



## What a Busy Day ! . . . .

Left home at 8:00 am so I could make a stop at a liquidation store that opened at 9:00 am in Niagara Falls. However, I found that with the light traffic I ended up in Niagara at 8:40 am. So, with my SUV full of donated clothing from WLCC, I went to the church first. Had to spend a few minutes cleaning up the room and stacking the chairs before I could begin bringing in the donations and placing them on the table for sorting, sizing and folding.



Oh, I forgot a small item of news that occurred as we travelled through the USA on our recent trip in May. We stopped at a store called Beal's. My sister-in-law said, "Change the B to D and we are in business—Deals." The store was full of name-brand ladies' clothing which was of

no interest to me. However, I discovered a rack of clearance items: T-shirts, hoodies, dresses, etc. Well, what do you know?! T-shirts for \$0.49 to \$0.89, and then . . . Hoodies for \$1.19 each! Well, now the hunt was on to find all the hoodies in the store marked down to \$1.19. You cannot buy just the hood draw string in Canada, let alone the entire shirt brand new, for that price. We bought 3 large shopping bags of T's and hoodies, and the bill came to less than \$20.00 USD. Some of our homeless folks will be kept warm for a while.

We had just 3 volunteers to sort the clothing, so the challenge was a big one. Everyone went to work to see what could be done in as short a time as possible. I began the process of loading the Ministry's Cube Van with rolling luggage, sports bags, sweat shirts, socks, and short pants for summer wear which were requested last week by the homeless enduring the heatwave Ontario was experiencing. Even after loading for 3 hours, the van was not fully stocked.

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## Needed Right Now!

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- [Tents](#)
- [Blankets](#)
- [Mens Pants 28-32](#)
- [Ladies Pants Small](#)
- [Sweat Pants & Shirts](#)
- [Under Garments](#)
- [Hotel Soaps, Sham-poops etc](#)
- [Volunteers--Call 365-880-0818](#)

## on the streets . . . Direct report from John

Early this morning, I went to wash my car at a coin operated car wash. I stopped off at a bakery for a nice treat for later and then traveled on a country road alongside the Chippawa River with forest and bush on both sides of me, enjoying the beautiful scenery God has made. Suddenly, a tall young man ran out of the bushes, waving his hands above his head and yelling something I couldn't hear. I stopped and he ran over to the car. There was no one in sight; I cautiously rolled down my window. He was in a frantic state, telling me he'd been beaten up and robbed, and thrown into the bushes, and had been there since dawn. His face and body appeared to have a lot of marks, and bug bites, and small tattoos on his face. I asked a few questions, and meditated on the situation before letting him into the car. He wanted a ride to a house where he lived with some other people.

He sat in the back seat, and as I was driving, I noticed on the front passenger seat, my treat from the bakery. I asked him if he would like to have it. "Yes,



asked questions and scoped out the area before helping the man in the ditch, to make sure it was not a set up for a robbery.

Also on my encounters, a young man who'd just gotten out of jail was looking for a construction job. He needed lots of encouragement, and was looking for godly advice. It is a very difficult situation with these encounters, to know if the situation and desires are genuine. When making recommendations to employers, it is necessary to be careful, and on the other hand the requests come with desperation and sincere pleas for help.

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please," he replied and gobbled the whole thing down. All the while, he was very polite. Once we got to the house, I mentioned JC's Place Ministries and he told me, "JC'sPM fed me once before." Before departing, I went to the back of the car and retrieved a book on Christ's love and His healing power, and gave it to him. We locked eyes as we shook hands and he said "Sir, I will read this book." After this encounter, I went to get my car wash; however, I did not go back for another bakery treat.

I pondered on the Good Samaritan story after this experience; I wondered if the Samaritan



## on the streets . . .

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Recently I found myself in need of help to have my grass cut at home. Divine inspiration created a thought in my mind and here is a story to make one wonder. The inspiration was to call one of our motel mom's to see if her 9<sup>th</sup> grade teenager would be willing to come and cut my grass. Both Mom and son were very excited, and so began another experiment with God's help. I arranged to pick up the young boy; he was enthusiastic to start the job. It became quite evident that the young man needed some training on the use of the lawnmower. After a few instructions on how to make sure the lawnmower



overlaps the last cut, along with some safety guidelines, the job was soon completed. If only I could transmit the smiles and expressions of joy on that face when he received his first pay for a job that he had completed! Pictures are indeed worth a 1000 words. It is wonderful to see what a little bit of sincere advice can do. He also received a mountain bike from the Ministry, so he can now get around and do errands for Mom and the family and maybe also be able to cut other lawns. There is a well-known saying that says "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him to fish and he will eat forever."

JC's Place Ministries received an email (which we did not see right away), and then got a phone call (after she was able to find the website and place a call, which was answered immediately). Here is what she said, "Hi, Guys! It's Jane\*. I wasn't sure how to contact you guys, but I do need some help, if possible. I'm back at the ABC\* Motel staying in room #000\*, and my phone # is 123-456-7890\*. If someone can contact me, that would be great. I haven't eaten for 3 days; the money I had was needed for rental deposit and first month's rent. Is the truck still on the road? Could I get a small lunch?" Carl had to inform Jane\* that the truck had just finished its run for the day and the volunteers had all gone home. "Please give us a few minutes to see what can be done," Carl offered. After a few phone calls, Jane\* was informed that a special run would be done to provide some lunches for her. The next morning, John delivered DONATED grocery and Tim Hortons cards. She was so thankful, and grateful! She said to THANK all the JC's Place Volunteers, and to John and Carl a SPECIAL BIG HUG.

Well, this article is growing in length but what does one do when the phone rings and the requests do not stop? The Lord has asked JC's Place Ministries to be His hands and feet; while we may not have a super abundance of resources, food, clothing, or money, or as many Volunteers and Leaders as we could use, as we do His work, He provides. A call came from a person who needed someone to cook and clean their apartment. Again, Divine Inspiration clicked in and the name of one of our motel residents with 3 boys came to mind. Would this idea work? A mom who needs some income and a parttime job, and a handicapped person who needs housecleaning help? Well, again to make a very long story and process short enough for this article, the two parties were both delighted to meet, and the mom will have extra income for her family and the disabled person has the help that is needed. Both are delighted, and the travel distance between the two is walkable! Praise God for His leading.

*\*information changed to protect identity*

*~~ John Mergl*

## What a Day ! . . .

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Our first stop, as is normal, was busy. At our second stop, the crowd did not appear; only 2 persons. Our day looked to be a light-duty day. But we had 103 lunches on board, and needed to provide our homeless folks the nourishment we carried. Third stop was also very light; only 2 persons again, and 4-5 missing. Did we have too many lunches on board today? Our 4<sup>th</sup> stop was a challenging one. John had received a notice that at least 4-5 homeless had moved back into an area that we had serviced in the past; off 4<sup>th</sup> Street. After parking, I sent one volunteer 100 feet to the west and I went 200 yards to the east to see if we could locate the new encampments. There were visible signs of past camping, but we did not locate any new ones. A gentleman on an ATV was asked if he had seen any of our homeless, and the answer was negative. Where was the volunteer I'd sent west? No sign of him. I was just about to send out a search party when he appeared. He had travelled 300 yards to the west, with no sightings of our missing homeless.



Well, off we went to the train station to see if the homeless were still there. Crossing the street and walking up to the guardrail, with a GO Train ready to depart for Toronto, I gave 3 short blasts of our air horn in the direction of where our homeless had been encamped. With the trees in full leaf, it is impossible to see the old trailer or the old motorhome, so the only option was to wait. In the meantime, the GO Transit Supervisor came to talk with

me, and stated "I appreciated what you are attempting to do to feed the homeless living opposite the station. It looks like you need to give another blast of the horns!" After telling her to cover her ears, I gave another series of blasts. The GO Supervisor then asked if it would be alright if she took a picture of our vehicle as she wanted to make a donation in the future. Of course it was okay! Slowly one person appeared, and then 2, and then 2 more walked out of the bush. After greetings and giving the newest homeless clothing and suitcases to carry the goods, we were able to find out the exact location of the new encampment. We would have to try to enter off the old road used to enter the former tent city. Our one-armed homeless person also showed up and requested a full set of clothes to change into, and a suitcase to carry his goods back to his location. He is given a blanket, shirts, pant etc. It was now time to depart for our next stop, where we found 3 persons and 2 dogs waiting on the curb for us. We are now 1 hour late.

After this stop we backtracked to where we thought the homeless were now encamped. Yes, we found them, but also discovered that they were on the other side of the rail tracks and we would have to enter from behind some businesses to gain access. Here we gave 5 suitcases for storing their clothing, and 5 lunches and bottled water to satisfy their thirst. On a note I forgot to mention, frozen water has now become a requested item; as the weather has been very warm, by drinking the water as it melts, it is a refreshing thirst-quencher.

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## **What a Day ! . . .**

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We are now 1 1/4 hours late for our next stop, the Library, and sure enough, one of our time-conscious homeless persons points out the fact that we are very late; the crowd we normally encounter here is not there. One of the volunteers went over to the Tim Hortons and found a few, and another volunteer went down the street to the side of the Library and found some more. Now the numbers we're expecting are coming to the van. Again, lunches, frozen and liquid water, and hats etc. are all given out to supply the needs of this group.

Now we're off to our last stop where we expect to find about 20 persons. After the residents were alerted to our presence, they began to show up, and again, frozen water is requested. Now we have only one final stop with about 17 residents, and so we are off to finish up the day. It is now approaching 6:45. We say goodbye to our extra volunteers who can now call it a day. I am alone on this final stop. The first person out to see me is very courteous, and says, "Help the others first. I want to talk, so I can wait." After everyone had finished and I am alone with the first person, he come to talk with me, but choked up and was on the verge of tears. So, to calm him down, I said, "Let me ask you some questions, and you just nod yes or no for answers." So as to not drag out this story too much, it came to light that he had lost a lot in a short period of time; he did have a job and a home, but for 3 months now he had been sleeping in his car. He has a ten-year-old son who he has staying with friends because he does not want to expose him to this type of lifestyle. "Please, can you help me?" . . . Please, in a bit of broken English; I believe French is his first language. Well, I remember a job offer that John had a few months ago, and when I go to try to call John, . . . guess what?! My cell phone gives up it'll last bit of charge and dies completely. This gentleman is pleading and I have not much I can work with. So, I have to tell him I need one hour but I will get back to him. "Oh yes," he says behind my back as I leave, "just like the others, you'll be gone also."



Well, I need to drop off the Cube Van, which now has "0" lunches left, at it's parking place. Picking up my SUV, I can get some charge on my phone. As I drive back to the church, where I have to clean up the sorting room and remove some donated items that will be passed on to other Charities, I call John who agrees to come and join me; we both return to the gentleman as promised. When we get on site, he has gone on an errand; we are reassured he will return shortly. We are able to talk with a friend and to discover a few more facts. Our person returns, and is astonished to see that I have come back, as promised. In the meantime, John had tried to call one of his contacts to see if we could secure a room and food and work, but being Sunday late evening, now past 7:00, this is not going to happen. We assure the gentleman, after getting his story, that tomorrow we would be able to do more, but he would have to spend another night, at least, in his car. . . . *Continued on Page 6*

## **What a Day ! . . .**

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Well, as you can see, our story is not finished. More next month . . . It is our hope that this story will have a positive ending. Thank you for listening. We need more resources, more help, and most importantly, your prayers.

**God's power + our efforts = a winning co-operation**

## **Breaking News !!** June 21, 2023

The City of Barrie is considering a bylaw that would ban, on public property, the giving of food or tents to people experiencing homelessness. Other Municipalities and Charities are perplexed. What is happening? Housing scarcity is creating outdoor encampments; the situations can be appalling. What is to be done? Prohibiting the distribution of food and shelter items such as tents and tarps on public property? This bylaw would mean that the outreach ministries could face fines of up to \$100,000.00 for each offense. This bylaw is in response to the growing problems of providing services to people on the street who often struggle with a complex mix of mental health issues, addictions, and unaffordable housing. It is a mounting challenge.

## **Late Breaking News !! . . .** *City of Barrie backs down on plan to ban giving food to homeless people on its property*

Bylaws are no longer needed after non-profit says it will move outreach away from waterfront, mayor said Wednesday night, council decided unanimously to refer by-laws 67 and 68 back to staff. The matter is expected to return to a general committee meeting later this year.

Blessings. ~~Carl

### **Ways to Give:**

- 1. Electronically: [www.jcsPlace.org](http://www.jcsPlace.org)**
- 2. Mail: JC's Place 2408 Smithville Road Smithville L0R 2A0**
- 3. Phone: 905-975-6394 or 365-880-7229**



### **JC's Place Ministries**

a mobile ministry of

the Niagara Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church  
5355 Belmont Ave., Niagara Falls ON L2H 3H6

[www.JCsPlace.org](http://www.JCsPlace.org) Carl: 905-975-6394

[donate@JCsPlace.org](mailto:donate@JCsPlace.org) John: 365-880-0818