

# Orlando Union Rescue Mission

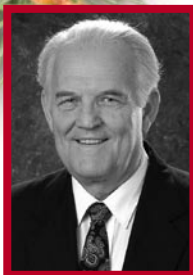
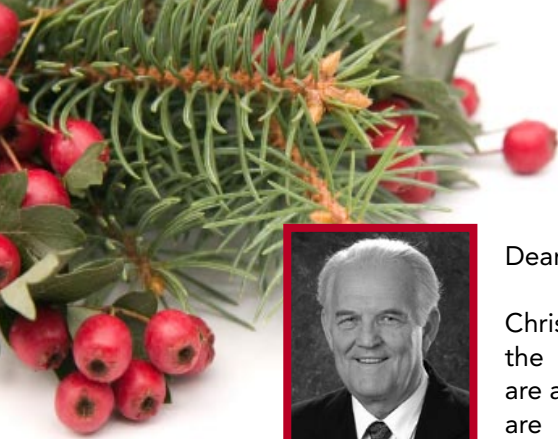
## *the Light of Hope*

...bringing the hungry, hurting and homeless to a new life,  
new goals and a new future in Christ since 1948.

**"Thanks be  
unto God  
for His  
unspeakable  
gift."**

**- 2 Cor 9:15**





Dear Friends,

Christmas is just around the corner... the signs are all around! The malls are buzzing with busy shoppers searching for the perfect holiday gifts;

shiny ornaments and glittering lights are hung carefully on the Christmas tree; and the soft hum of Christmas carols are the choice music everywhere you go.

Now imagine all of that being stripped away. For the homeless, the abundance of Christmas festivities can just be a reminder of the loneliness and desperation that they feel everyday. For the homeless, Christmas morning is not a time of opening up brightly colored packages. It's not a time of great joy. Homeless men, women, and children are simply trying to survive life on the streets—without food, without shelter, and without hope.

So what is Christmas at the Mission like? It is a time of joy as we celebrate the birth of the King, Jesus Christ. The One who has changed so many lives here through His mighty power. It is a time when homeless families create memories thanks to your generous outpouring of gifts this time of year. Your faithful support can give them a reason to be thankful during such tough times. Your gifts show them that they are not forgotten this Christmas. Thank you for caring enough to make a difference!

In Christ,

*Don*  
Don Moody,  
Executive Director



**If your employer has a Matching Gift Program, please consider asking them to match your gift to the Mission!**



***Give a year-end gift... to mark a fresh beginning for someone else!***

The Mission depends on the outpouring of your generous year-end gifts to provide food, clothing, and shelter to the homeless of Central Florida all year long. Your generosity during the holiday season shows thousands of men, women, and children that they have not been forgotten. Show them you care and please remember the Mission as you make your year-end giving plans!



# **We May Be Homeless... But We Are Together This Christmas!**

## ***The Story of Mary and Joseph Plain OURM Women & Children's Division Residents***



**C**hristmas is a time of celebration - a time of being together with loved ones. At least that is what it meant for the Plain family. They had always been together for the holiday season, sharing it as a family. However,

this Christmas would be different. Mary and Joseph couldn't have imagined that this year they would be homeless. Set aside the gifts and the Christmas dinner, these parents were just trying to keep their family together in spite of a financial crisis.

A few months ago, the Plain family came to Florida after they had been told that job opportunities were plentiful and housing was more affordable down south. It seemed like an opportunity to change their lives for the better, so they picked up everything and moved to Orlando.

Upon arriving, they were welcomed with the harsh reality that housing wasn't quite as affordable as they had originally thought, so they were left to rent a small condo. However, the unthinkable happened as Joseph, a hard working father with 28 years of work experience, struggled to find a good paying job. Joseph wanted nothing more than to support his family, so he chose to accept a job that didn't pay as much so the family would not continue to fall behind financially.

***"It was strange being in a place that was so organized when our life was in such chaos..."***

No matter how hard he worked, the bills overshadowed his income. Eventually, sacrifices were made as the utilities were turned off, leaving the Plain's without the most basic of comforts. Wondering if they had made the right decision to  
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## Who says supporting the Orlando Union Rescue Mission has to be boring?!?

**W**ould you be willing to give the shoes off your own feet to someone who didn't have any? That is exactly what Pastor Rodney Gage of Fellowship Orlando Church called for in his 3 Sunday morning services.

Pastor Gage surprised the congregation by asking them to give the shoes they wore to church that morning to a man, woman, or child in need. Right then and there, the congregation joyfully took their shoes off and piled them at the altar, leaving them barefoot for the remainder of the service. Bags and bags of shoes were donated to the Mission through this innovative collection!

It is always a blessing to hear how donors stretch their imaginations to make their contributions to the Mission fun and memorable. Each year churches, schools, businesses, and individuals come up with creative ways to partner with the Mission. The opportunities are endless... what will you think of next, Central Florida?

## *My Christmas Wish...*

**By Michelle, Resident at OURM Women & Children's Division**

**S**o here begins a life of poor choices and bad moves. Although I had been a Christian since I was 11 years old, I was always looking for approval from others: my parents, my friends, my teachers, and up until a short time ago, my boyfriends. Not knowing what real love was at the time, I started sleeping with my boyfriends outside of marriage because I thought that was the type of love I was looking for. I believed it would fill a void in my heart, but I was wrong and began a dangerous game of Russian Roulette with my life.

I now have 4 children by 3 different men who have abused me physically and mentally. I was blessed with my first child at the age of 19. However, after 2 years of abuse, my ex-husband and I decided to get a divorce. It was very traumatic, but I realize that it was for the best.

My second child came shortly thereafter by a man who made prison his permanent home. I was alone for most of the pregnancy and after my son's birth he and I lived in a local shelter for the first 2 years of his life. It was at that time that I realized that I was not going to let my precious son go through anything that was going to hinder him from having the best life possible, so I made the choice to give him up to a wonderful, godly couple who took him in as their own.

Shortly before I had given up my second son, I met a man who would be the father of my next 2 children. Over the next 3 years, our relationship consisted of a lot of drinking, drug use, cheating, and abuse. Eventually, the relationship ended leaving me with nowhere to go so I resorted to life on the streets. At that time, I was pregnant, sleeping on the concrete ground,

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MISSION?

### MISSION IN ACTION

Mission in Action is starting off with an exciting lineup in 2008. January's special guest speaker is:



Randal James  
First Baptist Church Orlando  
January 14, 2008 11:30 am- 1:00 pm  
Cost is \$5.00

Join us for a touching testimony, a tasty meal, and plenty of fellowship. For more information, contact LeeDawn Carpenter at 407-422-4855 ext. 116.

## *Christmas Banquet*



On Friday, Dec. 21 the Mission will host its annual Christmas Banquet. A hot, home cooked meal with all of the fixings may just be the start of a new beginning for those living on the streets of Orlando.

To support this special outreach to Central Florida's neediest call 407-422-4855.

