



# Mission serves Thanksgiving dinner and goodwill

By Kevin Modesti, Staff Writer

Updated: 11/26/2009 06:54:57 PM PST



Carrie Ann Inaba of "Dancing With the Stars" serves up Thanksgiving dinner at the Valley Rescue Mission thursday. The mission hosted the Valley's largest Thanksgiving Day Dinner serving 1,500 free Thanksgiving Day Dinners to anyone in need. (David Crane/Staff Photographer)

## PHOTO GALLERY

Dinner is dinner served



### NORTH HOLLYWOOD

It might not have been exactly the way she'd have chosen to celebrate Thanksgiving, but Adela Palomares didn't feel bad about being one of some 1,000 people eating a holiday dinner served by the new Valley Rescue Mission.

"I'm really enjoying it," the North Hollywood woman said Thursday afternoon. "There's so many people here, I feel like I'm at a big party."

Palomares held a baby on her lap as she sat at a round table with four other children, her husband and her mother, having plates of turkey, stuffing, yams, green beans, cranberries and rolls.

Theirs was one of 18 tables that seat 10 in use during the first of six seatings for free Thanksgiving dinner in the community room of Iglesia San Pablo, on Tujunga Avenue in North Hollywood.

Advertisement

**TARGET WEB COUPON**      **EXPIRES 2/27/10**

**25¢ each**  
with purchase of twenty-five  
4x6" Kodak instant prints

This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.

9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™



Palomares said her husband is out of work, the family is struggling to make ends meet, and they had nowhere else to go for a Thanksgiving meal.

"This is great, because so many people don't have the money to celebrate," said Palomares, who was taking advantage of Thanksgiving charity for the first time.

Organizers said the Palomares family was not unusual among the people attending the first major event put on by the Valley Rescue Mission, which was founded in August.

Ken Craft, executive director of the Valley Rescue Mission, said most of the people in the room probably weren't, in fact, homeless.

"But a lot of these people are barely hanging on," Craft said, because of job loss, family breakups or health problems. "They don't know if they're going to be in their homes next month."

To Craft, the response to Thursday's event reflected the growing financial trouble of many San Fernando Valley residents and the willingness of the region to help.

More than 300 volunteers prepared and served meals, and Craft said more than 300 other people offered to help but weren't needed. The cost, estimated at \$7,000-\$8,000, was covered by major sponsors Keyes Automotive, Rodeo Realty, other sponsors and individual donations.

Among the volunteers was Carrie Ann Inaba, the

"Dancing With the Stars" judge who lives in Valley Village. Inaba said she heard about the event from a friend who was involved.

"These are people I see in the neighborhood," Inaba said. "We need to give back to our community. It's easy to get caught up in the celebrity lifestyle, but that's not real."

Craft said he worked for six years with the San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission, one of a group of ministries run by the Oxnard-based Rescue Mission Alliance, before helping to found the locally run Valley Rescue Mission (818-392-0020, [thevalleyrescuemission.org](http://thevalleyrescuemission.org)).

Nearly 8,000 people are homeless in the San Fernando Valley each night, including about 2,500 children living with their parents, and one-third of Valley residents live below the national poverty line, the Valley Rescue Mission estimates.

Craft said the organization aims to provide five H's - hope, hot meals, housing, health services and healing. He said he's working on the third item on the list by trying to establish a family shelter in the east San Fernando Valley.

While Thanksgiving-dinner events have become a signature of rescue missions and get big responses, Craft said donations and volunteer work are needed at other times.

"There's something about Thanksgiving," said Craft, a former businessman and pastor. "When

Advertisement

**TARGET WEB COUPON**      **EXPIRES 2/27/10**

**25¢ each**  
with purchase of twenty-five  
4x6" Kodak instant prints




This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to [Target.com/photo](http://Target.com/photo) for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.



9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



you stop to reflect on what you have (that) others don't, it draws you into want to help."

As he and volunteers cleared tables Thursday evening, Craft said the event left him with "extreme gratitude for the number of people who really do have a heart for the Valley. They live here, they work here, and they want to help to make it better."

Advertisement

**TARGET WEB COUPON** **EXPIRES 2/27/10**

**25¢ each**  
with purchase of twenty-five  
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™