

News from Los Angeles Mission

CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

May 2019



"The Mission changed
my perspective and
saved my life!"

– Victor, Lead Operations
Coordinator at
Los Angeles Mission

Changed Hearts, New Lives

Victor and Rudy first changed their own lives at Los Angeles Mission and now they give hope to others every day! Read on page 2 how your support helped them create lasting change . . .

Double the Impact



Dear Caring Friend,

Hope is the belief that possibility exists! And I am filled with great hope for so many reasons. First, because of the inspiring personal stories shared by Victor, Rudy and Tina about how they turned struggles into success. I'm sure their courage will touch your heart, too. I'm also excited by the possibilities that may come from the generous offering of Mission friends to match gifts received during the month of May. I'm optimistic caring friends like you will take them up on their amazing offer!

May is also when we celebrate Mother's Day, which for many individuals in our program becomes an especially meaningful milestone. As they continue their healing, many mothers are reunited with their children for the first time in a long time. For others, reconciling the hurt of painful childhoods allows them to move forward into healthy new lives. Please keep all mothers in your prayers, that they may be blessed with God's grace to fulfill the important role they play in their family's lives.

Thank you for your steadfast support so we can continue to help mothers, fathers, daughters and sons rebuild their lives. Your kindness creates possibility for change and hope for neighbors in need!

God bless you,

Herb Smith
President/CEO

Lasting Change Is Possible!

"Thanks to donors, our guests have a bed at night, clean socks and underwear, and shoes. Please continue to help!" – Rudy



After a combined 26 years of being part of the Los Angeles Mission family, Victor and Rudy are familiar faces to staff, guests and donors. The two also know, better than most, the powerful impact donor support has on the lives of people who come to the Mission for help.

Victor graduated from the Fresh Start program in November 2000 and is the Lead Operations Coordinator at the Mission. In the many roles he performs, Victor receives in-kind donations like clothes and hygiene supplies and puts them into the hands of guests. He says, "However large or small a donation is, it's a blessing! Every donation gives our guests dignity."

Though it's been many years since he arrived at Los Angeles Mission, Victor remembers his negative feelings. "I'd gotten involved with a gang at 13, got shot five times and went to prison. I arrived full of the racial prejudice I'd learned there. Thankfully, God intervened. Since coming to the Mission, I have God in my heart and I see people, not colors."

"However large or small a donation is, it's a blessing! Every donation gives our guests dignity."

– Victor

After being homeless for many years and living under a bridge, Rudy came to the Mission in 2009 hoping for a safe place to sleep. **"When I first arrived, I only cared about myself. Today, I care about others and want to help. Being at the Mission has taught me about reading the Bible and about God. I'm grateful for that."** Rudy graduated from Fresh Start in 2011 and returned two years later to work with Victor as an Operations Assistant.

Both men are thankful for donors who continue to support the very place that helped them begin new lives. Each of them also pays forward the kindness they received by offering encouragement to people in the program today. "When I see someone struggling . . . I tell them to pray for patience; it takes time," says Victor. And Rudy adds, **"I try to help people to stay positive. Believe in God — He'll pull us through. You have to hang tight. The program does work!"**

Homeless Mother Finds Healing Thanks to Your Support

There was a time when Tina thought she had what any mother could want. Healthy children. A good home. A loving husband. Until the day she discovered his unfaithfulness.

She spiraled into despair. To ease the pain of her divorce, Tina began drinking. But she lost control. Her children rejected her.

Tina's dream life became a nightmare as she found herself on the streets with a man she grew up with as a child. A man she thought might help turn her life around. A man who began abusing her terribly.

"He beat me so much," Tina says. "He knocked my teeth out, he blackened my eye and then he broke my finger because I was trying to hide my face from him."

Thankfully, he was arrested, and she was taken to the hospital. There, Tina reunited with her mother, whom she hadn't talked to in 15 years. Her parents encouraged her to enroll at the Anne Douglas Center for Women.

There, with the help of our counselors, Tina was able to begin healing.

"I've changed so much. I feel so much at peace. I have no fear," she says.

Healthy and whole again, Tina has reunited with her children and was ecstatic to learn she is now a grandmother!

"I'm getting my family back, I'm getting my life back together and I'm being the mother that my kids want," she says.

It is only with your generous support that mothers like Tina are able to transform their lives and find peace.



"I'm getting my family back, I'm getting my life back together and I'm being the mother that my kids want." — Tina

First Time Homeless on the Rise

"More people in Los Angeles are falling into homelessness for the first time than ever before," explains Herb Smith, President and CEO of Los Angeles Mission.

It is a scary and uncertain feeling to sleep on a street corner with no roof over your head. To wonder if you will have anything to eat today, and question if things will ever get better. Nearly half of newly homeless people in the Los Angeles area are there due to job loss and other financial reasons. People who never imagined they would find themselves in this position.

"I'm thankful Los Angeles Mission is here for these people," Herb says. "They are welcomed with open arms and will receive real help."

Double Your Impact This Summer



Your gift today will double in impact to help twice as many people this summer.

Generous friends of the Mission have provided us with a \$200,000 Matching Challenge for the month of May! Every gift you give between now and June 26 will double in impact, up to \$200,000, and go twice as far for people experiencing homelessness.

This opportunity could not have come at a better time because summer is just around the corner. And while that may mean carefree days for many, it is an especially difficult time to live on Skid Row. With the added risks from dehydration and heatstroke, need will be high at a time when giving goes down.

Please make a generous donation today. Whatever you share before June 26 will double in impact and help twice as many of your friends and neighbors.



Parents and children who are newly homeless are grateful for your compassion.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

5/4 & 6/1

Volunteer Orientation

If you'd like to volunteer at the Mission, it's important for you to attend an orientation session. To register for the next orientation, please visit us at LosAngelesMission.org/Act.

5/11

Mother's Day Event

Help us honor the mothers in our programs and the important women in their lives.

6/8

ADC Honor's Evening

Join us for the Graduate Honor's Evening ceremony at the Anne Douglas Center for Women as we celebrate our graduate's amazing accomplishments!

6/14

Graduation Day

After the successful completion of 12 months in the FreshStart residential program students celebrate their graduation and begin the transition to independent living!

For information on more upcoming events at Los Angeles Mission, please call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 400.

The Simplest Way to Make a Difference!



Providing nutritious meals, shelter and care to veterans, children and thousands of individuals experiencing homelessness is an ongoing challenge for Los Angeles Mission. To help us meet that need, please consider becoming a Meals-A-Month partner. This dedicated group of donors provides a steady stream of support that helps us budget and plan more efficiently, stretching every dollar a little further.

Becoming a Meals-A-Month donor is simple and easy! To sign up online, visit us at LosAngelesMission.org/Give. Or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 334 to join by phone.

Writing a Love Letter to Your Family

Have you ever heard of a Legacy Love Letter?

It's not a legal document, but it can be added to your Estate Plan. It's a letter you create simply to pass a blessing on to the next generation and can include:

1. **Your beliefs and values.** What experiences helped to shape your journey of faith? What do you believe regarding money, raising children or marriage? What Christian causes or ministries are you passionate about and why?
2. **Life lessons.** Can you list the defining moments that impacted the trajectory of your life? What were some of your biggest joys and regrets? How did these help develop Christ-like character in your life?
3. **Words of encouragement.** Nothing makes a person's heart swell quite like "I love you." Are there especially meaningful or encouraging words or Scriptures you want to leave with those you love most?

Your story matters, and your loved ones need to hear it.

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "The Most Important Thing You'll Ever Say" by contacting Randy Hess at (213) 629-1227 Ext. 357 or rhess@lamission.net — or bless your family today with a God-honoring Will at www.christianwill.org/lamission.

You Can Change a Life Today!

Send back the enclosed reply form with your gift to provide meals, care and life-changing services to people who are alone with nowhere else to turn. Please give generously and offer your encouragement to neighbors who are rebuilding broken lives one day at a time. Thank you!

From Mr. and Mrs. John Smith,
To Be Doubled to Provide Meals, Care and Hope!

Yes, I want to help provide a hearty meal and compassionate care for friends and neighbors on Skid Row. Enclosed is my gift of:

\$_____ to help as much as possible!

Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Smith
123 Main Street
Anytown, USA 12345-6789

Los Angeles Mission
The Crossroads of Hope
PO Box 54059 | Los Angeles, CA 90054-0059
Give online at
LosAngelesMission.org/crossroads

Please make your check payable to Los Angeles Mission and return it with this slip in the envelope provided. To charge your gift by credit card, please fill out the information on reverse side or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 400. A receipt for your tax-deductible gift will be sent to you shortly.

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LosAngelesMission.org



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DONATION DROP OFF**
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