

News from Los Angeles Mission

# CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

July 2023



## From a Tent to Transformation

You rescued John from the streets and ensured  
he received meals, shelter and another chance!





## Pride and Humility

Dear Caring Friend,

Tonight, thousands of men and women who served our nation honorably will lay down to sleep on the streets of Los Angeles. It's an absolute tragedy. Some of them are suffering the devastating effects of PTSD from their deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan (or even Vietnam!). Others have fallen into poverty or addiction.

When I was in the U.S. Marine Corp, they taught me that *Marines never leave a man behind*. That commitment stays with you in or out of the service. Likewise, Jesus commands us to love and sacrificially care for the least of our brothers and sisters (Mathew 25:40). That's why I'm so committed to helping my fellow veterans and all of our neighbors in urgent need.


It's especially meaningful to me when we're privileged to serve one of my Marine brothers, like John. By God's grace, and thanks to your faithful prayers and support, his life is entirely transformed. While he used to stay in a tent on the streets, today his future is bright.

As you read his moving story, please remember to pray for America's veterans who are still struggling to survive on the streets. May God lead them to new hope and restoration. **Thank you for helping Los Angeles Mission continue to provide food, shelter, support programs and care to people who have survived the worst . . . and bravely continue pressing on.**



Troy Vaughn  
President/CEO

## Thanks to You, This Marine Veteran Is off the Streets



*John is so grateful that you gave him another chance!*

**John is a U.S. Marine Corp veteran who wound up on the streets of Los Angeles. Because you care, he found refuge and healing at Los Angeles Mission.**

John was born in the 1950s in rural, segregated Mississippi. He grew up surrounded by racism and conflicts. "I couldn't escape it," he remembers. "Folks were fighting and arguing all the time. I hated it, and I couldn't wait to get away."

When he was old enough, John joined the Marines because "it was the toughest branch of the military." The Marines taught him a lot about discipline, but when he completed his time of service and transitioned back to civilian life, trouble followed him. Certain people in his community seemed to have it out for him, so he left in search of peace and stability.

He moved to Los Angeles, thinking it would be a good place to start over. While things went well at first, he didn't have many marketable skills. He struggled to establish a career, and as his savings dwindled, he wound up experiencing homelessness.

After that, he decided to leave Los Angeles. "I mostly traveled around, and I met a lot of good people. I started wandering all over the country. Places like Miami, New York, Omaha and elsewhere. I'd work jobs, take classes and try to learn whatever I could to improve myself."

After many years on the road, John finally returned to Los Angeles last year — tired, worn out, struggling with addiction and a lot older. "I lived in a tent in Burbank for a while, but the camps are rough. I would come to Los Angeles Mission for a meal and a bed. Eventually, I decided to join the program for a fresh start."

After so much time on the streets, John certainly appreciated the "creature comforts" available at the Mission — nutritious food, clean clothing, showers, a warm bed and more. But the thing he cherishes most is the spiritual teaching, which has helped him grow in Christ immensely. "I'm trying to walk with Jesus every day, and I am not ashamed."

***Thank you for helping people on Skid Row like John. Your ongoing support gives second chances to all those who turn to Los Angeles Mission.***

# New Life After 30 Years on the Streets



When Rochelle was only 16, her mom died unexpectedly. At that moment, Rochelle's world seemed to end. She had no one to love or guide her and nowhere to stay. The hard streets of Compton were her only option. Out there, her heartbreak was so intense that she used drugs to cope — and that became her life.

“For a woman, life on the streets is cruel. There's no place to shower, no fresh clothes, I never knew where my next meal would come from,” Rochelle says. “Every minute of every day was filled with fear of what might happen.”



During that time, Rochelle met someone and got married. She and her husband looked after each other for 17 years, but they were both lost and broken in the world of addiction — and every day, life seemed to get worse.

When Rochelle's husband could take the hunger, hopelessness and suffering no more, he came to Los Angeles Mission to rebuild his life and urged his wife to do likewise. It took time, but he eventually convinced Rochelle to seek help at our Anne Douglas Center for Women.

“When we walked through these doors, I was ready and happy,” she remembers. “They gave me a place to sleep and shower. I have fresh clothes. Most important, they helped me get closer to God and showed me how to stay strong and focused on Jesus.”

Rochelle continues: “Every day, I'm more able to let go of the fear and self-hatred I felt on the streets and love myself and others more. God helped me survive 30 years out there, and He used the donors to give me a new life.”

*Thanks to you, Rochelle and her husband have hope for the future. Please continue giving generously to provide crucial meals, shelter and healing to more neighbors in need.*

***Because of you, Rochelle and her husband  
are rebuilding their lives after decades  
of homelessness.***

## THE RACE TO FEED

*Preventing homelessness  
in our community*

As food and other basic needs continue to increase in price, Los Angeles Mission is reaching out to help local children and families in need through our ***Race to Feed*** program. With your help, we're distributing meals and Food Boxes to:

- ✓ Homeless Encampments
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Foster Families

By providing these basic needs, we're preventing homelessness by easing struggling families' financial burdens and ensuring they remain fed and housed. But as you can imagine, meeting skyrocketing local need is no easy thing. **Please support the Mission's Race to Feed program to provide vital meals and services for our neighbors in need this summer. Thank you!**





## UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

### Volunteer Opportunities

Share God's love with neighbors in need by volunteering with Los Angeles Mission. To learn how you can make a difference, please visit [lamission.volunteerhub.com](http://lamission.volunteerhub.com) or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 337.



## Providing for a Loved One's Future

### *Ultimate gifts that pay income*

Many supporters further the ministry of Los Angeles Mission through a lifetime income gift. These gifts provide meaningful support to this ministry *and* secure steady lifetime payments for you or your loved ones.

*But what if you want to provide for a loved one **beyond** your own lifetime?*

**Including a life income gift in your estate plan is a generous and creative way to bless your children, grandchildren or other individuals with special needs.**

For example, John wanted to provide additional retirement funds to one of his faithful, long-term employees, Sharon. He included a gift in his Will that offers Sharon steady payments until the time of her passing when the remainder will go toward ministry.

Another couple was concerned their children would receive a single large lump sum when they go to be with the Lord. Instead, they set up lifetime income gifts that will provide each of their children 20 years of steady income, after which their favorite ministries will be blessed.

*Is a lifetime income gift the right charitable solution for your goals and situation? Email Kyle Patterson at [K\\_Patterson@lamission.net](mailto:K_Patterson@lamission.net) or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 304 to learn more.*

## Change Lives All Year!



Searching for nutritious meals, shelter and other crucial resources, hundreds of veterans, children, families and individuals turn to Los Angeles Mission every day. Only by standing together can we meet their needs. Please consider becoming a Meals-A-Month partner. By committing a monthly gift, you will provide a steady stream of support that transforms lives every day, all year long.

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

## Transform Lives This Summer!

Please help veterans and neighbors who have nowhere else to turn. Send the enclosed reply form with your gift today. Your support will provide the meals, healing and encouragement our guests need to get back on their feet. Thank you for your compassion!



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### Stay Connected

Keep track of the latest Mission news, make safe online donations and more.  
[LosAngelesMission.org](http://LosAngelesMission.org)



### LOS ANGELES MISSION DONATION DROP OFF

316 Winston Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Hours of operation are Monday-Friday: 7am-7pm  
Saturday: 7am-5pm; Sunday: Closed