

The Christ House Newsletter

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For Friends and Family

Xmas 2009

Dear Friends of Christ House,

The graces and blessings of the season to you all. It is difficult for us to find the Christ child under all the hyped advertisements, gift wrappings, and the clang of the cash registers. Christmas used to start after Thanksgiving; now it is given its commercial quick start after Halloween. Will Labor Day be next??

It is a comfort to me to go back in imagination to the first nativity and realize that He was just as unknown and ignored then as now. The wise men and the shepherds were added later to show the significance of His birth, but it happened in the huge black hole of anonymity. A reminder to our proud selves that God doesn't need our permission or attention to be real.

It has been a difficult year for Christ House. We ran into the huge problem of having a resident refuse to leave when his contract with us, our agreement to keep him for six months, expired..The police informed us that he had the rights of a tenant, which meant that anyone who lived in your house for thirty days could not be evicted without going through the court.

We showed them the contract, explained that we don't charge rent, that any money the residents give to us is a voluntary contribution, and that in no way do we rent rooms. All of this to no avail. We had to go the route of the housing court, and it took over three months and attorney fees of around \$1500 to evict this person. Adding insult to injury, he still comes around and demands-to no avail- that we let him in to look for things he may have left behind, this after an eviction notice which gave him a month to move out, and a final one for an additional five days.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Since our goal has always been to try and provide a family-like, community setting for our residents, we are truly pleased when they come back and pay us a visit. Here are some of the men who have visited with us recently:

Anthony Abase from Sudan, lived with us about eight years ago. He met an African girl after moved out, got married and is living in PA .

Joel Dossa, stopped by to let us know that he finally was able to bring the wife and three kids from Togo, their native land.

Samuel Aynomo, from Ethiopia, moved out to join Job Corps, do a GED and study book keeping. . He is now interning with a firm that will help him go to college in the Spring.

Patrick Motumbo from Congo, moved out four years ago, stopped by to say he is still employed at J&R downtown Manhattan and doing well.

Tzukola Ylehuele, a Russian, stopped by on the way to pick up his wife at Kennedy Airport. He has been in the Navy for three years and wanted to share his joy at being reunited with his wife.

Our new resident, a bright thirty year old man from Burundi, but had been living in Kenya as a refugee. He is applying for asylum and intends to go back to school and finish his MBA.

Since we could not evict him, his attitude was one of doing whatever he wanted, simply refusing to follow any of the established procedures such as keeping the dorm clean, when the computers may be used, etc.

It was living proof that it is not possible to run a program when the people in charge have no