



# THE BEACON

Stories of Light and Transformation from Las Vegas Rescue Mission | **THANKSGIVING EDITION**



Save the Date to

## Walk a Mile

Our 11th Annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes event will be held Saturday, October 8, 2022. This event raises awareness and funds to help neighbors in need — those who come to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission for help.

Come join other members of the community in taking “steps” to draw attention to our neighbors who are unsheltered. All funds raised during the event go toward providing food, shelter and addiction-recovery services to those who need it most. Details: [vegasrescue.org/events](https://vegasrescue.org/events)



Thanks to you, Edward has turned his life around, and he's grateful.

## No Problem?

*Edward thought he had his addictions under control. He was wrong.*

The term “functioning addict” can be deceiving ... especially to the addict.

Edward would know. He was one of them.

“Throughout my life,” he says, “I had a job, and I always had a place to go. I really didn’t think I had a problem ... until I was arrested and sent to prison.”

Finally, after more than two years of alcohol and drug abuse, Edward realized he had a problem after all.

He was only 14 when he started using meth and heroin. He hid it from his family and, in time, hid it from his employers — including, at one point, the Department of Homeland Security. On the outside, Edward appeared to be “functioning” just fine.

But inside? He realized something was wrong, especially as he began to notice he’d been burning bridges in his relationships, particularly with his family.

One night, while out with some of his drug-using friends, they pulled into a gas station. One of the guys asked Edward to fill the tank. While he pumped the gas, his friends bailed and ran ... just as the cops screamed into the parking lot.

Edward had no idea why his friends ran, but the cops let him know: It was a stolen car.

After a brief jail term, Edward returned to his old ways and had a few more brushes with the law. Though he’d destroyed his relationship with his family, his sister never gave up on him.

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## A Note From the CEO

Legend has it that Benjamin Franklin wanted the national bird to be a turkey, not the bald eagle. That's mostly myth, but Franklin *did* write that the bald eagle "is a bird of bad moral character" and that the turkey is "much more respectable."

That makes me laugh as we look ahead to the Thanksgiving season ... and as we prepare to feast on that "more respectable" fowl. It certainly makes for a more than respectable meal as we gather in gratitude for what God has done — and continues to do — at the Mission.

Which brings me back to the eagle. Turkeys aren't mentioned in the Bible, but the eagle gets some impressive ink ... especially in Isaiah 40:31:

*Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles ...*

That's our prayer for everyone who comes to the Mission for help. And it's my prayer for you during this season of gratitude.

*Heather Engle*

Heather Engle  
CEO

# You Can Take Action Against Addiction



September is National Recovery Month, a time for spreading awareness of the hope-filled opportunities for people who struggle with addictions.

The Mission plays a vital role in helping neighbors overcome addiction ... by giving them a fresh start and equipping them for a hopeful future.

If you know anyone struggling, we can help. So can these practical tips:



## ATTENTION

Because addiction affects our communities and the families living there, it's important to bring attention to the situation. Using a variety of free online resources, you can educate yourself on the latest information, see what initiatives are already underway and discuss with your loved ones how best to help.



## ADVERTISE

The Las Vegas Rescue Mission is more than just a homeless shelter. We also have long-term, Christian-based recovery programs for those who want to break free from addictions. Share about the Mission on your social media, at your church or with someone you think could benefit.



## ADVOCATE

Those struggling with addiction need compassion and understanding. More than that, they need a voice. Unfortunately, stigmatizing language like "addict," "drug abuser" and "junkie" push those seeking recovery further away. Being an advocate begins with positive, empathetic and solution-oriented language.



## ASSESS AND ALERT

Learn to assess what could be the signs of an opioid overdose. These may include (but are not limited to): no response to stimuli; shallow or stopped breathing; and inability to be awakened. If you cannot get a response from someone, alert emergency personnel right away by calling 911, tell the operator your location and stay on the scene until an ambulance arrives.



## ASSIST

One of the most powerful ways you can take action against addiction is to assist those struggling directly — either by making a donation to or volunteering to support an outreach ministry or recovery support organization like the Las Vegas Rescue Mission.

**Thank you for being a positive force for change!**



# “Such a Relief”

*After years on the run from violence and strife, this family found a safe haven.*

Nicole ran her own real estate company in Nigeria, with 50 employees on her payroll. But violence in the country forced Nicole and her four young children to flee.

They went to South Africa, where Nicole launched another successful real estate business. But on a 2015 family vacation to Los Angeles, news broke that xenophobic attacks were ramping up back home. Many Nigerians were attacked, and some were killed; Nicole's son lost a friend in the violence.

“We were afraid to go back,” she says. “So we stayed in Los Angeles.”

But money ran out, and she looked for a cheaper place to live. They ended up in Las Vegas, renting a small apartment. But Nicole says their landlord was abusive.

“It was hell,” she says. “My kids were terrified.”

Nearly broke and with no place to go, Nicole brought her family to the Mission. She says that from day one, it's been such a relief.

“It was as if they were expecting us,” she says. “They received us. There was nothing to be ashamed of. Everyone is super nice. It's been amazing.”

The Mission helped get Nicole's kids into local schools. And they helped Nicole address some health



Thanks to you, struggling families find hope and healing at the Mission.

issues, including a heart problem, by connecting her with a cardiologist and a dietician.

As her health has been restored, so has Nicole's spirit: “I've been reminded of who I used to be. Sometimes when you go through things, you forget who you used to be.”

She and her family had certainly been through enough hardships. Now they look ahead with hope and promise.

The Mission helped Nicole, so she can get a job and get back into the real estate business. Her oldest daughter just got a full scholarship to an American college. Her younger kids are flourishing.

“I'm grateful for the Mission,” Nicole says. “The people here are full of empathy and kindness. And it's so peaceful and serene.”

***Thank YOU for helping Nicole and her family find peace and serenity! ✝***

## No Problem, *continued from front*

Soon, she suggested he try out the Mission.

So he did. And his transformation had begun ...

Edward's top priorities at the Mission were to 1) get sober, and 2) restore his relationships with his family.

“I wanted a good program,” he says. “I wanted something substantial to stand on.”

He knew he was changing for the better, but his family was skeptical. But after a few months, “they saw that I had resolved to stay in the program, and they saw how much I've changed.”

This Thanksgiving, Edward is especially grateful for the healing that is taking place in his family, particularly with his sister.

“It hurts so much knowing that I lost those relationships,” he says. “But she's been able to forgive me and give me a second chance. It's overwhelming.”

He finished the program at the Mission and is paying it forward to help others who are struggling — including the “functioning” addicts who don't even know they have a problem ... yet. Because Edward knows where that can lead.

“If it weren't for the Mission, I'd either be back in prison ... or dead,” he says. “The Mission changed my life.”

***This Thanksgiving, Edward is grateful for supporters like you! ✝***

# A Backward Story

*Joseph's journey may be a little unusual. But you helped him find the right road.*

Many homeless substance abusers have a similar chronology to their stories: Their drug and/or alcohol addictions led to other problems, which led to losing their homes.

But not Joseph.

"I actually have a bit of a backward story," he says. "I didn't start drugs and then end up on the streets. I ended up on the streets and then started using drugs."

Joseph, 51, had never touched drugs or alcohol before, but six years ago, he came home to find that his partner of 10 years had disappeared, taking all of Joseph's money. "He took 93 grand out of the account," says Joseph, "and left me with \$23."

Devastated, Joseph quit his job and stayed home. But he couldn't pay his mortgage, and ended up on the streets, where someone introduced him to meth. He drowned his sorrows in drugs. He quit for a while, then relapsed.

Someone at his church recommended the Las Vegas Rescue Mission. Joseph decided to check it out ... and was immediately transformed.

"Within a week, I spiritually felt something," he says. "I can't really describe it, but I haven't had any cravings, any urges of any kind, since then."

When he finishes the recovery program, Joseph wants to return to his old profession — nursing. He'd been an ER nurse for 28 years.



Joseph is thankful for friends like you!

He says his recent experiences with drugs and homelessness "will make me a better provider, because I have lived on this side of the fence, and I can relate to my patients a little more."

Joseph says the Mission helped him climb back over that fence.

"Without them," he says, "I would have fallen into the ditch."

***Thank you for helping men like Joseph find recovery and healing! ✝***

PLEASE CUT OFF THE REPLY FORM BELOW, AND RETURN WITH YOUR GIFT. THANK YOU.

## I WANT TO TRANSFORM LIVES THIS THANKSGIVING



480 West Bonanza Rd.  
Las Vegas, NV 89106-3227

To give online, visit  
**vegasrescue.org** or use your  
phone to scan this code  
**Thank you!**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Yes! I want to help my neighbors in need this Thanksgiving. Enclosed is my gift of:**

- ☐ \$19.92 to provide 8 meals and care.
- ☐ \$32.37 to provide 13 meals and care.
- ☐ \$64.74 to provide 26 meals and care.
- ☐ \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide as much care as possible.
- ☐ I'd like to give monthly. My first gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Please make your check payable to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission.