

the Light of Hope

www.ourm.org ★ December 2011



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

IN THIS ISSUE:

Putting Christmas in Perspective

2 Corinthians 1:2: "Grace unto to you and peace from God our Father.."

God Made a Way

The Story of Nicole and Israel Torres, Current Residents at O.U.R. Mission Home

Nicole and Israel were at their breaking point. They sat with their 2 children in a dark room –with no money to pay the past-due electric bill and no food in the pantry. They had left their home country of Puerto Rico in hopes of pursuing the "American Dream." But this dream had suddenly turned into a nightmare.

Nicole and Israel arrived in this country with one child and another on the way. They were desperate to leave their past behind and have a fresh start for their family. Israel immediately began working as a maintenance technician, as well as taking odd jobs in order to make ends meet. Nicole also began looking for work in her field as a Medical Secretary.

For a while, things seemed to be going well. Nicole and Israel moved into their own home and they both had steady jobs. However, Nicole recalls being at her office one day and getting an unexpected visit from Israel. "I showed up at my wife's job crying that day. I had been laid off," he explained. With hardly any savings Israel desperately searched for work. Because of his skilled work experience, he was hired for 2 more jobs but was laid off again from each as work became scarce. Israel utters with tears in his eyes, "I've always been a hard worker, but it doesn't matter how hard you work. If God wants to take something from you, He will."

After struggling for months to live on only Nicole's salary, bills began to lapse, the electricity was shut off, and the little food they had became a luxury for only the children. Even Nicole's wedding rings had to be sold just to buy food to feed their family.

"I showed up at my wife's job crying that day. I had been laid off."

One evening, Nicole left the house at 7pm to pay what little she could on their past-due phone bill. As the hours passed, Israel began to worry that Nicole was not yet back. Finally, after midnight, she walked in the door and Israel noticed that she had been crying. But they were tears of joy. "God has opened a door for us!" exclaimed Nicole.

Continued on back page



Putting Christmas in Perspective



ALLEN HARDEN, PRESIDENT/CEO

We often hear that Christmas is "the most wonderful time of the year," and for most – it is. But do we ever stop to think about those who may not be having such a "wonderful" Christmas? People

that cross our paths everyday, who we may never notice, are struggling and crying out for help during this time of year.

Imagine waking up on Christmas morning homeless – maybe in a rundown motel, in a vehicle, or even on the street. How would you feel waking up and seeing the look on your child's face when he or she has nothing to open this year?

These homeless families don't dream of things like Santa Claus and bright Christmas lights. They dream of just having a safe shelter and being able to make it through the day with what little food they may have.

However, you can help make this time of year memorable and exciting for the homeless men, women, and children in our community. Your support allows the Mission to share the true meaning of Christmas and provide the broken hearted with a blessed holiday season and lasting hope for the new year!

Provide 20 Christmas meals for only \$24.80!

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A WAY TO MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS PARTY STAND OUT THIS YEAR?

Instead of another "secret Santa" or "white elephant" gift exchange, make your party have a lasting impact in our community by asking guests to bring a Christmas gift or financial contribution to help those who have no hope this Christmas!

This is a unique and easy way to get your friends and family involved in helping those who are hurting this holiday season.

If you would like more information on Christmas giving opportunities, please call 407-422-4855 ext 1117.

Donate Your Christmas Party

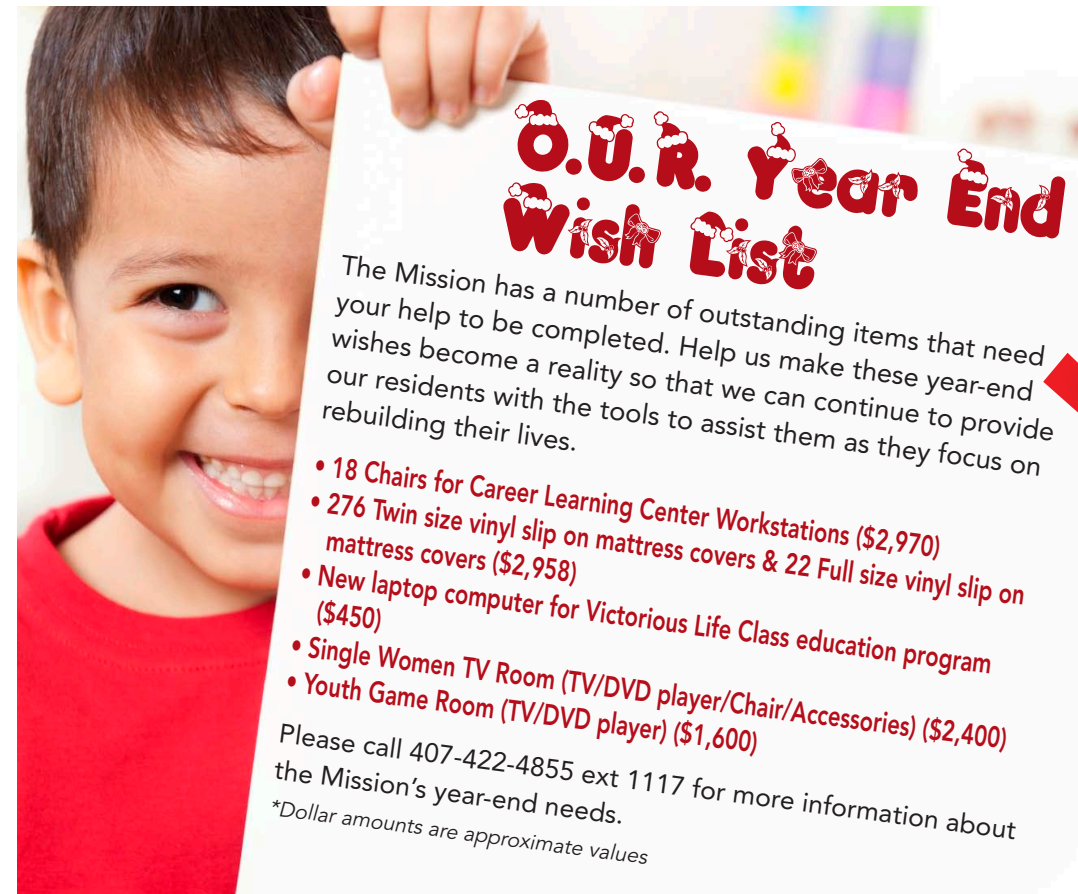
O.U.R. Year End Wish List

The Mission has a number of outstanding items that need your help to be completed. Help us make these year-end wishes become a reality so that we can continue to provide our residents with the tools to assist them as they focus on rebuilding their lives.

- 18 Chairs for Career Learning Center Workstations (\$2,970)
- 276 Twin size vinyl slip on mattress covers & 22 Full size vinyl slip on mattress covers (\$2,958)
- New laptop computer for Victorious Life Class education program (\$450)
- Single Women TV Room (TV/DVD player/Chair/Accessories) (\$2,400)
- Youth Game Room (TV/DVD player) (\$1,600)

Please call 407-422-4855 ext 1117 for more information about the Mission's year-end needs.

**Dollar amounts are approximate values*



Christmas Wishes

If you were to make a Christmas wish list, what would it look like?

Chances are, it would look a lot different than the wish list of the men, women, and children staying at the Mission. When you come from having so little, it's the things most would take for granted that mean everything during the holidays . . .

"I just want a backyard that my children can play in."

-Nicole (Resident at O.U.R. Mission Home, mother of 2)

"I'd like to be more like Jesus this Christmas."

-Jerome (Resident at O.U.R. Men's Division)

"I would wish for my son and I to be able to graduate high school together."

-Mary (Resident at O.U.R. Mission Home, mother of 3)

"I would like to have a room of my own."

-Lamonte (Age 12)



from page 2

While searching for the phone company, Nicole passed by O.U.R. Mission Home. "God blinded my eyes, and I didn't see all of the phone companies that I passed before seeing the Mission," she explains.

Nicole had recognized the name of the Mission, stopped in and ended up filling out an application. Within 24 hours, Nicole, Israel, and their 2 children had found a safe shelter from this storm. "We got to the Mission, because it was the only door that God had left open for us," says Israel.

Since being at the Mission, Nicole has found steady work in the hospitality industry and Israel is now part of the Mission's Discipleship Work Program serving in our kitchen. They are excited about the plans that God has for their family and are saving to buy a home within the coming year. Their two children are enjoying their time at the mission and are excited about having a great Christmas. Isaias and Nia both want video games for Christmas, but Nicole and Israel are "looking forward to Christmas this year because we are going to have each other ... and that's all we need."

Each \$24.80 that you send will provide 20 meals to homeless men, women, and children who are struggling this Christmas.



What's Happening at the Mission

Don't forget to mark your calendars for these exciting upcoming events at the Mission!

NOEL

DEC 4th COME TO O.U.R. MISSION HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS - OPEN HOUSE 10:00am - 3:00pm



DEC 17th GIFT WRAPPING PARTY 1:00pm - 4:00pm



DEC 23rd CHRISTMAS BANQUET 10:30am-2:30pm

Call 407-422-4855 for more information on how you can get involved at the Mission this Christmas!

The Orlando Union Rescue Mission is a non-profit, faith based organization whose mission is to provide those in need with food, shelter, clothing, education and other resources to help the homeless achieve self-sufficiency. The foundation of our work is Biblically based - to bring people to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Send your gift today to make a difference in the lives of Central Florida's homeless this Christmas!