



THANKSGIVING DAY AT THE PALMERS

Give thanks this November by helping those in need.

By Jim Palmer
President, Orange County Rescue Mission

Yes, we do have a traditional turkey dinner at home. However, we also try to invite a few people over who don't have family nearby or have had a tragedy and aren't looking forward to the holiday. It's a special day to share with others—that's the calm part of the day.

Before we eat, the race is on. As the President of the Orange County Rescue Mission, it is my task to assist those who are homeless in our county. The kids and I race to the different shelter facilities like the Men's Shelter or the House of Hope for homeless women with children, for Mission activities. I usually go with the kids, while mom stays home with the adult company. And my kids love it.

My 11-year-old Kody, our second oldest, wants my job. He tells people, "When I grow up, I'm going to be the executive director of the Orange County Rescue Mission." He likes the idea of helping people. All of my kids, since they were tiny, have been really attuned to ministering to other people. The first three are fostered and adopted, so they already have a sense of what they've received and a desire to give back. I'm proud of them all. And I'm thankful for so much. I'm thankful just to be able to serve with so many others who love helping people out.

I'm thankful for the miracles. Some only God could have done – and others he's done through people who care. I can look back years ago and remember when we didn't have enough turkeys for everyone. One year we had run out of turkeys and we were turning away a family when another family pulled up to donate a turkey.

And the needs haven't subsided. According to an article in the Orange County Register on Thursday, July 22, 2004, a County study revealed that the number

of Orange County homeless has risen by 25% in the past year, from 27,947 to 34,998.

That means we need a lot more food! It's hard to imagine finding enough food or cooks or volunteers to provide the anticipated 50,860 meals this holiday season. But we'll do it.

We'll be able to do it because the people of this County always come through. Year after year, in the midst of the busyness of the holiday, people like you still remember your forgotten neighbors who dearly need a meal, who need to know that someone cares, and that they are not alone.

If you are looking for a way to reach out to someone in need, the Orange County Rescue Mission will be accepting donations of food items such as turkeys, canned hams, instant potatoes, yams, string beans, cranberry sauce, stuffing, rolls, pies, canned fruit, gravy, fresh vegetables for salads, salad dressings, fruit punch, milk and assorted pies; as well as 2,000 lbs of non-perishable food and 500 canned hams for food boxes which will be delivered to families who live in the poverty motels.

Please deliver food before noon on Wednesday, November 24, 2004, to the Orange County Rescue Mission's Support Office located at 1421 Edinger Avenue Ste. B, Tustin, CA 92780.

Also, volunteers are much needed to coordinate food drives, sort and pack food boxes at the warehouse, and cook turkeys. Your donations and assistance bring more than just food to poor, hungry men, women, and children—your gifts bring love, joy, and hope. What a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday!

For information on how to help this holiday season, call 714 258-4450 or visit our website at www.rescuemission.org. ■

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