

Paul's Ponderings

FRUITFUL

There are many verses that come to mind when I think about fruitfulness. The first is *Genesis 1:28* "be fruitful and multiply," I interpret this to also mean that we are to be spiritually fruitful.



Paul Stasi, Executive Director, CRM

Paul, in Galatians, says that there is "fruit" of the spirit. The prophet Jeremiah says that when we trust in the Lord, we are like a tree planted by the water having no worries during a drought and always bearing fruit, and Jesus calls us to bear fruit in the gospel of John.

Since we are created in God's image, we are to be fruitful. The Lord could have created everything Himself, but He chose to create us to work in tandem with Him to bring about the world's potential; to participate in His work. We are made for fruitfulness and commissioned for fruitfulness. In fact, in *Colossians 1:9*, God is not just calling us to work, He's calling us to bear fruit in our work. God desires for us to actively engage with the world around us.

As disciples of Jesus, we are commanded to go out and make disciples. He wants us to be fruitful. In other words, He wants us to live out our productivity in whatever social and cultural spheres He has placed us. This is exactly what we are doing at the Mission. We are either bringing people to a saving knowledge of Christ or guiding them to recommit their lives to Christ. The rest of our work then is discipling and commissioning them to go out and make disciples themselves. I often say that they will have contact with so many people that we never will, and I encourage them to share their faith and their testimony.

So, your support has a multiplication effect in the Kingdom! As we work to be fruitful and multiply, so do those who come to us for help, and it just keeps going. Your gifts have such a great kingdom impact and I am certain the Lord is pleased.

Thank you so much, good and faithful servant.

FRUITFUL

- ♦ advantageous ♦ beneficial ♦ abounding ♦ abundant
- ♦ blooming ♦ blossoming ♦ effective ♦ fertile ♦ flourishing
- ♦ gainful ♦ plentiful ♦ profuse ♦ proliferant ♦ propagating
- ♦ reproducing ♦ blossoming ♦ rewarding ♦ successful

HOW CREATING A WILL SHOWS YOU CARE

Before Dr. Gary Chapman was a bestselling author, he was a husband in a struggling marriage. His wife was frustrated that he didn't help around the house. He was disappointed she didn't respond to his encouraging words. When they realized they expressed love differently, the discovery led to Gary's book *The Five Love Languages*, a resource that has helped millions of people.*



Have you ever thought about legacy planning as an act of love? It's a loving deed that:

Serves your family. Creating a will ensures your financial house is in order, your final wishes are clear, and your family is saved stress and expense.

Shares what matters. Your will allows you to communicate with your loved ones about your cherished beliefs and values.

Spreads the love. What better gift to give than one that changes lives? That's the impact you have when you leave a gift in your will to City Rescue Mission. Your loving generosity embodies these words from Mother Teresa: "Love has no meaning if it isn't shared. Love has to be put into action."

*Story found in USA Today

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
- New Life Inn Oven \$13,809
- **New Life Inn Men's Dorm AC \$5,680** ◀ Urgent Need
- 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.**
- Replacement of Dental Clinic flooring: Cost \$15,000

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



CRMjax.org

Follow Us on Social Media



Board of Directors

Mark Anderson, <i>Chair</i> Robin Hyde, <i>Vice-Chair</i>		
Pamela Kincaid, <i>Secretary</i> Kendall Spencer, <i>Finance</i>		
Shontrell Anderson	Craig Henderson	Gary Walsh
Carrie Chupp	Rocky Johnson	Clay Yarborough
Tina Daniels	Chad Perce	
David Eure	Laura Smith	



New Life NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024



VENUS "I am beautifully and wonderfully made."
When the loving couple who had raised her passed away, Venus adopted a perilous lifestyle that left her homeless . . . and eventually battered and bruised.

VENUS'S STORY
Page 2

BANQUET HOMELESS MEMORIAL
Page 3

PAUL'S PONDERINGS MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Page 4

VENUS'S STORY

I am Beautifully and Wonderfully Made

Born to a woman barely more than a child herself, Venus enjoyed a happy, if unconventional, upbringing. The young mother and daughter were "adopted" and cared for by an older couple whom Venus lovingly referred to as her foster grandparents. "It was wonderful growing up with them," she says.

But by the time she was 22, the couple had passed away, leaving Venus and her mother heartbroken and struggling without the resources they depended on. They moved from place to place, relying on the good graces of others for shelter and necessities. Sadly, mired in the depths of grief and frustration, Venus began abusing alcohol.

"I just wanted to party and have fun."

Through her self-destructive habits, Venus met a man who encouraged her to leave her mother and they began a nomadic existence that eventually brought them to Jacksonville. For 13 years, they worked labor pool jobs, sleeping on the streets or in hotels when they had the money. They learned to "follow the homeless" to find showers, clothing and soup kitchens. And Venus continued to cultivate her addiction.

Finally, the couple's relationship soured and resulted in an altercation. "He hit me and I was stunned . . . I was bleeding. I closed my eyes and thought, 'I'm tired of this lifestyle but there's nothing anybody can do.'"

Venus hadn't yet learned of God's life-changing love. By His grace, good Samaritans had witnessed the fight, and they directed her to City Rescue Mission.

"The most important thing about being in LifeBuilders is that every day you get to walk the walk of someone who is recovering. You feel your life is a new story going forward and God put you on this path to learn."

As with untold guests before her, Venus immediately felt welcome when she walked in the door. "It was like a big hug," she says, "with open arms that make you feel you're part of a family." Just as important, our faith-based environment supported her healing and encouraged her to trust in the Lord.

"The Bible tells me I am beautifully and wonderfully made. So I have no fear. I pray first and then go about my day."

In our LifeBuilders Program, Venus found the tools and skills she needed to overcome destructive habits and end life-draining behaviors. Through her ministry assignments she found fulfillment in helping others and seeing them smile as she shared God's compassion and love. She worked in our kitchen for two years, then moved into transitional housing and took a job at a restaurant, where she continues to touch lives with her servant's heart.

Venus recently celebrated her 49th birthday and feels, indeed, like she's been reborn. She's sober, independent and humbled to share her story with friends like you and those seeking their own new beginnings.



"God loves you just like He loves me. He gave me a choice and a second chance at my life. Now I have a job and I'm happy, and I know God has more wonderful things in store."

CRAVING CHOCOLATE?

CRM'S CHARIS CHOCOLATES are available at ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL BOOKSTORE. Stop in for a look at their books, gifts and buy some delicious CHARIS chocolate to support CRM!



SAVE THE DATES

SPRING LIFEBUILDERS GRADUATION
FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 2024
Wayne M. Densch Chapel (426 S McDuff Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32254) Join us

EASTER BANQUET AT NEW LIFE INN - THURSDAY, MARCH 28
New Life Inn (234 W. State Street, Jacksonville, FL 32202)
We will be providing Easter praise and worship, along with a traditional Easter meal for the public in need on April 6. Praise and worship will begin at 10:30 am and the meal will be served from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BREAKFAST - THURSDAY, APRIL 18.
City Rescue Mission's McDuff Campus (426 S. McDuff Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32254). If you are interested in getting plugged into the volunteer program at City Rescue Mission, we invite you to contact Sherrie Mack at (904) 421-387-4357 or volunteers@crmjax.org.

9th ANNUAL

Difference Makers Banquet

Featuring the Comedy of Robert G. Lee

Thursday, May 2, 2024

Seating begins at 6 p.m. Banquet begins at 6:30

Southbank Hotel Jacksonville Riverwalk

Tickets \$150 Table (10 seats) \$1500

1515 Prudential Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32207

Contact: Angela Washington (904) 421-5147 or crmdevelopment@crmjax.org.

We have included the ECFA brochure to highlight our commitment to the highest standards in financial accountability. We promise to use your gifts wisely and effectively in Christ's name.

Furniture

BIG SALE

CRM THRIFT STORE

30% OFF

GENTLY USED FURNITURE SALE

FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 30, 2024
GENTLY USED FURNITURE SALE AT CRM THRIFT STORE
7200 NORMANDY BLVD., JACKSONVILLE, FL 32205

HOMELESS MEMORIAL

Every year the Homeless Commission has a Memorial Service for those who have passed from this life while homeless. We are honored to host this service in our chapel and to have local representatives attend.

Our hearts break that even one person should die on a cold pavement without shelter or care. Thank you for showing compassion to those experiencing homelessness in Jacksonville.