

News from Los Angeles Mission

CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

May 2020

A photograph of two men, Daniel and Christian, standing side-by-side in front of a white truck. They are both wearing black t-shirts and smiling. The truck behind them has the word "MISSION" in large black letters, and below it, "The Crossroad" and "Donations (213-629" are visible. The background is slightly blurred, showing a yellow container and some equipment.

Building a Bridge to a Brighter Future

Read how your gifts are helping brothers, Daniel and Christian, get back on their feet!

Inside . . . important message about how you can help our neighbors in these uncertain times.

Double Your Impact



Dear Caring Friend,

A lot is happening at Los Angeles Mission this month as we feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. **We continue to work toward keeping our friends and neighbors safe and healthy, and to make sure our services are available for all who need them.**

As you may have read, a generous group of donors has provided \$100,000 and challenged us to match it with donations from friends like you. I hope you will take them up on their amazing offer. The impact of the coronavirus crisis has taken a toll on our budget, and we really need your support. We must prepare for the busy summer ahead, a time when demand soars and donations drop, so this matching challenge is critical.

On a brighter note, May is also when we celebrate Mother's Day — a holiday that has the potential to reconnect families and heal relationships. During this time, many mothers in our program are reunited with their children for the first time in a long time.

This month, two special families are featured in this issue of *Crossroads*. Please read their stories of hope that have transpired thanks to the Mission and the support of friends like you. Thank you for your steadfast support and for continuing to care for neighbors in need during these uncertain times!

God bless you,

Herb Smith
President/CEO



Bridging the Gap from Homelessness to Housing

Thank You for Supporting Programs That Rebuild Lives

Brothers Daniel and Christian moved from the Midwest to Los Angeles to pursue their dreams in the music industry. To supplement their income while following their passion, Christian found a job as a security guard, and Daniel began working at a local restaurant. But soon, their dreams became nightmares. The high cost of living left them struggling to survive. Unable to afford their apartment, they had no choice but to live on the streets and sleep outside. Thankfully, a friend told them about Los Angeles Mission.

At the Mission, the brothers found an answer to their prayers — our Bridge Program. It provides temporary shelter, meals and care for people who are employed but need time to get back on their feet. Now, Daniel and Christian are safe from the streets and crime.

They're using our resources to prepare to move into permanent housing — with money in savings — and also fine-tune their goals and future plans.

"The Mission is a place where people can grow and change," Daniel says. **"The Bridge Program helped me understand when you have a fall in life, you get back up. It helps give you the power to get back up and fight and live again."**

"The Bridge Program has given us the leverage to be able to go forward in life and most definitely the leverage to be able to get housing," Christian adds.

"When you donate, it gives someone momentum," Christian says. "It creates a spark for them to keep going." **Your continued support will help us be there for even more people in need of help and hope.**

**"The Bridge Program
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leverage to be able
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— Christian

You Make a Difference

A Mother and Son Reunited, Thanks to You

Alejandra is grateful for every night she spends indoors with a roof over her head — because she will never forget the times that she couldn't.

Haunted by the trauma of her past, Alejandra had turned to drugs to cope with her inner pain. One bad choice led to another, and the consequences compounded. She lost her home, her children and her freedom.

Unfortunately, the cycle of homelessness also affected her son Ricardo. Despite being adopted by his grandmother, Ricardo was lost in a haze of drugs and bad decisions — just like his mother.

When the courts directed Alejandra to Los Angeles Mission last year, she felt relieved and grateful. She knew this was her best opportunity to become the person she always wanted to be.

Alejandra took classes to build her life skills and worked as a housekeeper inside the Mission as she prepared to live independently again.

“I thank God I had the chance to go to the Anne Douglas Center,” Alejandra says. “It gave me another chance at life.”

As her healing progressed, Alejandra knew in her heart that Ricardo needed the same opportunity to transform his life.

“I was tired of letting people down,” Ricardo says. “I needed to work on myself. To take responsibility for my actions and get my act together.”

Ricardo was inspired by the change he saw in his mother, and he has been working hard to transform his life too.

“I'm glad I'm here with my mom,” he says. “It's been a long time since I've had her by my side, so it feels good to be with her.”

Alejandra agrees and says she is grateful for the help you are giving her and her son. **“Thank you for believing in me and my son. Thank you for helping us change, move on with our lives and do good for ourselves.”**

This is the impact you are making as a supporter of Los Angeles Mission. **Because of you, a mother and son are reunited, healing and looking forward to a bright future together.**



“Thank you for believing in me and my son.”
— Alejandra

American Veterans Are Counting on You

They've risked everything to protect our country. But after their duty is done, too many American veterans in Los Angeles are becoming homeless, struggling to survive on Skid Row. And we expect that number to go even higher due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

And while the number of homeless veterans is down across the country, in L.A. that number has stayed flat — nearly 4,000 veterans are still sleeping on the streets in Los Angeles County on any given night.

Your continued gifts to Los Angeles Mission will give them meals, care and the chance at a transformed life. Thank you.



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

Double Your Impact This Summer

Generous friends of the Mission have provided us with a \$100,000 Matching Challenge for the month of May! Every gift you give between now and June 26 will double in impact, up to \$100,000, and go twice as far for people experiencing homelessness.

This opportunity could not have come at a better time as our resources are stretched thin to deal with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, as well as our usual services. As more people than ever come to the Mission, we must be ready to help them. 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.



UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

5/2 & 6/6

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 one, please visit us at LosAngelesMission.org/Act.

5/9

Mother's Day Event

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

6/6

ADC Honors Evening

Join us for the Graduate Honors Evening ceremony at the Anne Douglas Center for Women, as we celebrate our graduates' amazing accomplishments!

6/12

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.

To sign up online, visit us at Give.LosAngelesMission.org. Or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 334 to join by phone.

Nip Family Conflict in the Bud

A *Reader's Digest* commenter quipped, "Ours was a family of eight children, but only one boy. One day, I was complaining to my brother about having six annoying sisters. He retorted, 'What are you griping about? I have seven!'"

Sibling rivalry is common, but every parent hopes their children grow to share a healthy relationship.

One way you can help your adult children experience peace is by creating an up-to-date Will or estate plan. Through this one simple action, your family will hear important messages like, *In this family we . . .*

- **Value peace.** Your children will see the steps you took and appreciate that you cared enough to plan ahead, creating peace before there was even a chance for conflict.
- **Value communication.** Even though discussions about death can be difficult, no one wants to deal with a messy estate. You have an opportunity to communicate your wishes (and love for your family) while you are still alive.
- **Put our values into action.** By including a gift in your Will to a ministry like Los Angeles Mission, you will set a powerful example of living your values.

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "How to Get Your Family on the Same Page" by contacting Herb Smith at (213) 629-1227 Ext. 305 or hsmith@lamission.net — or bless your family today with a God-honoring Will at www.christianwill.org/lamission.

Your Gift Today Will Change Twice as Many Lives!

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



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LosAngelesMission.org



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