

Paul's Ponderings

While in college years ago (1982), my wife, Laurie, and I volunteered to do tutoring in Chicago's Cook County Jail. This was our first time locked up behind bars. It was somewhat daunting initially. Even though I had worked with juvenile delinquents who had gang affiliations, the jail inmates were a rough crowd. The jail's staff member who oversaw our group of suburban Christian college students was himself a Christian, and that made us more comfortable. He had a motto that he said to the inmates, **"tomorrow about this time, things are gonna change."** This phrase has stuck with me all these years.



Paul Stasi, Executive Director, CRM

In 2015, as we were deciding on a new motto for the Mission's 70th Anniversary, we settled on Hope, Healing and Change. Change is a big word. Change is inevitable. Change will occur whether we like it or not. The question is, what positive steps do we need to take for our personal change.

We teach those in our care, regarding their former way of life, **"to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires."** They can be **"new in the attitude"** of their minds. They may, **"put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness,"** Ephesians 4:22-24. We can praise God that through Christ, we are a **"new creation, the old has gone and the new has come,"** 2 Corinthians 5:17. This is the change we all want and our students embrace.

Recently, I was distributing flyers door-to-door in our McDuff neighborhood with some guys in our LifeBuilders Program about our Fall Festival community outreach. One young guy was court-ordered here and had come straight from jail. He had given his life to the Lord in an evening Bible Study two weeks before. He began praying for people we met on the street. He was a brand-new believer and an introvert, so going up to a stranger and praying was WAY out of his comfort zone. But he showed the love of God and was faithful and prayed. We are making disciples. This was only possible through the life transforming change of God in his life.

The only one who doesn't change is God. Jesus **"remains the same yesterday, today and forever,"** Hebrews 13:8; and **"The Father does not change like shifting shadows,"** James 1:17.

We are so thankful to you and your generous gifts and prayers that make these amazing life changes possible!

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:

- Upgraded flooring in classrooms and offices at McDuff Campus \$42,000
- Chapel roof \$30,000
- Kitchen exit doors for New Life Inn \$10,000 and McDuff exit doors \$22,000
- **400 TWIN cotton thermal blankets or a gift of \$25.00 each. ◀ Urgent Need**
- Replacement of Dental Clinic flooring: Cost \$15,000

Contact Angela A. Washington at (904) 421-5147 or awashington@crmjax.org



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New Life NEWS

DECEMBER 2023



Keith was on a path of self-destruction. He knew something had to change.

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KEITH

"It's like when you're riding a bicycle and you fall and skin your knees and your mama runs and picks you up while you're cryin' and hugs you like everything's gonna be alright. God is here at the Mission, and He's holding me like everything's gonna be alright. I can't even fathom the feeling of it." – Keith

It started as simply "pain management" prescription medication for ongoing physical distress. But when the pain was gone, Keith's desire for the drug lingered on.

"Then it flared up and got outta hand, and I was addicted," he says.

After his prescription was discontinued, he was on his own. "The only thing my consciousness was thinking about was getting high." He couldn't hold a job and began to lie and steal from his family to sustain his habit. Soon he lost their trust and respect.

"They disowned me and they cast me off, so I became homeless."

Through a friend of a friend, he found a place to stay rent free. For the next eight years, rejecting genuine opportunities to turn his life around, he survived with only running water, no electricity, light or heat, no fan or A/C. He continued to do whatever was necessary to support his addiction.

"Through the summer and winter months, it was horrendous." Finally, he could no longer manage his toxic and unhealthy lifestyle. As his resources dried up, he began to experience withdrawals so intense that he had to be hospitalized. "It got to a point that my body was failing and the doctor said I had to get



help, and that my life depended on it. They told me about City Rescue Mission."

Keith was familiar with our ministry as he'd been in our care before. But he admits he'd been impatient. He left before his healing was complete and rekindled his self-destructive ways. Concerned about how he'd be received if he returned, "I asked the Lord to help and I was sincere." God's presence was evident as soon as Keith walked through the doors at CRM.

"They welcomed me with open arms. They didn't look down on me. They didn't laugh at me. They embraced me with love, physical and spiritual love." Keith re-entered our LifeBuilders Program, but with a different attitude than before. "This time I learned to be patient and stand grounded in the Word of God, and that's keeping me humble." And after completing the program, including Bible Study, addiction recovery, life skills development and work readiness, God opened a door for Keith by revealing what He wanted him to do with his life. Keith plans to go into ministry to share the Lord's life-transforming love with others. And the Mission is helping him prepare.

"They taught me if I'm gonna be a pastor, if I'm going to be telling

people about the Word of God, I gotta have accountability for myself and the things that I do, spiritually, physically and mentally." If he hadn't returned to the Mission, Keith says, he fears he'd be in prison or the graveyard. Today he's grateful to our staff, and to friends like you, for his health, his strength and his new beginning.

"I am clean, sober and in my right state of mind . . . and I thank God. It's a feeling I can't explain. It's a relief."

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

HOPEWELL CHURCH has brought over 500 volunteers to CRM this year! We could not do the work we do without the help of individuals and churches who give their time and talent to help those in need. You are greatly appreciated!



Thank You!



THANK YOU!

A big THANK YOU for the generous support of our TURKEY AND HAM DRIVE, MISSION WARM FEET, the TOY DRIVE as well as our SHOEBOXES OF LOVE. Because of you we were able to feed the needy and homeless throughout the holidays and give them gifts of compassion.

If you would like to find out about other ways that you can help CRM, contact Sherrie Mack at (904) 387-4357 or Volunteers@crmjax.org



We are pleased to share that we have been re-accredited through CARF, for our CROSSROADS program. CRM has provided residential recovery since 1988. Crossroads began in 2017 to serve those on felony probation helping them on their road to recovery from substance use disorder.

THANK YOU RIVERSIDE HOSPITAL FOUNDATION!

CRM has received a grant from Riverside Hospital Foundation. The money will provide much needed assistance to those in need.



JOY FM

The Joy FM held their big annual promotion, T-Shirts for Turkey's to feed those in need during the holidays at CRM. We value JOY FM and their support! **THANK YOU!**

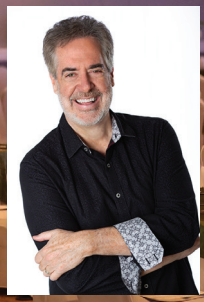


CRM THRIFT

CHRISTMAS Sale

December 18	Books 15% off
December 19	Jewelry 15% off
December 20	Homegoods 15% off
December 21	Kid's clothes 15% off
December 22	Handbags 15% off
December 23	Toys 15% off
December 24	-closed-

STORE LOCATION
7200 Normandy Blvd. Jacksonville, FL 32205
904 421-5171



9th ANNUAL DIFFERENCE MAKERS BANQUET

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.