

Paul's Ponderings

Happy 2024!

A new year is always a good time for new beginnings, and second chances. Remember when we played softball as kids? Every now and then we'd call for a "do-over." I often think of that when people come to us for help. They get a second chance, or a do-over. The difference now is that, they have a strong relationship with God and He is right there helping them through.



Paul Stasi, Executive Director, CRM

I love the "Footprints in the Sand" poem and use it as a reminder. Two sets of footprints started in the sand. They represent us walking with the Lord. At times, though, there was only one set of prints. While we may think that God had left us to walk alone during difficult times, the reality was that this was when He carried us.

As those who come to City Rescue Mission for help commit their lives to Christ, we know that they can be assured that, "they are a new creation. The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Too often, the old self has a grip. We want them to be set free and walk in their new identity in Christ.

On a corporate level, we keep being led to Isaiah 43:18, where it says "Behold, I will do a new thing." We know the needs are great and the workers are few. We have been working tirelessly to ensure that the services and ministries we offer are top notch and effective. We see God working a new thing here. We know He is calling us to do more and serve more and we are entering a season of growth. You will hear further about this in the future.

For now, we will continue to help as many people as we can, with the best services. We want to see them live out their lives as new creations in Christ Jesus. This ministry can only be done with your continued prayers and support, so thank you! May you have a happy and blessed new year!

CREATIVE GIVING THAT MAKES A LASTING DIFFERENCE

In 2018, a Texas woman purchased a sculpture from her local Goodwill store that was later identified as a priceless Roman bust.* Talk about a unique donation!



There are other unique ways you can support the work of organizations close to your heart, no matter your season of life or size of your budget.

Prayer. Interceding for the ministries you love is a welcome gift.

In-Kind Gifts. You may have resources or skills to help us further our mission. Get in touch with us for what in-kind gifts can make the most difference.

Other Assets. About 90% of wealth is held in non-cash assets like IRAs, real estate, stocks, or personal property. Many have also found that creative giving could mean leaving a legacy through a gift in their will to Your Ministry Name.

Your creative giving impacts the Kingdom! "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God" (2 Corinthians 9:12).

For more information, please contact Angela Washington at (904) 421-5147 or awashington@crmjax.org.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

City Rescue Mission is in need of the following:

- 400 TWIN cotton thermal blankets or a gift of \$25.00 each. ◀ Urgent Need
- NIV Life Study Bibles- Large Print 60
- Kitchen exit doors for New Life Inn \$10,000 and McDuff exit doors \$22,000
- Upgraded flooring in classrooms and offices at McDuff Campus \$42,000
- Chapel roof \$30,000
- Our store needs donations: Gently used pots & pans, dishes and mugs, shoes, sheets, towels.



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New Life NEWS

JANUARY 2024

J.B. - Without Him, I Have Nothing

J.B. tried to steer clear of negative influences but his path was filled with instability and self-destruction. When his life depended on it, he turned to the Lord.

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JB - Without Him I Have Nothing

As a young man raised by his grandmother in Chicago, J.B. understood the bleak outlook for kids in the inner city where gangs, substance abuse and violent crime were prevalent and often the only means of survival. But J.B. saw another alternative: service to his country. "I left Chicago in order to have a productive life in the military," he says. "I wanted to escape and build a successful future."

But sadly it wasn't to be. While his decision on the surface seemed wise and well advised, it took him down a path of self-destruction.

Homesick and often with too much time on their hands, J.B. and others in his platoon began abusing alcohol. When he learned his grandmother was dying and he wasn't allowed to go home, his grief and anger, fueled by his growing addiction, resulted in behavior that led to him being compelled to leave the military.

"My life spiraled into disarray." He returned to Chicago. While he was fortunate to find work, the jobs were seasonal. Once again, he began filling idle time with self-destructive behaviors that, for more than two decades, resulted in broken family relationships, spotty employment and bouts of homelessness. He was filled with regret and self-contempt.



"I constantly thought about my life and my failures. I couldn't blame anybody for my downfalls. I didn't want to listen or adhere to the rules of society. I felt incomplete - I had no peace."

Finally, severe health challenges nearly cost him his life, and he knew he had to change his ways and his environment. He'd heard how the Mission helps men like him build new lives in Christ. So he traveled to Jacksonville and surrendered to the Lord.

"I couldn't take care of myself any longer. I was tired of the unsustainability and loneliness. I didn't want my kids to say, 'My dad didn't love us because all he thought about was drinking and drugging and running the streets.' I thought I was just hurting myself, but I was hurting my loved ones."

That was 10 years ago. Today, an alumni of our LifeBuilders Program, **J.B. is nine years sober, married, healthy and at peace with the Lord.** Now as then, our holistic outreach continues to address the long-term emotional, spiritual, medical and educational needs of those with life-dominating issues. Most important for J.B., our counselors encouraged him to accept God's forgiveness and place his trust in Him.

"That was just what I needed, because without God I have nothing. I'm in constant prayer, especially when I face adversity."

If not for the Mission, J.B. says he would still be lost and without those in his life who mean so much to him - his wife and children and the students in our program for whom he serves as a mentor and godly role model. When he finds himself with free time, he embraces it to share God's life-transforming Word with others. **"If I can mentor others, I don't mind, because somebody did it for me. And once I let God take the wheel, I never looked back."**

The Florida Department of Health

Provided Narcan & Fentanyl Strips to CRM along with training to the staff at CRM.

DRUG OVERDOSE

Is the leading cause of accidental death

91 AMERICANS DIE EVERY DAY FROM OPIATES

Overdoses tripled from 1999-2017

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

- Small constricted "pinpoint pupils."
- Falling asleep or losing consciousness.
- Slow, weak, or not breathing.
- Choking or gurgling sounds.
- Cold and/or clammy skin.
- Discolored skin, especially lips and nails.
- Limp body.



WHAT TO DO

1. Call 911 Immediately
2. Administer naloxone, if available
3. Try to keep the person awake and breathing
4. Lay the person on their side to prevent choking
5. Stay with the person until emergency assistance arrives



Enjoy an evening of laughs from Robert G. Lee, a seasoned comic who comes armed with a refreshingly clean, relatable act! He's a sitcom warm-up trained to ad lib with any type of crowd. He has been entertaining audiences behind the scenes on Hollywood sitcoms for over 3 decades!

Thursday, May 2, 2024 - Southbank Hotel Jacksonville Riverwalk
Sponsorships Available Table (10 seats) \$1500
CONTACT: Angela Washington (904) 421-5147 or crmdevelopment@crmjax.org.

CHRISTMAS PUBLIC MEAL

We celebrated the birth of Jesus at the Mission and gathered with our community, the "CRM Family." Everyone enjoyed a message from Pastor Artie Brown and then a delicious Christmas meal. Afterwards, we distributed Shoeboxes of Love and other donated gifts. Our friends expressed how much they appreciate what CRM has done for them.



We appreciate those who donate, volunteer and support us. THANK YOU! We couldn't do it without you!

Prayer & Praise

Thank you to our donors and volunteers for your support and prayers for our students. They have many struggles, but your kindness and prayers help through it all.

STUDENT CHRISTMAS PARTY

