

More Than Soup

SUZIE POTTER
Staff Writer

them feel special. They are our guests today.”

With those words tucked away in our minds, we began to serve.

All sorts of people straggled in. There were many older people and adults, but what shocked us were the kids our age. Many of them smiled and talked with us, but others shyly avoided eye contact and merely pointed at the food they wanted. At that moment, I felt so grateful for everything that I had and so guilty for complaining about dining hall food.

When the crowd had started to die down, Ashley and I walked around and passed out the leftover sandwiches. In the middle of this, a few latecomers wandered in, and the people who were already eating insisted we give these sandwiches to the people who had just arrived. This amazed me. These people who were hungry and had nothing were willing to share, and were actually looking out for the people around them.

I learned a lot that Friday afternoon. I realize people always say the same cliché things about volunteering—that it makes them feel good,

and they love giving back, and all that, so I won't even bother going into it. You've heard it all before. What I will say is that volunteering is an enriching experience. It helps you to see another way of life and to be thankful for all that you have. It also reminds you that we are all people, regardless of where we live or what we do.

I feel like my smile and my willingness to serve made a small difference to somebody that day. The great thing is I do not have to be at a soup kitchen to do it. You can make a huge difference in a person's life just by smiling at them when you see them heading to class or by asking them how they are doing and really listening to the answer.

Volunteering is wonderful, but it is how we treat people everyday that really matters. So, today, take a minute to talk to that girl in your calculus class who sits by herself, or smile at somebody who looks a little stressed. It will not kill you, and it might just make you a better person.

For information on volunteering at the soup kitchen, contact Sam Carrothers at carrotherss@meredith.edu

Last Friday, my roommate, Ashley, and I received an e-mail from Sam Carrothers, the campus minister. He told us he was looking for volunteers to help out at the local soup kitchen for a couple of hours. We didn't have any other pressing engagements, so the two of us decided to go along and help out.

The experience was very different from what we were expecting. Besides Ashley and me, only two other girls from Meredith went. We had expected to feel awkward and out of place, but it was not like that at all.

When we arrived at the large downtown church that is the home of Raleigh's soup kitchen, we had aprons thrust at us. After tying them on, we only had a few seconds before the hungry started pouring in.

In those few seconds, the woman over the soup kitchen shared some profound words with us.

She said, "These people have made some mistakes and taken some wrong turns in their lives, but they are still people, just like us. Make

Zing!

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The *Meredith Herald* is published by the College throughout the Academic Year. The paper is funded by the College and through Independent Advertising. All advertisements should be sent to herald@meredith.edu, Herald Advertisement in the subject line.

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Published by Hinton Press