"Cut 'Em Some Slack"

By Tom Turner, Director

I met with a middle-aged mother of two, who was in our Employment Program. She was working at a fast food restaurant and needed to find a better paying job as she was having a hard time keeping up with her bills.

I asked her, "What financial stress keeps you up at night?"

She said, "My car payment. If I don’t keep up with those payments and end up losing my car, then I’m really sunk."

I asked, "How much is your car payment?"

She said, "$125 every two weeks."

I said, "OK. I’ll tell you what. We will pay your next two car payments. Stop worrying about losing the car for the next month and focus on finding a better job."

She immediately broke down and cried. She said, "I’m sorry (for crying). You don’t know the place I am in and how much that will help."

This body language of this woman waiting for food in our lobby indicates the stress she is under.

To some extent, we can all relate to this woman. We have all had times in our lives when we felt stressed out. Our nerves feel like a taut rope that needs some slack lest it break. When I told this woman that we would pay her next two car payments, she felt immediate psychological relief; her "taut rope" relaxed so much so that it caused her to cry. As the saying goes, we "cut her some slack."

Your donation here does at least two things for people in need. First, it takes care of an immediate need. For example, paying a light bill lest their electricity be shut off, or help with a rent payment to avoid eviction or homelessness. The second thing your donation does is it provides psychological "slack." When people are extremely stressed, they either make poor decisions or are unable to make any decision. Your donation brings relief and helps free them to make better decisions.

Providing some slack for a struggling person is a big deal. That woman whom we helped with her car payments was able to focus on her job search and went on to find a better paying job.
Thousands of people in our city need to “Catch a Break” from hardships. You can join in the cause by attending the Catch a Break dinner sponsored by Zarda Bar-B-Q in December. Chris Conley and Albert Wilson will be there to thank you. For more information, visit www.bishopsullivan.org. Through the bye week, Chris and Albert have raised $2,500 for the fund.

**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, 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 www.bishopsullivan.org/missouri-tax-credit or consult your tax advisor.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** March 4, 2017, at the Sheraton Kansas City Hotel at Crown Center

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Time to Round Up Your Gang and Come to Bishop Sullivan Center’s Annual Auction and Trivia Night!

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Follow us on social media to keep up with the Center, learn about whom we serve and see the difference your support makes.