



Lighthouse News

December 2018

Issue 12, Volume 69

THE STORIES YOU'RE CREATING  THE LIVES YOU'RE CHANGING

“

I'll be
home for
Christmas...

...Thanks
to You!”



IN HONOR OF... JESUS

A few weeks ago, a former disciple came to meet with me to discuss some ideas he had for improving our programs at the Mission. This particular disciple is what we hope for with all our disciples. He is someone who has a good job, is a faithful follower of Jesus, and is enjoying a healthy and sustainable living.

When he came in, he was clearly nervous bordering on shaking. He expressed how "honored" he felt that I would actually take the time to meet with him and repeated that sentiment several times. I have never had anyone tell me that they were "honored" to meet with me. Certainly, I have heard the normal pleasantries like "it is nice to meet you" or "it was a pleasure meeting with you" but no one has ever told me that they were "honored" just to meet with me. I will admit that many lawyers assume that everyone is honored to be in their presence...even if they do not say so. That is not, however, an assumption that I share.

As I met with the disciple, he explained why he was so honored. He confided in me that before coming to the Mission, he was on the verge of suicide. He described how the trauma of life and some bad experiences that were not his fault led him down a dark path that took him to a very destructive place. He then also described how the Mission changed everything for him. Although he admitted that it was hard to get through our Academy Program, it was the **truth of Jesus** we shared that not only saved his life, but gave him a new one.

The more he spoke about the Mission and what it did in his life, the more I realized why he felt so honored. He wasn't honored to meet with me personally. I just happened to be the guy representing the place where God changed his life. The wonderful part about that life-change is that it led to him sharing with me some amazing ways we can better care for the people that we serve.

Here is a message to my unnamed friend who I know will be reading this newsletter: I look forward to when we can meet again. It will be my honor.

Your friend in Christ,



Matt Dildine
Chief Executive Officer

*The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.*

Isaiah 9:2

A GIFT MADE IN HONOR /MEMORY OF...

Share your gift in honor. In the name of a loved one or memory of, sponsor a meal, a safe night's sleep, chapel services, education, vocational training, Bible, a special holiday moment with their child, and so much more. We will then share your special message with someone we serve throughout the holiday season. Example:

"Your night of comfort, warmth and safety is provided in honor of "Jim, loving husband being remembered this season by his family."

See page 6 for details



THANK YOU
FOR
SUPPORTING
FRM
MINISTRIES

A Glimpse of our 2018 Thanksgiving Luncheon



"I'll be home for Christmas"

From the age of 13, Felipe was a gang member. Now, age 34, he has no memories of a family Christmas.

"I lived without any peace for over 20 years. Because I was always at war with other gangs, my family had no peace either. To this day I have no explanation for being alive or never being shot. I was always armed and was involved in countless shootouts. It wasn't until I lost my brother and my mother that I walked away from the lifestyle. My brother (age 18) was killed in an auto accident on September 27, 2015, and my mom, who battled complications from diabetes, passed away on November 8, 2015 from the sadness of his loss. All of a sudden I could feel the pain of deep loss, something that I had caused others. It just hit me. I couldn't do that to people anymore."



Felipe sought help through the Fresno Rescue Mission but left after 4 months to try recovery through an outpatient program. It wasn't enough. Eventually, he came back.

*"I was sitting in the chapel service at the Mission one evening and felt like the chaplain was speaking about me. Every word he said was about my life, playing out in every detail. I can't explain what happened next, but I felt free. Listening to Him talk about Jesus gave me hope. The Lord was suddenly there, and very real to me. At that moment I committed my efforts to the program and committed my life to follow Jesus. I called my probation officer and told her I was back at the FRM Academy. Even though I only had 3 months remaining on my probation, I knew I needed more than a release from the courts. **I needed the life God was promising me.**"*

No longer a threat, Felipe is working toward a new kind of life. Because of the time he spent living on the streets, he never finished school. Even when he attended school, he struggled. *"My reading comprehension level is very low, so I will be taking GED courses for a long time. It's something I need to move forward, but it's also something I really want. I struggle when I try to read Scripture. For now, I just listen to what I hear other people read and hear. They sound so smart and they get things I don't. Reading is not easy, but I won't give up. I want to hear God talk to me in His Word like others do."*

Felipe has now finished his 1-year residential portion of the Academy program. He transitioned into Aftercare and was hired by the Mission to work as our Cook in Food Services.



Felipe, pictured with his little brother, Jeremiah.



Felipe pictured with just a small portion of his enormous family, captured during a family birthday celebration, before he returned to the Academy.

"I love working in the kitchen and learning from the rest of the staff. I'm very shy - it's an odd personality trait when I consider the reputation I used to have, running the streets - a time when people were afraid of me. Now, being around people who are kind is new to me. The program staff and the men enrolled in the program help me grow and engage. I also like the people I meet who come in for meals. There was a time when I would have used their pain and addiction to build up my gang status and reputation. Today, I cook for them. It feels good.

Actually, my whole life changed. My friends and family no longer see me in the same way either. God has changed me so much that my life has become a living testimony to His love, power and continued grace. He restored my connection to the people I loved and missed. Because of that, this year I'll be home for Christmas. It will be the first time in...I can't even remember. No more violence, and no more worries that bullets will fly through the walls unexpectedly. From now on, I'm living with hope in the future God has for me."

VOLUNTEERS AT THE MISSION

See how you too can be a part of our Mission work during Christmas and all year long. Contact Paula Bohamed, our Volunteer and Events Coordinator at (559)293-4522 or email pbohamed@fresnorm.org for volunteer opportunities





My gift this holiday season . . .

To _____

Is a donation to the Fresno Rescue Mission

In Honor of _____

Throughout the year . . .

Here is a snapshot of how your giving provides opportunities:

- \$20.50** provides 10 warm and nutritious meals.
- \$35** provides one of 4 GED tests for a disciple
- \$250** provides bus tokens for the Academy for one month
- \$4,000** provides bus tokens for RTC for a year
- \$140** provides 1 month of healthy snacks for the children's Discovery Center
- \$212** provides 1 month of diapers and pull ups
- \$27.98** provides 1 can of baby formula
- \$4,800** provides our approximate fuel expense per month

Each and every gift – large or small – is making a difference. For a complete listing of financial accountability, please see our webpage link at <https://fresnorm.org/about/>



GED is a mandatory component in our recovery programs for any man or woman lacking in literacy or lacking a high school diploma (roughly 45% of those we serve).

FRESNO RESCUE MISSION, INC.

To mail a gift:

P. O. Box 1422, Fresno CA 93716-1422
Phone: (559) 268-0839
Fax: (559) 268-1317
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES – 263 G Street

FRM THRIFT STORE AND CARS
181 E. Sierra, Fresno CA 93710
(559) 440-0870



Please remember the Fresno Rescue Mission in your will or trust.

Need Help?

COMMUNITY CARE – 315 G Street
24-Hour Emergency Services /Case Management

(559) 444-0451

FOOD SERVICES

Dining Area/Kitchen – 285 G Street
Breakfast: 6 AM
Dinner: 5 PM

CHAPEL LOCATION – 239 G Street

Service Times: 7:30 PM Every Evening

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY:

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- Ken Scheid – ScheidImages.smugmug.com
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