

Sleep in Heavenly Peace

When Roger Dorsey was in junior high school, his parents divorced, and he moved to Ohio with his mother and siblings into a crowded house.

He spent most nights sleeping on a cold floor in a tiny closet. “It’s just the situation we were in,” he remembers.

Dorsey’s childhood struggles taught him to be sensitive to others in need, and to build his life around something more than his own happiness. One day, Dorsey came across a statistic about how many children didn’t have beds in his home county of Lorain, Ohio. Stunned by this information, he decided to do something about it.

He discovered a nonprofit organization in Idaho called Sleep in Heavenly Peace that makes bunk beds for children in need. Dorsey flew to Idaho to learn how to make the bunk beds, then flew back to Ohio to start a chapter of this nonprofit in his hometown. He recruited a team of volunteers and sponsors, and they began making bunk beds for children in need in Lorain.

Sleep in Heavenly Peace was founded in 2012 by Luke Mickelson of Twin Falls, Idaho. In a story about him on CNN in 2018, Mickelson was described as a high-school quarterback-turned-family-man. He was a churchgoer with a thriving career who coached his kids’ sports teams and fished in the nearby river. But when he met children who were sleeping on the floor, his idyllic life changed.



He said he had no clue about what the need was. “There were kids next door whose parents are struggling just to put food on the table, clothes on their back, a roof over their head. A bed was just a luxury.” Using his daughter’s bunk bed as a template, Mickelson started buying wood and supplies to build beds with his own money.

As word spread, interest and involvement from his and other communities surged. He set up a formal charity, complete with training courses, construction manuals and local chapters so communities from coast to coast could join the movement. By 2019, SHP had 200 chapters around the U.S. and had built 35,000 beds. Its motto is: “No kid sleeps on the floor in our town.”

(more)

“It’s all worth it when you see the smiles on the faces of these kids,” Dorsey says. “There was this one little girl who asked, ‘Why are you doing this?’ I told her, ‘Because we love you.’”

Dorsey and Mickelson found their life’s purpose in building bunk beds for children who didn’t have a bed. In other words, they found their calling in helping others. And their commitment to this mission brings them great joy and inspires and touches the lives of others.

Their understanding about life and its meaning is similar to that of the associates of Life Care and Century Park, who minister to the frail and infirm at points of need in their lives.

Sacrificing some part of yourself for something or someone you love only enlarges love and grows you into the person God created you to be. Jesus said it: *By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:35 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter