Thanks to You, Gustavo Has a New Purpose in Life

As we approach the Thanksgiving season, Gustavo is doing everything he can to help nourish his neighbors experiencing homelessness—body and soul...
Dear Caring Friend,

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens . . . ” Ecclesiastes 3:1

Our guests know about seasons of life. They’ve endured seasons of wholeness — and of hopelessness. Most have had times of happiness and hardship. Thanks to your support for Los Angeles Mission, Thanksgiving will be a season of healing for many of them.

I say a “season” because restoration doesn’t happen overnight. When a person experiences trauma over an extended period — sometimes many years going back to childhood — recovery is a journey. It has ups and downs, triumphs and setbacks. The process requires prayer and perseverance, but God is faithful, and it’s beautiful how He transforms lives.

Thank you for partnering with the Mission to serve a growing number of neighbors in critical need this holiday season. Because of you, people on Skid Row are receiving shelter and a second chance. Families facing hunger get food. Men and women with addictions and prison sentences are rebuilding their lives. And many broken hearts will be filled with gratitude this Thanksgiving because you were willing to share God’s love with them.

May He also bless you and your household with a season of joy.

Troy Vaughn
President/CEO

“A Season of Healing”

Your Compassion Gave Gustavo a New Purpose

“The streets are no joke,” says Gustavo. “I was out there for five years. Most people can’t make it.”

Gustavo struggled with drugs, poverty and other hardships for 13 years before he ended up homeless. He ran with the “wrong crowds” and trusted the wrong people, and it nearly cost him his life. He recalls at least six times when someone tried to kill him.

“One time,” he says, “they kidnapped me. They were going to kill me because someone lied about me. I was able to talk my way out of it, but it was traumatic. The kidnappers ended up telling me, ‘What are you doing out on the streets, bro? Go back to your son and your family.’”

But Gustavo didn’t listen. His addiction was too strong, and it left him increasingly depressed and broken.

Life-Changing Arrest

In 2021, Gustavo was arrested. “A judge gave me the option of going into a program at Los Angeles Mission instead of jail. I didn’t know it was a Christian program or that I would have to be there for two years. If I knew that, I would have said no!” Gustavo laughs.

At first, he had no interest in God or in changing, and he wasn’t exactly a model student. “The chaplains kept telling me, ‘Just talk to God.’ So, I started praying. ‘Give me a sign you’re there!’ Then I started seeing all these blessings.” Gustavo found new purpose working in the Mission’s kitchen, where he’s helping ensure we’re ready for the multitude of people who will turn here this Thanksgiving.

He continues: “God changed my life and renewed my mind. He made me realize I survived the streets for all those years because He has a purpose for me. God wants to use me to help other people get off the streets and find God.”

Today, Gustavo is deeply grateful for friends like you. “You’re doing the work of Jesus,” he says. “You’re giving people like me that chance to come out of the darkness.”

Thank you for changing Gustavo’s life. Your support helps many more neighbors experiencing homelessness this Thanksgiving.
Because of You, Summer’s Life is Restored

Last year, Summer was kind enough to share her story with friends of the Mission. After being diagnosed with fibromyalgia, she developed a severe addiction because her doctor over-prescribed painkillers. That addiction steadily worsened, leading to terribly self-destructive behavior, estrangement from her family and near-starvation as her life fell apart.

But thanks to your support, Summer’s life was entirely transformed at Los Angeles Mission. And today, she’s doing better than ever! She recently gave us an encouraging update:

“It’s hard to believe how much my life has changed since I first came to the Mission. I’ve been sober for more than two years, and even though I still have issues due to my fibromyalgia, I really think the Mission prepared me to deal with that pain in a way that doesn’t spiral out of control.

“My relationship with my family is also doing really well, especially my sister, who is my best friend. In my addiction, things were so bad between us that I feared we’d never talk again. I’m so grateful for the forgiveness and healing between us.

“I also have a really good job. It’s a management position, and I love what I’m doing.”

This Thanksgiving, Summer will be giving thanks for the restoration of hope, family and purpose to her life. She’s come so far, and your continuing support will help many other neighbors in need get back on their feet. Thank you!

Thanksgiving Hope Starts With a Meal

As hardship has multiplied in southern California, Los Angeles Mission will soon face our most demanding Thanksgiving ever.

Thousands of individuals will turn to us for meals, shelter and other services. Every one of these meals has the potential to spark a person’s healing journey! That’s why our kitchen team is already busy planning for the event. We’re preparing menus, gathering supplies, making orders, accepting donations . . . all to ensure that each one of our guests can see how much we value them.

Your faithful support is absolutely crucial at this time. Without generous friends like you, our guests would very likely be hungry and alone on Skid Row.

Since it costs just $2.53 to provide one Thanksgiving meal and care at Los Angeles Mission, just imagine how many lives your generous gift will touch!
Is Cash Really King?

4 Powerful Benefits of Non-Cash Gifts

You’ve probably heard the saying: “Cash is king!” But is it, really?

When it comes to supporting Los Angeles Mission, there are more cost-effective ways to give than from your wallet or checkbook.

Giving non-cash assets (such as stock, real estate, business interests, commodities or machinery) can benefit you in a number of ways.

1. **Reduce your taxes.** Receive a deduction for the fair market value at the time of your gift and avoid the tax liability on the sale of appreciated assets.

2. **Eliminate hassles.** Give assets you no longer need or care to manage for the benefit of the Mission.

3. **Increase your giving capacity.** Give from your excess resources without restricting cash flow.

4. **Eliminate burdens for your heirs.** Reduce potential taxes or complications for your loved ones by giving complex assets to ministry rather than leaving them in your estate.

So, is cash really king? Not when it comes to giving! By considering all your available options, you can achieve tremendous Kingdom impact and reduce your taxes.

Ready to learn more about how you can support Los Angeles Mission in smart and powerful ways? Contact Kyle Patterson at (213) 629-1227 Ext. 304 or k_patterson@lamission.net.

Change Lives All Year!

Demand for food remains 200% over the historical norm as thousands more families and households turn to Los Angeles Mission for meals, shelter and help. Beginning this Thanksgiving season, please help meet their most pressing needs by becoming a Meals-A-Month partner. Committing to give a monthly gift is one of the best ways to provide a steady stream of support that transforms lives every day, all year long.

Go to Give.LosAngelesMission.org to sign up online, or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 334 to join by phone.

THANKSGIVING ACTION ALERT! Urgent Help Needed!

Homelessness and hunger have risen across Los Angeles. Many of these families and individuals have never needed help before. So we’re depending on you today to provide meals and care to a growing number of people in critical need this Thanksgiving season. Thank you for your faithfulness!