

January 2010

Dear Friend,

As we begin the New Year, I'd like to share two vivid mental snapshots with you. Pictures that are burned into my mind of people I've seen and horrors I've witnessed on the grimy, heartless streets of Skid Row.

Picture with me a young mother climbing into a dumpster desperately searching for something to feed her child.

She smiles as she pulls out a half-eaten hamburger and a container with some orange juice still inside. It's someone else's garbage...but to this street mother and her child it is dinner.

Now picture with me a young man whose home is a collection of cardboard boxes, probably not much thicker than some we used to wrap Christmas presents.

The cardboard is a thin shield from the frigid wind, but it can't protect him from thugs who want to steal what little he owns: some worn-out shoes, a tattered jacket, and maybe a little food he scavenged earlier in the day.

My friend, these are glimpses into the reality of life here on Skid Row. Both of those people are real... I've talked with them!

Their stories are repeated over and over. But sometimes the dumpsters are empty because the rats or the garbage truck got there first. And sometimes the winter rains come, turning the flimsy cardboard shack into soggy pulp.

The truth is that Skid Row is a dangerous, heartless and cruel place. I ache for the suffering and horrible conditions people endure every day and every night just to survive.

"Down on Crenshaw and Imperial there's a hamburger place... and there's a garbage can out back and I get food outta' the garbage can. My little boy hadn't had any water to drink in a couple of days. I got him some juice... outta the garbage can. I don't ever trust the milk I find, but if there's a can of juice I'll taste it first. And if nothin' happens to me, I'll give him a drink."

A HOMELESS MOTHER INTERVIEWED ON THE STREET



Continued...

I want to help them! And that's why I'm turning to you for help.

You see, those mental snapshots inspire me to work with all my strength to help suffering, lost and frightened people.

At the Fred Jordan Mission, we've seen some success, but I believe we must do more! Our goal is to see God change lives, one person at a time... and we're seeing that. With your help, we're seeing God change lives.

Every day we — you and I — feed frantic mothers and their babies. Every day we — you and I — share spiritual hope, provide blankets and warm clothes to broken-down men and women who have given up on life.

As we begin our 66th year on Skid Row... I ask you, my indispensable partner, to stand with me against the pain, fear and hopelessness that stalks the mean streets of our inner city.

Winter brings cold temperatures and freezing rain, and more and more people come to us with real, critical needs. These hurting, hungry, frightened people — including so many little children and babies — need your help this month.

So I ask you to please send a generous donation today — as much as the Lord lays on your heart — to help us feed and clothe some of the most desperate people here in our nation.

Because the need is already so great, please send your gift with the enclosed card today.

I thank you on behalf of all those whose lives will be made better because you chose to help. And I ask you to continue standing with me.

Your partner in God's work,



Willie L. Jordan (Mrs. Fred Jordan)

PS: I pray that your heart will be warmed as your gift warms and comforts people who would have nothing without you. May God abundantly bless you, for His Word promises "He who gives to the poor will lack nothing" (Proverbs 28:27).

"I'm not gonna feed him outta the garbage can no more. I'll find some way. And if I can't, then I'll take him to my social worker and tell her I love him, but I don't want to feed him outta the garbage no more. And I'll ask her to put him up for adoption. I pray that God will watch over my little boy so I don't have to feed him outta' the garbage cans no more. I can't... I just can't!"

