

(Msg from CO-Director continued)

ministry, and communities throughout Utah. The days and weeks ahead will call for continued outpouring of donations, but I am confident that together we will meet this challenge.



Our main focus during the last several months has been supplying food to those who are homeless, hungry, and the 53% increase in clientele experiencing food insecurity due to the COVID crisis. We have strategically altered our food distribution services to include receiving semi truckloads of food items. In addition to supplying the growing needs of individuals and families, we have also been able to assist other service providers in the Greater Salt Lake Region. Even though we had to temporarily close some feeding programs due to guidelines mandated by health officials, the Mission has been able to supply food in greater amounts due to restructuring. In place of our numerous annual meal outreach events, we have reorganized our efforts to increase additional food box giveaways, in place of public gatherings.

Our 6th Annual "Putting for Pencils Charity Golf Tournament", which focuses on funding our annual Back to School Giveaway, has been suspended due to Covid-19 pandemic. We are working on another fund raiser in which

to lend your support for the annual Back to School Giveaway where we provide backpacks and school supplies. Currently, we are working closely with the Granite Education Foundation/School District to find solutions. Please stay connected through Facebook and our website, as we will be providing updated information in the coming weeks.

Our addictions recovery program for men is currently at full capacity. We were able to hire a full time Programs Director who has been working on developing the Men's Program even more. The "Upwards Motion Men's Program" continues

to change lives through daily life skills classes using "Family Integrity Training" curriculum, as well as, the "Experiencing God" discipleship lessons - weekly Bible studies, and countless hours of counseling and other vital activities. Unfortunately, we have to turn away many who need the program, due to lack of sufficient housing.

The Mission needs more space. We are praying that this becomes possible in the year ahead. In order for Salt Lake City Mission to accommodate the growing needs for our vital services. We need to relocate and physically expand our facilities. We will be looking towards commitments from others in the community to help us reach the goal of growth and expansion.

"In kind" (food) donations increased more than 200% as the COVID

crisis unfolds. This is very timely, as we experience a 45% increase in new guests receiving assistance through this program.

Our food pick-up and processing programs are still increasing, especially since the Covid crisis started. With other food pantries currently closed because of the crisis, we have been able to fill the gap in directly feeding additional people. Vital partners in our food relief efforts include such Nicholas Food Distributors, Bimbo Bakery, Inmar Distributors (Kroger Industries), Wasteless Solutions, Cre8ameal/City Serve, and Farm-link (which is a government subsidy program purchasing and processing product, packaging and shipping to service providers) regionally. We have received truck load shipments from CA, OR, IN, and ID, since we joined this program one month ago. This alone has brought 320,000 lbs of food thru Salt Lake City Mission distribution operations.

In conclusion, The Mission is on course to have a special year despite the challenges we face. We owe this to a great support team of community partners and Donors. God bless all of you as we move forward together to continue our mission of being a catalyst where the compassion of our community meets tens of thousands of neighbors in need.

Pastor Joe, Co-Director



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Meeting Their Greatest Needs!

Newsletter From Salt Lake City Mission // JULY 2020

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HOPE in the Face of Crisis. Message from the Co-Director

Some have said that hunger is the worst man-made disaster in the United States. And I agree. But over the past few months, the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed that disaster into one of the most trying times in the history of Salt Lake City Mission—and I expect the worst is yet to come if we experience a resurgence of any kind. And unfortunately, the fallout in our state's economy is overwhelming our resources even more.

Yet as painful as this crisis is for the homeless men and women we serve daily, one of the most heartbreaking realizations are the effects on children. Food insecurity is the enemy. No longer is the stereotypical image of an "old man down on his luck" the prevalent image of the crisis we face today – both in homelessness and from the effects of the Covid crisis. The universal situation facing us today have captured even more families than ever into the grip of poverty and illness.

And the children suffer... Children have no choice but to endure their environment. And when hardworking parents suddenly lose control of their ability to provide for the family, by no fault of their own, children are afflicted the most.

Yet I am still filled with hope for these children, for their families, and for the homeless we serve - all because of caring people like you. Thanks to you, no one goes hungry who comes through our doors in need of assistance. Families receive the provisions of food they need. The homeless find shelter in the hope of your caring.



Thanks to you, no matter how tragic this, or any crisis becomes, I know that together we are feeding more people than ever before.

Thank you so much!

STATE OF THE MISSION

Even though the current issues of the times we live in are very concerning, Salt Lake City Mission has been surrounded by a core group of committed Partners and Donors whose compassion to serve others in need goes "above and beyond". I am so grateful for the great response we have received during the COVID crisis. As we respectively manage expenses and find ways to maximize every dollar, we also find ourselves seeing an increase in new clients. It has been nearly overwhelming but we are still open. What a privilege to serve this

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TESTIMONY: Truly Beginning to Live Again

For many years before coming to terms with his moral frailty, Carlos chased many things in life trying to gain a happiness that always seemed just out of reach.

"My pursuit for happiness involved doing whatever I could to gain money and power. Growing up in Southern Cali, in a gang infested neighborhood, I learned to obtain money and power through drug dealing and violence. That lifestyle brought a lot of pain and suffering to me, and everyone I

encountered, especially my mother who was a single mom, trying to raise three boys and a little girl in the ghetto."

As Carlos grew, he aggressively pursued the lifestyle he wanted, disregarding the negative effect it had on those closest to him. But being raised as a young child by a Mother who believed in God was something

he always carried with him, no matter the circumstances. "I have four kids. My first I had at the age of sixteen, he is now 25 years old. God has recently

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(testimony from side one continued)

been mending our relationship. My son has blessed me with two beautiful grand-daughters. My other three kids I haven't seen for a long time. I'm trusting in God to restore those relationships in His timing."

"Upon my release from prison in 2011 I met my wife. She had two beautiful children from her prior relationship. Then shortly after we met, we had our first child together. Unfortunately, during our marriage of four years, I was still struggling with my meth addiction and my hunger for money and power. I was living a double life - a family man and being a drug dealer without my wife knowing. Everything started to fall apart - my marriage, my home, my family, and especially my relationship with God."

In 2015 I was involved in a shooting and ended up with four bullet holes across my chest and almost died. While in the hospital, my wife finalized our divorce, and afterwards I fell into a very dark place. Nine months later I was facing charges leading to a life sentence. I had no defense and I was at the mercy of the court."

Somehow, no matter what was going on, or how dark and seemingly hopeless the days had become for Carlos, he never forgot about the God he carried deep in his heart. "Once again I called out to God. This is what I heard inside; "And when you are brought to trial in the synagogues and before rulers and authorities don't worry

about how to defend yourself or what to say for the Spirit will teach you at that time what needs to be said" (Luke 12:11). The Lord Most High once again had mercy on me, and to my surprise and against all odds, I was given probation and released. Shortly after that the Lord God led me to Salt Lake City Mission and the Men's recovery program."

"Being a part of the Mission program has been a really good experience for my life. Some of the best moments here involve the relationships I've developed with my fellow brothers in Christ. There had been some difficult times as I worked through issues with anger, pride and humility. But thanks to the leaders of the Mission for giving much time and effort and investing in me, I have learned to manage my anger and now I get along with my brothers in peace."

Carlos is moving in a positive direction and intends to keep it that way. "Life at this moment in time is full of hope. I have noticed a great change in my character. I am more compassionate and considerate toward others. My hope for the future is to be the man and father God intended me to be. My goal in life is to pursue a career in ministry and go to Bible college to become more effective at serving God, and serving others. I have recently been given the opportunity to serve in the ministry at the Mission by working with the Spanish speaking pastors and serving the Spanish speaking community. For the first time in my life I have a true purpose, one that is meaningful. Now I am beginning to truly live."

500,000 Lbs OF FOOD Distributed thru COVID Food Relief Efforts

During the last three months alone Salt Lake City Mission has seen a 63% increase in people coming for food assistance. Caught unaware by the COVID crisis, many of our neighbors and friends from communities all over Utah have experienced a drop in their personal income – due to job furloughs, job loss, loss of business or customers. This has created an influx of people experiencing food insecurity for the first time, many have fallen into the category of those now living below the poverty line.

"In order to accommodate the growing demand for services, Salt Lake City Mission had to restructure it's programs to receive larger quantities of food and become more efficient at receiving and distribution", says Pastor Joe Vazquez, Co-Director. "Not only are we working with area food suppliers, but we also signed on to receive truckloads of food from other states where farmers now have an excess due to restaurants and other food service establishments all over the nation having to close its doors."

With the large increase of food supplies coming in, the Mission has been able to supply the daily demands of its own clientele and distribute large quantities to other local service providers who are also experiencing an increase of individuals and

families in need of food.

"On Father's Day we gave out 174 boxes of food, along with gift bags for the dads. Many people were very thankful for the additional food and also the gifts which included backpacks, socks, shaving kits, sunblock, candy, cookies and other assorted snacks. The men in our recovery program were blessed to know that they are actively helping fathers and families on Father's day, as well as



meeting such a critical need in providing food and other items to so many in need" Says Pastor Joe.

Along with providing daily food assistance to a growing clientele, The Mission will continue its current special food box giveaway events on all major holidays. The Mission will remain open throughout the crisis to feed as many hungry people as it can.

Become A Sponsor

We need businesses and individuals to join our efforts this year as we help those financially struggling through the COVID crisis.

Become a sponsor of our annual "Back to School Giveaway".

Due to the current COVID crisis, Salt Lake City Mission had to cancel the annual "Putting For Pencils" charity golf tournament which is held every year in support of our Back to School outreach.

To maintain a source of support and fund raising for this event, which helped over 1000 children last year, the Mission will be hosting other opportunities for the community to get involved and help equip local children in need get ready for the next school year.

Stay tuned to our website for updated information on how you can get involved:
www.saltlakecitymission.org/outreach-events/become-a-sponsor

TESTIMONY Rebuilding family, trust, and love, lost to addiction

Jeremy is still new to the Salt Lake City Mission's men's recovery program. "I was lost in this world. The world outside these doors. I was wandering the streets fighting depression and using drugs to fill the gap inside my head. I was going nowhere fast. And yeah, suicide was always on my mind. I would constantly be in and out of hospitals trying to "tame the voices" in my head.

"I am a single father with a 17-year-old boy and a 12-year-old daughter. Being in a constant state of depression made it really hard to have a normal relationship with my children. Fatherhood was almost non-existent to me, mostly due to the poor decisions I made over the past eight years."

"All the relations in my life have a thorn in them. I really have no one at this point - because I burned every bridge – losing all the trust and love of those around me. My kids still have a little faith in me, but even that is fading fast if I don't get the help I need. I was lost. I needed to figure all this out. That's how I ended up at the Mission. I needed someone to talk to. I talked with Pastor Paddy and made my decision to enter the program. 'This has to work', I said to myself. I am ready to change my life and willing to finally give God full control. I know I can't live successfully without God in my life. I haven't been here at the Mission that long and already I can feel a change happening. I am becoming more humble and meeker, and its great I can also help the Mission serve others who come to get the help they need with food and other things. It is humbling and fulfilling at the same time."

"The great part so far is that I am beginning to forgive myself. I know God living inside me has a lot to do with that. I am starting to feel love again. I know I can begin to show love again to those around me. I need this program. I need others who believe in me. I need God. And I know if I stay strong and diligent, I will be with my family again. I haven't felt this good in a long time. My 'Brother's' here at the Mission are helping me to stay accountable. They are like family to me, and I am remembering how to live in a family again. The harder I work at this thing, the more I want to succeed. I want to continue to build the bond I have with Christ, with my new friends, and re-build the trust and love of my family. I want to make things right again and repair all the damage I have done. I believe I can do it... I will do it!"

