



# CHEESE ON TOAST



**JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2010**

**Newsletter of the Soup Kitchen (SK) at the American Church in London  
Helping the homeless and marginally homeless in Central London**

79a Tottenham Court Rd London W1T 4TD Reg. UK Charity 1051770 & US 501(c) 3 org  
T: 020 7580 2791 www.amchurch.co.uk/soup\_kitchen.htm E: soupkitchendirector@hotmail.com

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US TO  
MAKE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL:**

With your help we served over 200  
people at our Christmas Luncheon  
on 12 December:



Happy guests above, and  
Entertainment from the  
American School below



*From the Director, Miranda Suit:*

***I LEFT THE SOUP KITCHEN KNOWING I WAS LOVED***

We have just done our annual Guests' Survey, which shows that along with our free food and clothing, the most appreciated aspect of our work is the company and emotional support. One of the most touching comments was from a guest who in mid February gave us the good news that he had been going regularly to a clinic and now had a place in residential rehab for his drug addiction. This is someone we have known for 2 years, who was dependent on drugs and very vulnerable emotionally when we first met him. Over that time, all the staff and several volunteers have chatted, listened, sympathised and encouraged this man, who has so much charm and potential. He writes: *'There were times when I had given up on life, but after talking to staff and volunteers, I left knowing I was loved.'*

***THE DUVET YOU SAVED FOR ME WAS JUST RIGHT!***

Apart from free food and clothing, we sometimes provide for other guest needs: a day bus pass to get to interviews, a few pounds to top up their electricity key, the cost of a few copies of the Big Issue which they can sell on. A more poignant recent request was for the price of a bouquet of flowers for a funeral. Recently we were thrilled to learn that one guest, a longterm squatter, had got a Council flat, so we started looking out for household items. At just the right time a duvet was donated, in very good condition!

***I'M FEELING MUCH HAPPIER THIS WEEK***

One of our guests told us he had received a very upsetting letter from his alcohol clinic and was wondering if he should even continue his treatment there. We were able to call the clinic, clarify the letter's intention and reassure our guest that although the letter was rather blunt, it was intended to help him get into rehab. He then began to feel calmer.

***HE'S LOOKING MUCH BETTER THIS WINTER***

Currently we have a small group of guests within the SK that is more close-knit than the rest, and they look out for each other. Last winter one of them, an older rough sleeper, began going downhill, losing weight, washing less. Another of the group started making sure he got enough warm clothing and ate enough; he also alerted SK staff. I am glad to report that this winter he is looking much healthier again.

**PTO for more information about THE BLACKBIRD TRAIL - our NEW Spring/Easter Fundraising Pack:  
a sponsored quiz that takes parents and children around the Victoria & Albert Museum**



### COLD WEATHER

As you are all aware, the UK is currently experiencing its coldest winter for 30 years!

I am pleased to report that staff and volunteers have pulled together magnificently, and the SK has stayed open throughout. Also, thanks to your very generous donations of clothing we were able to hand out a huge number of warm coats, gloves, hats, socks, jumpers, boots, etc.

### Let's keep fighting LONELINESS:

'It can make you sick, destroy your sleep, raise your blood pressure, and shorten your life. It's a chronic emotional ache that affects up to 15 percent of us. One expert calls it "the Antarctica of the soul."

*Oprah Winfrey Magazine.*

### OUR 2010 SPRING INTERN

My name is Coleen Halloran and I am a 3rd year student at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN (USA). I'm very excited to be working with the Soup Kitchen till May! While in high school, I worked with a food pantry in the large suburban town of Ossining, NY. It distributed bags of groceries to individuals and families one morning a week to about 150 people. Non-perishable food was collected from a wide variety of local churches and places of worship and from local food stores. I have participated in a variety of fundraising efforts during my time at university and am helping to organize a SK Easter-Spring Fundraiser while I'm here:

### THE BLACKBIRD TRAIL – a family outing for the spring break?



We have named the 'Blackbird Trail' in honour of a blackbird who, according to SK tradition, used to visit the SK occasionally and even nested here once!



This is a new fundraiser for children (approx. 8 yrs old) and their parents to enjoy - a quiz that takes them round the Victoria & Albert Museum, Kensington in search of different bird-related exhibits. Once they have found the exhibit, they have to answer a few questions on it. And as this is a sponsored event, the more questions they answer, the more money they raise for the work of the SK! This might be the perfect activity for a rainy day over the Easter holidays!

**To receive the Blackbird Trail Pack, with sponsorship form, etc., please fill out the Response Slip below or simply contact Miranda.**

**"Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty." Mother Teresa**

### PRAYER

† Thank God that we have so many wonderful volunteers and pray that they will find their work at the SK rewarding

† Ask God to help us continue to maintain the safe welcoming atmosphere in the SK. Our Welcomer, Sharon especially needs our prayers

† Pray for our guests who have made progress in their lives - that they will resist the temptation to turn back and will always be ready to ask the SK for help

**'The LORD is my strength and my shield'**  
(Psalm 28:7)



### A SPECIAL THANK YOU

**To volunteers Sarah and An Chi** and their helpers, who have committed to covering the cooking for every Monday and Tuesday right through till the end of July. This is an enormous contribution to our work!

**To the American School in London**, whose Christmas Concert raised over £2,500! Many thanks to all who took part and/or supported it.

### CONTINUING OUR WORK IN 2010: FOOD, CLOTHING AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

### Response Slip Feb 2010: Enclosed is my gift of £ \_\_\_\_\_ for the Soup Kitchen

*(Please make cheques payable to The Soup Kitchen or The Whitefield Corporation)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pls. send me more info on:**

praying for the Soup Kitchen

**the BLACKBIRD TRAIL PACK**

volunteering in the kitchen and/or the office

setting up a standing order to make regular donations

**Gift Aid Declaration for Taxpayers only:** If you have NOT filled in a Gift Aid Declaration form for the Soup Kitchen before, please fill in the following now in order to increase the value of your donations by about 20p in £1.

**Gift Aid Declaration:** As a UK taxpayer, I want the Soup Kitchen to reclaim tax on all my donations made after 6 April 2000

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

NB: You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year.

**Data Protection:** Your details will NOT be used by anyone except the Soup Kitchen, who will send you occasional news/ appeals. If you do NOT wish to hear from us again, please tick here

**Pls. fill in slip and return to: Miranda Suit, Director, Soup Kitchen at American Church, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TD (020 7580 2791) www.amchurch.co.uk email: soupkitchendirector@hotmail.com**