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## **Christmas Store's big sale: Hope to families in need**

**CINCINNATI (Dec. 9, 2008)** — A few years ago, Veronica Louis' visit to the Christmas Store in Over-the-Rhine helped spark a turning point for her financially struggling family.

Severe back and hip problems had caused Veronica's husband, Tony, to lose his construction job. Veronica and Tony, of Forest Park, were not going to be able to provide Christmas gifts for their 10-year-old daughter, Olivia. That is, until someone from their church recommended them for the Christmas Store, an annual initiative of City Gospel Mission/CityCURE.

"We just needed a little stepping stone," said Veronica, who was able to purchase a sweater, wool hat and portable DVD player for Olivia with the \$7 entry fee to the Christmas Store. "We just needed something to get us through that. If it hadn't been for the Christmas Store, I don't know what we would've done."

For several years, the Christmas Store — hosted by Philippus United Church of Christ, 106 W. McMicken — has been providing hope for families in need. **The Christmas Store opens this Wednesday and runs through Saturday (Dec. 13). The store is open 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m.; 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, the store is open 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; 11:45 a.m.-2 p.m.**

Annually, almost 400 parents unable to afford gifts shop for their children at the Christmas Store. Over 100 partner churches throughout Greater Cincinnati distribute registration forms to parents they know need help with Christmas. The shoppers, who pay \$7 per child, also receive free gift-wrapping and a ham for Christmas dinner.

Another feature of the Christmas Store is the Christmas Boutique, which is a party for over 100 elderly women who might otherwise be overlooked at Christmas.

**City Gospel Mission also will host The Outlet Christmas party for the homeless this Saturday (9 a.m.-noon) and Sunday (noon-3 p.m.) at the Mission building, 1419 Elm Street.**

For more information, log onto [www.citygospelmission.com](http://www.citygospelmission.com) or contact Paul Spence, Vice President of Development: 513-345-1048; [pspence@citygospelmission.com](mailto:pspence@citygospelmission.com).