

the MISSION

Stories of Second Chances

God is Who I Was Missing

by Damien



My name is Damien and I was in my early 30s when I realized alcohol was becoming an issue for me. Initially, it was a weekend social thing, just hanging out with my buddies and drinking. Before long I was getting drunk every weekend, and then my drinking started spilling into the week.

As a father who loves my children deeply, I knew I needed help, that I needed to get myself straight. I entered a 30-day recovery program, and it worked for a while. But that program didn't address the personal heartbreak behind my drinking and I eventually returned to the bottle.

Thankfully, my pastor knew the people here at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission and got me connected. I knew from the moment I arrived that this place was different. There's fellowship from the moment you walk in the door, and I've learned so much here in this program—especially about my need for God.

You see, I grew up going to church but I never had a relationship with God, and I didn't really know who Jesus was. That has changed through the Mission's 15-month

recovery program. Through counseling and amazing classes about forgiveness and walking with God, I know now that God is who I was missing in my life. Now I've been given an opportunity to start my life over, alcohol-free and focused on Christ.

“I've never experienced the kind of joy I have now.”

I will graduate from the program in a few months, and I can tell you I've never experienced the kind of joy I have now. I can't wait to be reunited with my children and to be a Christian example for them.

There's really no way to adequately thank you for supporting the Mission. Just know that you're helping so many men and women. And without you, this place wouldn't be here.

Thank you for giving more people like Damien a fresh start through your continued support today!



Walk a Mile in My Shoes



On February 20th at 9:00 a.m., we will be converging at Wingfield Park in downtown Reno for our annual **Walk a Mile in My Shoes** event.

This year's mile-long walk will begin at the park and end at the Mission, where participants can tour our Record Street campus and catch a firsthand glimpse of the life-changing work God is doing through the support of friends like you. Vans will be available for transportation back to Wingfield Park.

Individuals, families, church groups, businesses, and other groups are all welcome. Suggested registration is \$30 per adult (\$25 if part of a group of 4 or more). Kids under 12 are free, **and all proceeds go directly to meeting the needs of hurting and homeless people in Northern Nevada.** Register today by calling Mariah Peaslee at **775-323-0386, ext 16.** Then lace up and come join us! Follow us on Facebook for event updates @renomission.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Luis Santoni



“Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.” —Matthew 28:5-6, NIV

Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

I can only imagine what was going through Mary Magdalene's mind that first Easter morning so long ago. She went out to the tomb expecting to see Jesus. Instead, she discovered that the tomb was open and empty. And in that moment of unrestrained grace, she ultimately found forgiveness, restoration, and new life.

In a way, that scene is played out here at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission every day. People from all walks of life come through our door, unsure of what to expect. And what they find is the grace, hope, and life-transforming goodness of God. They see it in the way our staff cares for them. They see it in our recovery classes and discipleship programs. And they see it in the generosity of friends like you who give them the opportunity to start anew.

On behalf of all of us at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission—and each of the men, women, and children in our care—thank you for your friendship, your compassionate support, and for bringing the hope of Easter to hurting people all year long!

Your servant,

Luis Santoni



Thanks to Christ, your gifts can

In these times of pandemic and economic hardship, homelessness has been a constant threat to many of our neighbors who struggle every day to make ends meet. And now that Nevada's eviction moratorium—which was protecting vulnerable families from losing their homes—has been lifted, many more people are at risk of having to survive in cars, tents, abandoned buildings, and even on our city streets.

But there is hope, for one single reason: that first Easter morning, when Jesus rose again, bringing the promise of wholeness and new life to every struggling person in Northern Nevada and throughout the world. Easter is the reason that Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission and caring people like you reach out to help the “least of these,” because

You Give Me Hope

by Ada Marie



I was just seven years old when I first tried alcohol. My parents would leave drinks laying around the house, and I was happy to sample them all because I liked the way they made me feel. And as the youngest of seven children, alcohol became an escape from a family that never seemed to care about me or love me.

At 13, I moved out and became a live-in babysitter for another family, and my drinking continued. For years I drank my troubles away because I was so sad, lonely, and hurt. Then, in my 30s I turned to cocaine. I eventually lost custody of my own five children and ended up living on the streets, where I was frequently attacked and assaulted.

I first came to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission 10 years ago, but I only stayed a couple months. I just wasn't ready. Then this past January, after being evicted from my home in Akron, Ohio, I remembered the Mission and sold everything I owned

to buy a one-way train ticket back to Reno, arriving with \$1.50 in my pocket.

When I arrived, I was bitter and angry, but I knew this was the right place to be. And through prayer, changes are occurring in me. My heart is still hard

“You give me hope that I will make it through the next day.”

around the edges, and it's very hard for me to let somebody hug me. But now, I wake up in the morning and I start to pray for the other women in the Mission.

Surely, God is changing me to become the person that I want and need to be. I'm eight months clean, and I will soon graduate from the recovery program.

Thank you so much for your support of the Mission. You give me hope that I will make it through the next day.

2020 REPORT: YOUR KINDNESS AT WORK

Despite the many challenges of 2020, friends like you rallied together in an outpouring of support to ensure the needs of hurting and homeless people were met. And the needs were many, perhaps even unprecedented. Job losses and a struggling economy brought people to the Mission in droves. Thankfully, you linked arms with us to answer the call, and it was a beautiful thing:

- Over 450,000 meals were served to hungry men, women, and children.
- 50,000 nights of safe shelter were provided to those with nowhere else to go.
- Thousands of children and families received Christmas toys and clothing.
- Countless lives were blessed by your compassion and generosity.

Your continued support is needed today to rescue and change more lives in 2021. So, please send your gift today. If you'd like to volunteer or learn more about our mission, please visit us at www.rsgm.org. You can also call Mariah at **775-323-0386, ext. 16**.



transform lives

of our shared hope in a Risen Savior. Thank you!

Your gifts and prayers for hungry, hurting people at the Mission restore hope and offer new life in Jesus Christ to those who have lost hope. God is transforming lives through you! But every day, more come seeking our help. They too need to know there's a Risen Savior. And they need people like you to give them the chance for a fresh start.

To give your generous Easter gift today, please use the remit slip enclosed, or make your donation online at www.rsgm.org/EasterNews. You may also call us at **775-323-0386**. Thank you for being an Easter friend to men, women, and children who need your help!

“Your gifts and prayers for hurting people restore hope and offer new life in Jesus Christ.”

Bless Hungry Families with Emergency Food Baskets



In the wake of a brutal 2020, many families are still reeling from the financial impact of the pandemic. And a growing number are turning to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission for help meeting their number one need: food.

Your support today will help us reach our most vulnerable neighbors with emergency food baskets during this difficult time to ensure they have the groceries they desperately need. Each basket is jam-packed with nutritious food staples, including fresh produce, and contains enough to feed a family for one week.

Please open your heart and send a gift today to help hurting families when they need it the most. *Thank you!*

"Praise be to the
God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ!
In his great mercy he has
given us new birth into
a living hope through the
resurrection of
Jesus Christ
from the dead."

— 1 Peter 1:3, NIV

Help Hurting and Homeless Neighbors of All Ages this Easter!

Send your gift with the reply slip below. Or give online at rsgm.org/EasterNews. Thank you!



MY EASTER GIFT

YES, Luis, please use my gift to bring new life to struggling neighbors during the spring. **I've enclosed:**

- \$21.70** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
- \$30.38** to provide **14** meals and other assistance
- \$60.76** to provide **28** meals and other assistance
- \$ _____ to provide as many meals and care as possible
- Please bill my credit card: (please print) VISA MC AMEX



ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

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