

Colleen's Contemplations – November 2009

Thankfulness...

Ah November, a time for thankfulness. So far, I must say I am thankful that my family has not contracted any flus of any variety. The weather has not been terrible, it seems to be slowly cooling us down, so we get used to it. And my store has a fresh new look. This year I've been blessed and am truly thankful for my volunteers.

Every time the store is open someone comes in to help. It's always the right person too. Not that there is a wrong kind of person, I just mean that the person who is needed here most that day comes in. It could be someone who just happens to have big storage tubs at home, and realizes they would work perfectly to hold gloves and mittens here. It could be a person who loves books, and really enjoys thinning and sorting our new and improved reading corner. As soon as anything heavy arrives that we need to deal with, one of my strong volunteers stops in. When we were rearranging, a friend stopped in to pick up his wife and ended up straightening and aligning the drawers and counters I was struggling with. Every time I sit here studying the shelves, wondering how best to arrange our small space, someone walks in to inspire me. Is it arrogance or faith that has me expecting the solution to all my problems to walk through the door? Just today I had someone sheepishly ask if they could put a washer and dryer on the needs list. I said of course, because you never know. But actually I do know. Because as is quite common here, a half hour later a man with a dryer in the back of his truck stopped to ask if he could give it to someone.

It's not just the material needs that I trust Him for. Everyone who walks into my store; volunteer, client, or donor; have something they need, whether they know it or not. I've seen a young mom who I knew was wishing her mom lived closer, be helped and loved by two grandmotherly volunteers. I've seen donors struggle to part with something that they felt they should appreciate more than they do, then watch as someone gets big eyed and excited to take that treasure home. I've seen volunteers of all ages get their baby fix by helping someone out with their little ones. I've had clients volunteer during their own hard times and get a lot of pleasure helping others and giving back. When I have a client who seems sad or prone to depression I encourage them to come volunteer, because it's a happy place. I don't just watch it happen to others either. I had a day that I came in still frustrated from the previous night's battle over homework; the volunteer who arrived to help me over that was a teacher who knew my child and had advice for me. I'm sure I'm not the only one who has benefitted from working alongside just the right person at just the right time.

So during this month of thankfulness, look around you where ever you are and ask yourself why you might be there. I believe that the help we pray for is right there, or about to walk in the door and you might be it for someone else.

Colleen Woerner
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