"Learn How to Settle"

Advice to Job-Seekers Applies to All

By Thomas Turner, Director

Every Tuesday morning people who are looking for work come to our Center. The good news is that there are many job openings right now. If someone wants to work, work is available. The bad news is that many entry-level jobs pay about $8 or $9 an hour, full-time hours are not guaranteed, and benefits are not offered.

Finding a job that pays a living wage is hard. Until they find such a job, the advice we give job-seekers is, "You must learn how to settle for less...less pay, less hours, less job satisfaction." It's the same advice we give them about their personal lifestyle, "Learn how to settle for a smaller apartment, no cable, no car, less stuff."

It's tough advice, but it's realistic. It's a lesson that no doubt many of our parents, who grew up during the Depression, learned and practiced and taught us. My father was baffled one Christmas when one of my siblings gave him a sweater. He said to my mother, "I already have a sweater. Why would I need two?"

Learning "how to settle," how to do with less, is not all bad. We are surrounded by temptations to buy more things we don't really need and that can distract us from what is really important in life, like personal relationships.

We helped Richard find a job. He had been homeless. His job is 3 miles away, so we helped him secure a bike to get back and forth. Richard has learned "how to settle."

Over the past few weeks we've had people come to our Center to ask for help for Christmas for their children. The staff and volunteers were humbled by the families and their requests. They asked for socks and underwear for gifts for their children. They have learned "how to settle."

I think part of the attraction of the Christmas manger scene is its simplicity: an infant in a manger in a stable. Deep down we want a life with fewer distractions. Maybe the real message of Christmas is not to get and give more stuff, but to learn and teach "how to settle" into a more meaningful life.
More than Food
Providing Other Basic Necessities

We help people with a number of fundamental needs. The need we satisfy on a daily basis is food. We have two large food pantries and a community kitchen. Each month we feed more than 1,200 families. We are one of Harvesters Community Food Networks’ largest customers.

In addition to food we provide new shoes for kids, coats, beds, eyeglasses, medicine and more. When families face an emergency and need financial support, we help.

None of this would be possible without you, our donor, and your generosity.

We provided shoes for some children in a nearby school whose parents could not afford them.

Before each school year we provide backpacks for kids.

Tax Credits Available for Donations to Bishop Sullivan Center

The State of Missouri, in its effort to support people in need of food, offers a tax credit – better than a mere deduction – to any Missouri tax-filer who donates money to a food pantry in Missouri. Bishop Sullivan Center operates two large food pantries, and therefore, your donations here qualify.

The state has set aside a little more than a million dollars to give back to such donors. According to the Missouri Department of Revenue website, “Any taxpayer (individual, corporation, or trust) that makes a donation of cash or food supplies to a food pantry may receive a credit of up to $2,500 per taxpayer per year. The taxpayer may take a credit of 50 percent of their donations.” For more details go to our website, www.bishopsullivan.org and link to the State of Missouri’s website or consult your tax advisor.

Volunteer Mary Vincent (l) delivers food from our pantry to Jackie. Jackie lives alone, and she can’t make it to the store. We’ve been delivering food to her for three years, and every single time we make a delivery she says, “This is a blessing, I don’t know how I would get by without this help.”