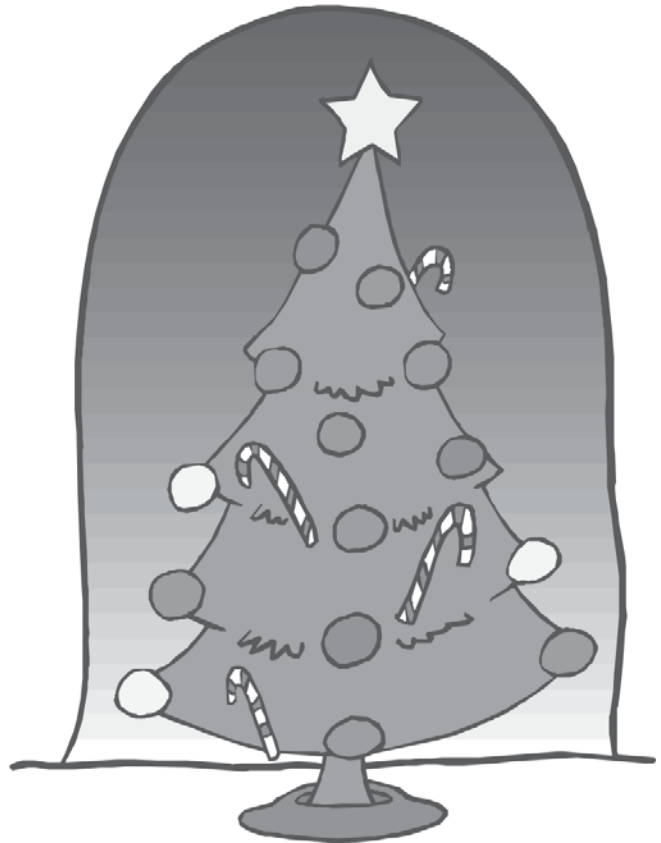
As long as one hears, "Every time I turn around, someone is trying to get their hand in my pocket," or, "Hardly a day goes by that we don't receive some kind of request for money or assistance in the mail box or over the telephone," thus sending a clear message that such requests should stop, the statement: "And the needy will not always be forgotten," holds true.

May the Christmas season we celebrate, along with the reason for doing so, be blessed with the Christ Child's presence in our individual lives as we worship, adore and serve Him with joy. May the new year bring promise, confidence and assurance of the Savior's grace, mercy and forgiveness to all who believe in Him.

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THE GATHERING TABLE — An Update

The “Gathering Table” began on October 1, 2006 and has continued serving evening meals at The Salvation Army dining hall on Sundays and holidays when no one else is serving. The Gathering Table is nearing fourteen months of operation.

The Gathering Table continues to have a variety of delicious menus served from 5:15 – 6:30 P.M. Currently, nearly thirty groups consisting of at least 14 different churches and civic groups have assisted in putting together the 2008 calendar for serving these evening meals.

The Gathering Table invites persons from the area who wish to receive a well-planned meal, along with friendly fellowship, to come and eat. Persons who might otherwise be alone and appreciate the presence of fellow community members are invited to dine and visit.

If you belong to a group, we would encourage you to prayerfully consider being included in this powerful need. You could join one of the groups involved or volunteer individually. You are welcome to visit and get involved. If you are interested, please contact either Doug Winder at 308-391-2341 or Karl Hughes at 308-583-2210.

Harvest Festival for Hunger Awareness Report

The Eighth Annual Harvest Festival for Hunger Awareness, held November 4, 2007, at the Grand Generation Center in Grand Island, NE was attended by 284 guests raising \$12,626.00. There were eighty \$100.00 "Table Sponsors," along with several silent auction and bake sale tables. Proceeds, after expenses, from the event were designated for local hunger needs and world-wide needs through Orphan Grain Train, Norfolk, NE. Local projects include food purchases for the Grand Island Community Food Pantry and food vouchers for qualified Food Pantry and Health and Human Services clients. This fund also provides a full holiday dinner for families in the area to be delivered by volunteers. Any one may designate a Christmas dinner to be delivered to families of their choice by sending \$25.00 to Project Hunger, PO Box 967, 68802 by December 20, 2007, listing the recipient's name and address. Project Hunger will deliver the same before Christmas. Sixty-five families received a dinner delivered the day before Thanksgiving.

Sincere thanks goes to all who made this Harvest Festival possible along with their prayers, talents, efforts and generosity.



Food Bucks, Food Vouchers and what they do

During the last part of September and the first part of October, Doug Winder reports that the "Food Bucks" program has funded the purchase of \$4,221.00 worth of groceries for the Food Pantry here in Grand Island. Project Hunger funds of \$221.00 also provided food vouchers for Health and Human Services clients. Fresh eggs and milk amounting to \$483.00 was purchased and distributed to those in need through both of these avenues.

A new, growing program was started in August of this year with "Food Bucks" boxes being placed in the employee break rooms at Hornady MFG, Skagway, GI School Administration, Swift and both Wal-Mart supercenters. Employees at these locations, in turn purchase "Food Bucks" coupons, sign them and also participate in monthly drawings for complimentary dinners from Appleby's, Perkins, Red Lobster, Texas T-Bone and Uncle Ed's restaurants. Although this new program is in its infancy, it is intended to grow to the point of providing all fresh eggs and milk for those who might need them. Project Hunger will continue to try providing for the hungry here at home and abroad.

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