

Feeding The Hungry

By

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They are lined up outside before the doors open.

Even if it is cold or rainy, they are there.

Waiting.

For they are hungry.

Today is their one day of the month when they may come to our local interfaith food pantry for a grocery cart full of nourishment.

We exchange greetings as I walk by, some are familiar faces, some are new. They are young, old, middle aged, of different race and cultural backgrounds.

As a volunteer, I have been assigned to help in the canned protein section, and there is a steady stream of clients during the two hours that our doors are open. All who enter are thoughtful in making their selections. Time and again, I witness the clients' honesty in choosing only what they need.

"I have peanut butter left from last month, so I will pass on that," says one older gentleman whose arthritic hands struggle to put his selections in the cart.

He is followed by Ruth, who despite recovering from multiple surgeries, greets each volunteer with cheerfulness. Next comes Mark, who severely burned his arm while on the job and is now unable to work. He is followed by a young mother, several elderly couples, and a woman in a wheel chair. Each one says "thank-you" over and over again.

Some of the clients look like they are down and out and some do not. Are they out of work? Have medical bills set them back? What circumstances made them swallow their pride and drove them to this point?

But judgment is not on the menu.

For when it comes to our daily bread, they are like you, like me.

They hunger.

They thirst.

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